



LEON COUNTY COMMISSIONER

Rick Minor

DISTRICT 3 NEWSLETTER



January - February 2026 Newsletter

Upcoming Meetings

Board of County Commissioners Meeting

-- Tues, Feb. 10
-- 3:00 pm -
-- The agenda can be viewed [here](#) on or about Feb. 3rd.

CRTPA Board Meeting

-- Tues, Feb. 17
-- 1:30 pm
-- The agenda can be viewed [here](#) on or about Feb. 10.

Board of County Commissioners Meeting

-- Tues, Mar. 10
-- 3:00 pm
-- The agenda can be viewed [here](#) on or about March 3.

Click [HERE](#) for the complete Commission calendar.

Hello,

The new year is off to a busy start, and this newsletter provides information on various policy issues, projects and upcoming events in Leon County.

First, you'll find below an important section on a state grant for reimbursement of the Leon County Sheriff's Office's required support of **immigration enforcement (ICE)**. The County Commission voted on this item last Tuesday (Jan. 27th) and it's one of the most difficult votes I've had to make. Please take a look and let me know what you think.

We also have several major infrastructure projects moving forward in District 3:

\$21M for North Monroe Safety Improvements!

On December 23rd we learned that **the U.S. Department of Transportation has awarded Leon County \$16.8 million for North Monroe!** This funding, combined with \$4.2 million in matching funds from Blueprint, will provide a total of **\$21 million in safety improvements** for Tallahassee's #1 gateway. Christmas came early for Leon County!

And **Leon County residents had a role in making it happen.** Almost two years ago, 1,600 people signed the 'Monroe Makeover' petition to ensure that Blueprint would dedicate the required 20% match for this grant.

This funding will save lives on North Monroe, and I can't thank you enough for lending us your voice and support. Thanks also to my County Commission colleagues, Leon County Administrator Vince Long and his team, CRTPA Executive Director Greg Slay and his staff, the Directors and staff at Blueprint, the consultants at RS&H, and of course the Florida Department of Transportation and the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Other District 3 Projects

There's a lot going on in District 3. Below you'll find information about the site plan for the new **Buc-ee's**, a separate **North Monroe resurfacing project** by FDOT, upgrades to **Tharpe Street**, a FDOT **resurfacing project for Thomasville Road**, and a study on the **Orchard Pond Greenway**.

Thank you once again for the honor of representing you at the Leon County Commission, and please don't hesitate to contact

me if you have any questions, comments, or suggestions.



Rick Minor

Commissioner, Leon County District 3

MinorR@leoncountyfl.gov

P.S. If you have friends and family who might be interested in receiving this newsletter each month, please ask them to sign up at www.LeonCountyFL.gov/RickMinor. Thank you!

LCSO's State Grant for Reimbursing ICE support

At the January 27th County Commission meeting, my colleagues and I discussed whether to accept a **state grant** that would reimburse the Leon County Sheriff's Office (LCSO) for its required support of **federal immigration enforcement (ICE)**.

The agenda item can be found [HERE](#), and the video of the County Commission's discussion of the grant (Agenda Item #4) can be streamed [HERE](#), starting about 31:57.

As I said at the Commission meeting, **I am appalled by what happened in Minneapolis earlier this month**. My personal opinion, based on the evidence I've seen, is that actions taken by ICE agents resulted in the needless deaths of two American citizens, and that those citizens displayed no intention of harming ICE agents in the moments before they were killed. This is NOT immigration enforcement.

I do not support the 287(g) agreement between immigration enforcement and the Leon County Sheriff's Office, but neither the County Commission nor the Sheriff has the ability to reject it. **The County Commission no authority to direct the LCSO, the state, or the federal government to curtail ICE operations here.**

According to what the LCSO's Chief Financial Officer confirmed on the record at the Commission meeting, **there will be no changes to the LCSO's required support of ICE activities, regardless of grant acceptance. No increase in ICE support, no decrease in ICE support.**

So the County Commission's vote ONLY determined whether the state -- or Leon County taxpayers -- would pay for the Sheriff's required support of ICE. That's it.

