



## A Big Win for Affordable Housing

Dear Neighbor,

This month, I have big news to share.

The Leon County Commission just approved **\$500,000 in recurring funding for affordable rental housing**, and we're on track for a **total of \$1 million annually** if the City of Tallahassee matches it.

This new funding will support *GAP financing* for affordable rental housing for families earning at or below **30% and 50% of the area median income**. That means more safe, stable homes for the people most often left out — low-wage workers, single parents, and others doing their best to stay housed in a rising market.

Leon County has made housing investments before, but this fills a critical gap. Until now, most public dollars went to homebuyers or renters making up to 80% or even 120% of the median income. This vote shifts our focus to the renters most at risk — and the housing our community has been missing for years.

### A win that took years of organizing

This victory didn't happen overnight. Since 2022, the **Capital Area Justice Ministry (CAJM)** has been organizing for this specific kind of funding.

When their first proposal didn't make it through the City, they kept going. When Blueprint turned them down in February, they didn't stop. And when their County proposal didn't initially succeed, they worked with staff to develop a new version — one that ultimately brought in support from both the City and County.

When I asked you to show your support [last February](#) and again [this January](#), hundreds of you responded. You emailed, you showed up, and your voices made a difference. We now have a program that reflects both CAJM's vision and the practical insight of our County staff. That's what progress looks like.

### Why this benefits all of us

Affordable rental housing at this level doesn't just help one group — it benefits the entire community:

**-It strengthens our workforce.** When people can afford to live here, businesses retain staff and essential services run more smoothly.

**-It stabilizes families.** Housing insecurity is one of the biggest drivers of poor educational and health outcomes for kids.

**-It saves public money.** Preventing homelessness and housing instability costs far less than crisis interventions.

**-It builds safer, healthier neighborhoods.** Stable housing reduces displacement, fosters community trust, and lowers crime.

This is smart policy — and it reflects the long-term thinking our community needs.

### What's next

The County will vote to ratify this funding at our **July 8 Commission meeting**, and the City is expected to vote on their \$500,000 match as well. If both pass, we'll have **\$1 million each year** to build and preserve the kind of housing our neighbors need most.

If you can, join us at the **July 8 meeting**, or email your County Commissioners to show your support — and thank them for voting in favor of this new funding. Your advocacy made this possible, and it will keep us moving forward.

Thank you for staying engaged in your local government. It truly makes a difference.

Sincerely,  
David T. O'Keefe, CPA

## Washington Square Update

I first brought this issue up at our April 2025 County Commission meeting when I requested information on timelines and costs for repairing the county roads surrounding the stalled Washington Square project. Part of my request also included the legal options available to us to collect moneys due to the County for the repairs.

**UPDATE:** At our June Commission meeting we unanimously approved an agreement requiring the Washington Square developer to repair the surrounding roads and sidewalks within 60 days — or face legal action from the County.

It's time that our downtown streets and sidewalks surrounding this site are repaired and are safe and accessible again.

## Moms Demand Action

Earlier this month, I joined neighbors and advocates at the *Wear Orange* event organized by [Moms Demand Action](#) to honor lives lost to gun violence — and to call for change.

As your Commissioner, I'm pushing for Leon County to support these priorities at the **state and federal level:**

- [Safe Storage Requirements](#) – to keep firearms secure, especially in homes with children.
- [Red Flag Law Expansion](#) – so families can act when a loved one is in crisis.
- [Local Control](#) – so communities can pass gun safety laws without being punished by the state.

We may be blocked by the Florida Legislature from passing local gun laws right now — but that doesn't mean we stay silent.

## Blueprint Audit: Accountability Matters

At our May Blueprint meeting, I raised serious concerns about audit practices and project budget transparency.

As a CPA, I reviewed the draft annual audit (ACFR) and found it was not substantially complete. Key documentation was missing, and a known **\$1 million receivable** was omitted from the financial statements. I issued a public letter urging the Board to delay approval until the audit was finished — a basic standard of financial oversight.

□ [Read my Blueprint Audit Letter here](#)

As I warned, the final audit found a **significant deficiency in internal controls**.