I know many people are extremely upset with the agenda item. I am, too. Before the meeting, I personally went back and forth on whether to vote YES or NO. Ultimately, though, my decision was based on the following:

- A YES vote means that the state pays for LCSO's ICE support.
- A NO vote means that Leon County taxpayers will fully pay for LCSO's ICE support.
- A YES vote does not encourage ICE to expand their presence here.
- A NO vote does not discourage ICE from expanding their presence here, and it might actually encourage them to increase their operations in Leon County.
- A YES vote is not a vote in support of ICE.
- A NO vote is not a vote against ICE.

I voted YES, because while I can't reduce ICE operations in Leon County, I could take this step so that, as a matter of principle, Leon County taxes aren't paying for it. **I believe Leon County taxpayers do not want to pay for LCSO's support of ICE, and my vote reflects that.**

1. In the “Search” box at the top of the page, enter the Project ID (e.g., LSP26002) and press **Enter**.
2. Click the correct record, then select **Record Info** → **Attachments**.
3. (Optional) Double-click the **Upload Date** column header to sort files so the newest documents appear first.

Monroe Street Resurfacing Public Meeting



HYBRID PUBLIC MEETING

 U.S. 27 (MONROE STREET) FROM
STATE ROAD (S.R.) 263 (CAPITAL CIRCLE)
TO NORTH OF JOHN KNOX ROAD
RESURFACING IMPROVEMENTS | LEON COUNTY

WELCOME

**THURSDAY
FEBRUARY 5, 2026**

 **FDOT**

FINANCIAL PROJECT ID NUMBER:
452939-1-32-01

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has announced that it will be holding a hybrid public meeting concerning the resurfacing improvements project on US 27 (Monroe Street) on **Thursday, Feb. 5, 2026, from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. (EST)**.

Citizens are encouraged to attend the **virtual meeting**. Those who are unable to participate virtually may attend the meeting in-person at the **Lake Jackson Community Center**, 3840 North Monroe Street, Tallahassee.

Pre-registration is required for the virtual format and encouraged for in-person attendees. The same materials will be presented for each format.

[Register Here](#)

Black History Month



BLACK HISTORY MONTH

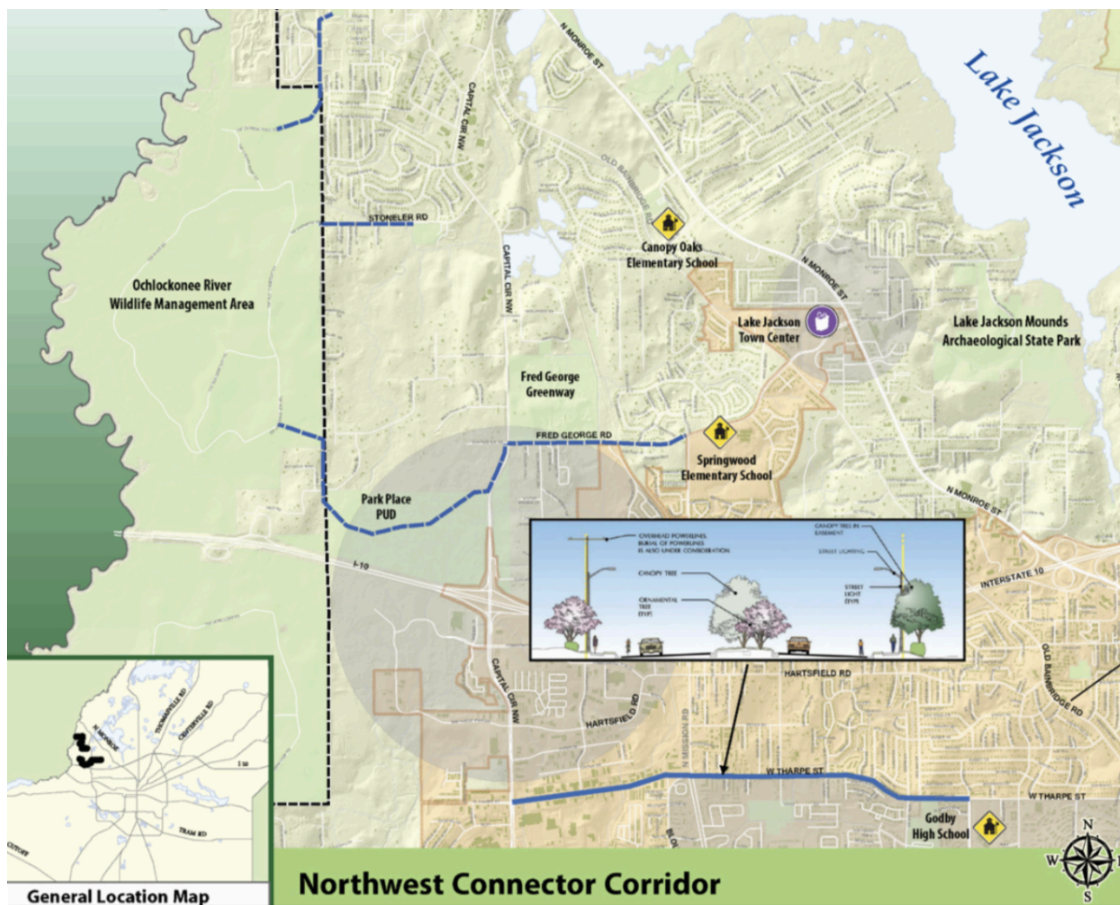
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LEON COUNTY
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Black History Month is celebrated in February and recognizes the contributions, triumphs, and achievements of Black Americans in history, culture, and society.

Designated Black History Month in 1986 by the U.S. Congress, the month-long celebration is an opportunity to “gain a deeper understanding and knowledge of the many contributions of Black Americans to our country and the world.”

Learn About Leon County's Black History Month Programs and Resources

Public Meeting: NW Connector - Tharpe Street Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study



The Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency will hold a public information meeting concerning the above referenced project on **Thursday, February 12, 2026**, from **5:30 pm to 6:30 pm (EST)** at **Abundant Life and Restoration Ministries (ALARM) International Church, 2532 W Tharpe Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32301**.

The purpose of the project is to improve multimodal, pedestrian safety, and traffic operations by **adding sidewalks and intersection improvements** along the corridor as well as associated stormwater infrastructure. The total distance of this study is approximately 2.6 miles.

Maps, drawings and other information will be on display at the meeting. Representatives will be available to discuss proposed improvements, answer questions, and receive comments. Additional project information is available [here](#).

Breakfast Meeting for North Monroe Businesses



In 2023, Rick hosted a series of breakfasts for the owners and managers of businesses along North Monroe Street, with the goal of helping these businesses reduce crime and homelessness and to help make North Monroe something our community can be proud of.

We've made a lot of progress since then, including the recent **\$16.8 million Safe Streets for All (SS4A) grant** from the U.S. Department of Transportation. In addition, LCSO and TPD have made **important strides in reducing crime** in the area.

To discuss these achievements and what more we can all do moving forward, Rick will be hosting a follow-up breakfast on **February 17th at 8:30 am** at the **Days Inn & Suites, 2900 North Monroe Street**. Special guests include the Sheriff and his team, representatives from the Tallahassee Police Department, and Property Appraiser Akin Akinyemi.

All businesses and nonprofits located on or near North Monroe are invited to attend, as well as all other interested citizens. To ensure we have enough food for all, if you plan to attend, please let us know by replying to this email.

Tallahassee to Havana Trail/Orchard Pond Greenway - Environmental Impact and Alternatives Study

Orchard Pond Greenway

Environmental Impact and Alternatives Study



CRTPA Board Retreat

January 12, 2026



On January 12th, the Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency (CRTPA) held its retreat and discussed the **Tallahassee to Havana Trail / Orchard Pond Greenway**. An update on the Environmental Impact and Alternatives Study was presented, and is available below. Engineering analysis, environmental analysis, and public involvement planning is currently underway, with the study's completion scheduled for late 2026.