□ [You can read it yourself on page 91 of the final report.](#)

Several board members said they would support a **June meeting** to review the audit *if* there was a significant finding.

That significant deficiency happened.

The meeting never did.

Approving an audit before the work is done — and then ignoring the findings when they arrive — sets the wrong precedent. Blueprint belongs to the public. You deserve transparency, not excuses.

I'll keep fighting for stronger oversight and real accountability.

## Recent Votes at CRTPA and the County Commission

In our effort to keep you informed about the decisions we make on various issues, I am posting some of the key votes from our June 10th Commission Meeting, the June 16th Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency Meeting and the June 17th Budget Workshop.



## 6/10/2025 Votes

Authorized staff to execute an agreement with the Washington Square developer to repair the surrounding roads and rights-of way and to seek legal action against the developer if the repairs aren't completed within 60-days.

**PASS**

**YES**

Cummings, Welch,  
Caban, Proctor, Minor,  
O'Keefe, Maddox

**NO**



## 6/10/2025 Votes

Directed the County Attorney to explore public uses for the Woodville Aquaculture facility and inquire whether there is an interest from the owner to sell the property.

**PASS**

**YES**

Cummings, Welch,  
Caban, Minor,  
Maddox

**NO**

O'Keefe, Proctor

Not Present:

Abstained:



## 6/10/2025 Votes

Accept the Lake Munson Action Plan and Post-Drawdown status update and schedule staff led town hall meeting to include state agencies, stakeholders and residents.

**PASS**

**YES**

Cummings, Caban,  
Proctor, Minor,  
O'Keefe, Maddox

**NO**

Welch

Not Present:

Abstained:





## 6/17/2025 Votes

Approved a package of key FY2025 budget items, including early funding for capital projects, updated EMS and Medical Examiner fees, continued progress on the Sidewalk Program, and a grant application for the next phase of the Woodville Sewer Project. We also accepted the Strategic Plan status report and approved hiring a consultant to explore long-term alternatives to property tax funding.

**PASS**

**YES**

Cummings, Caban,  
Proctor, Minor,  
O'Keefe, Maddox,  
Welch

**NO**

Not Present:

Abstained:



## 6/17/2025 Votes

Accepted the FY2026 Preliminary Budget Overview, which holds the millage rate flat for the 14th straight year and avoids tapping general fund reserves. The plan adds 10 new EMS positions to meet rising call volume and lays the groundwork for future investments in infrastructure, safety, and housing.

**PASS**

**YES**

Cummings, Caban,  
Proctor, Minor,  
O'Keefe, Welch

**NO**

Not Present:

Abstained: Maddox



## 6/17/2025 Votes

Approved the Sheriff's Proposed Budget, including four new Deputies, a specialized Homeless Outreach Deputy, and a new School Resource Officer. We also funded additional correctional officers to improve safety at the detention center and expanded services for women and girls experiencing homelessness.

**PASS**

**YES**

Cummings, Caban,  
Proctor, Minor,  
O'Keefe, Maddox,  
Welch

**NO**

Not Present:

Abstained:



## 6/17/2025 Votes

Approved \$500,000 in Annual GAP Financing for affordable rental housing for low- and very low-income families. This investment helps expand access to safe, stable housing for residents most in need.

**PASS**

**YES**

Cummings, Caban,  
Proctor, Minor,  
O'Keefe, Welch,  
Maddox

**NO**

Not Present:

Abstained:



## 6/17/2025 Votes

Approved Merit Raises for County Employees (averaging 3%) and will consider a 5% across-the-board raise after final projected revenue numbers are available in July.

**YES**

Cummings, Caban,  
Proctor, Minor,  
O'Keefe, Maddox

**NO**

Welch

Not Present:

Abstained:



## 6/17/2025 Votes

Maintained the Current Millage Rate for FY 2026–2027, continuing Leon County's long-standing commitment to keeping property tax rates stable.