Presentation

Agenda Item

World Athletics Cross Country Championships Tallahassee 26





Congratulations to Leon County Administrator Vince Long and the many County employees and community members who worked tirelessly to make the [World Athletics Cross Country Championships, held on January 10th, such a wonderful success!](#)

Prior to the event, Rick was pleased to join Vince and other County commissioners and County leaders, along with World Athletics President Sebastian Coe and five-time world cross country champion Paul Tergat, for the official 2026 World Athletics Cross Country Championships press conference at Apalachee Regional Park (ARP).

More than 15 years ago, Leon County began transforming ARP from an inactive landfill into what is now one of the most respected and talked-about cross country venues in the world. That vision has been recognized on the global stage. **World Athletics even declared ARP the best cross country course in the world and named Leon County the cross country capital of the world!**

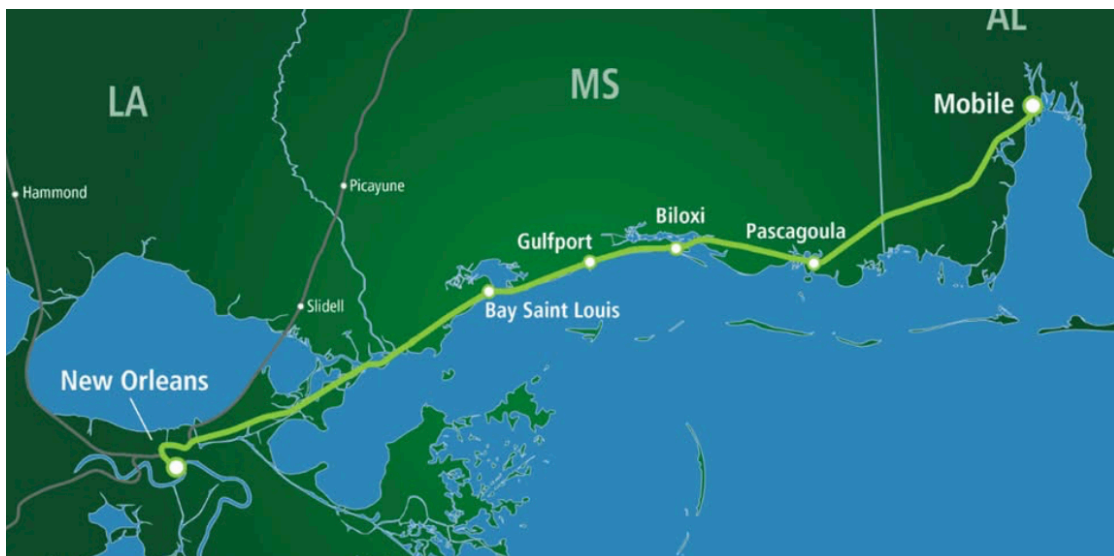
The event was one for the books and we are so proud of and grateful to everyone who was a part of it.

Lake Jackson Dry Down



On New Year's Eve, Rick and his daughter visited Porter Sink at Lake Jackson to witness the dry-down. Dry-downs like this one have been taking place at Lake Jackson for hundreds of thousands of years, with about ten over the past 200 years. Read the [Tallahassee Democrat's recent story](#) on the current dry down, and check out [WFSU's "Everything you Wanted to Know" webpage](#) about Lake Jackson's dry-downs.

Amtrak Update



Recently, Rick attended (virtually) the Southern Rail Commission's board meeting, where they announced the ridership numbers for the "Mardi Gras" route, which runs twice daily between New Orleans and Mobile. Officials are calling this **new passenger rail service "one of the most successful service launches in Amtrak's history", with 46,000 riders in just the past four months.**

Why is this important to Leon County and North Florida? **The new route's level of ridership — twice what was expected — bolsters our argument for restoring passenger rail in North Florida.** As shown in this [NBC15 news segment](#), passenger rail service improves connectivity between communities and helps local businesses.

Rick continues to champion Florida joining the Southern Rail Commission and is advocating for it during this legislative session, and we're further along than ever before. Currently there are standalone Southern Rail Commission membership bills in the House and Senate, and there is SRC language in the Senate version of the Transportation bill.



FDOT Conducting Design Phase for SR 61 (Thomasville Rd) Resurfacing Improvements

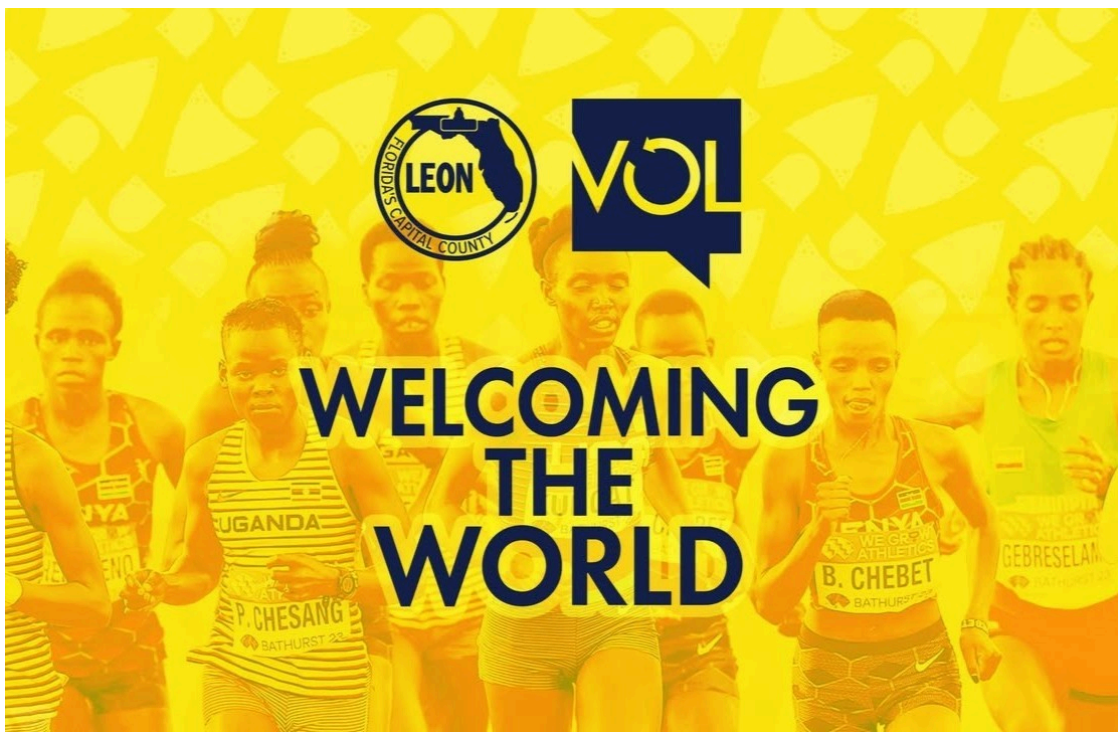
The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has an upcoming Thomasville Road (SR 61) resurfacing project which will extend north of 9th Avenue to south of Maclay Road. The project is currently in the Phase II stage (60% of design), with construction scheduled for fiscal year 2027. Stay tuned for additional updates once design has been completed.

Rick on the Greg Tish Show



On December 15th, Rick visited the Greg Tish show. Rick, Greg and the team talked about the comp plan, Buc-ees, passenger rail, and so much more. If you missed it, you can replay the show [here](#).

Leon County Has Launched a Podcast!



Voices of Leon is a conversational-style series that brings listeners behind the scenes of Leon County to meet the team, programs, and stories shaping our community.

Check out the first episode featuring World Cross Country Championships co-chairs and County staff members Taylor Wheaton and Amanda Heidecker, who give an inside look at securing, planning, and preparing for WXC Tallahassee 26.

[Listen Here](#)

One-on-One Financial Planning

**ONE-ON-ONE
FINANCIAL PLANNING**

Meet with a **CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™** professional
for free, confidential guidance tailored to your financial goals.
Get clear, practical steps you can use right away.

Reserve your spot now at
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Available on select dates January through April 2026
5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
Leon County Main Library, 200 W Park Ave.