**PASS**

**YES**

Cummings, Proctor,  
Maddox, Minor,  
O'Keefe, Welch

**NO**

Caban

Not Present:

Abstained:

Adopted the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) – a federally required 5-year blueprint for funding regional transportation projects.

**PASS**

YES	NO
Messersmith, Maddox, Matlow, Minor, O'Keefe, Richardson, Williams-Cox	

Not Present: Hosford, Lawson-Cox, Holt, Riley-Goldwire

Abstained:

Approved a TIP Amendment – to reflect updated costs and new project needs, including the study for improvements at Capital Circle NE and Mahan Drive.

**PASS**

YES	NO
Messersmith, Maddox, Matlow, Minor, O'Keefe, Richardson, Williams-Cox	

Not Present: Hosford, Lawson-Cox, Holt, Riley-Goldwire

Abstained:

Adopted the 2027–2031 Project Priority List – which ranks the region's top projects for which we will seek future funding and construction support.

**PASS**

YES	NO
Messersmith, Maddox, Matlow, Minor, O'Keefe, Richardson, Williams-Cox	{No}

Not Present: Hosford, Lawson-Cox, Holt, Riley-Goldwire

Abstained: {Abstain}

# Shelter Pet of the Month - Jessie





I am a **spayed female** and I look like an **American Staffordshire Terrier** mix. The shelter staff think I am about **8 years** old.

I'm a **super goofy girl** and I love **going on walks** and also on **car rides**. I really enjoy rolling around in the grass and doing the zoomies. [WCTV](#) recently highlighted me in a short news story and I hope everyone will [watch it here](#).

**By Appointment:** Daily, 10:00 am – 6:00 pm  
**Walk-in Kennel Viewings:** Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday, 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm  
**Phone:** 850-891-2950  
**Shelter Address:** 1125 Easterwood Drive

Shelter Adoption Information

Pride Month 2025



At our June Commission Meeting I had the honor of presenting a Proclamation recognizing June 2025 as Pride Month. Pride Month is an opportunity to recognize the history, resilience, and many contributions of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and other LGBTQ+ individuals to the cultural, economic, and civic life of Leon County and beyond.

I was also proud to be a host for Equality Florida's *Allies for Equality* event at Proof Brewing. The happy hour celebration honored all those in our community who stand up for love, inclusion, and justice.

My Weekly Update Videos on Social Media

At the end of each week I record and post a [Weekly Update](#) video on each my social media platforms. These videos are a way for me to keep you and other neighbors informed of the issues I've been working on that week.

I realize that some of you may not be on social media so you may not get to see my videos. I've uploaded most of them to my [Youtube](#) channel in case you'd like to see them.





**David O'Keefe**  
Leon County Commissioner, District 5  
@commishokeefe



## Commissioner David O'Keefe

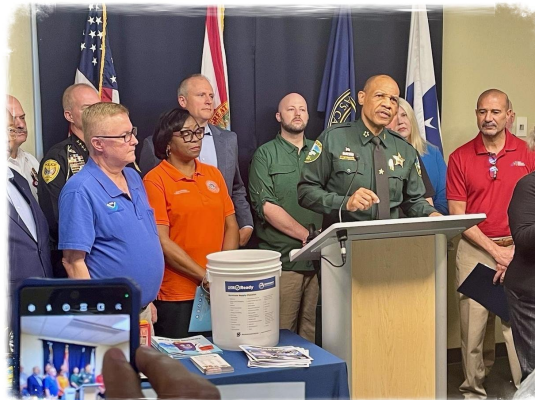
@commishokeefe · 29 subscribers · 148 videos

Representing Leon County's District Five. | My videos are my own and do not reflect the vi...more

[mtr.bio/Okeefe](https://mtr.bio/Okeefe) and 4 more links

Subscribe

Home Videos Shorts Playlists Posts









[Manage](#) your preferences | [Opt Out](#) using TrueRemove™  
Got this as a forward? [Sign up](#) to receive our future emails.  
View this email [online](#).

301 S. Monroe Street 5th Floor | Tallahassee, FL 32301 US

This email was sent to .  
*To continue receiving our emails, add us to your address book.*

emma

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.