Whether you're budgeting, saving for retirement, managing debt, or seeking guidance on a specific concern, connect with a Certified Financial Planner for a confidential, one-on-one session tailored to your financial goals at the Leon County Main Library for free!

[Register and Learn More Here](#)

Become a Master Recycler



On **Saturday, February 7**, the Office of Sustainability will host their next Master Recycler training from **1 p.m. to 4 p.m.** at the Office of Resource Stewardship, 1907 S. Monroe St. Sign up today to become a certified Master Recycler and an ambassador for sustainability in our community. Engage in hands-on activities, receive a personalized certificate, and enjoy free lunch!

District 3 Chief of Staff Jodi Wilkof recently participated in this training and reports that it was informative, educational, engaging—and even fun! She highly recommends it.

[Register Here](#)

2026 Seed Library Kickoff



Saturday, February 14, 2026
10 a.m.-12 p.m.
Leon County Main Library

Join the Leon County Library for the 2026 Spring Seed Library kickoff where you can pick up a variety of seeds, participate in educational activities, and learn how to create a successful home garden.

The kickoff will offer fun for all ages, including:

- Hands-on seeding activities.
- Information about vegetable gardening techniques and sustainable gardening practices.
- Healthy cooking demonstration.
- Ask-a-Master-Gardener booth.

Ask questions and interact with the knowledgeable staff from the Leon County Office of Sustainability and UF/IFAS Leon County Extension.

[Learn More](#)

Arbor Day Celebration



Rick and his daughter recently joined nearly 100 community volunteers and staff to celebrate **Florida Arbor Day** at St. Marks Headwaters Buck Lake Trailhead. The group successfully planted more than 200 native trees at the annual Arbor Day Tree Planting event hosted by Leon County Government.

Each year, this event supports and strengthens the hundreds of native and migratory species that call Leon County home, while also contributing to the community's beautification and the overall improvement of the environment. Native trees, such as Shumard oak, Live oak, Willow oak, Crabapple, and Beautyberry, were among the variety of species planted, contributing to the community's aesthetic appeal and environmental well-being.

The Arbor Day Tree Planting event is one of the many ways the County and City protect and preserve our local ecosystem. Another initiative, the [County's Adopt-a-Tree Program](#), has led to the planting of thousands of native trees in our community by providing free trees to citizens.

Florida AI Classroom of the Future Event



Rick recently participated in a Fireside Chat at the **Florida AI Classroom of the Future Event**. This was a premier two-day event designed to showcase the transformative impact of artificial intelligence in learning.

In partnership with Tallahassee State College, the Florida K-12 AI Education Task Force, the University of Florida, and the Florida School Board Association, this event brought together key stakeholders, including K–college educators, technology leaders, and policymakers, to explore the future of AI-powered education.

The panel that Rick sat on was called *Future-Ready: How Sector Leaders Are Uniting to Shape a Bold Municipal Vision in the Age of AI*. That panel brought together leaders from government, business, education, and technology to reimagine what a forward-thinking, AI-enabled community can look like. Panelists highlighted how cross-sector collaboration is shaping Tallahassee and Leon County's municipal vision, driving innovation, and preparing the community for an AI-driven future. They discussed strategies for economic development, workforce readiness, and public engagement, explore how AI is transforming local services and industries.

During the panel, Rick spoke about the importance of cultivating a community that is informed, prepared, and empowered. One exciting step toward that goal is a new AI / Digital Literacy Training program he's been developing with private sector and higher education partners. **This training will help Leon County residents avoid scams, phishing, and ID theft, and will provide tools for using AI safely and effectively.** The training is scheduled for rollout this spring and will be open to all—watch this newsletter and Leon County communications for registration information.

MLK Day Parade - January 19th





In Memoriam: Chuck Goodheart



On November 29th, we lost a friend to the community and the father of our amazing network of nature trails - Chuck Goodheart.

Chuck worked for the City of Tallahassee for 30 years and helped in the planning and creation of biking, hiking and equestrian trails throughout the region and beyond.

Rest in peace, Chuck.. And thank you for your service to to the people of Tallahassee.



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