

A close-up, high-contrast photograph of a turkey's head, showing its textured, reddish-brown skin and a dark eye. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the intricate details of the feathers and skin.

# 2021 Budget Turkey Watch Report

*An analysis of the transparency and  
accountability of the budget process*

MAY 2021

**T**HE 2021 BUDGET TURKEY WATCH REPORT: AN ANALYSIS OF THE  
TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY OF THE BUDGET PROCESS

IS THE RESULT OF AN ANNUAL INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF FLORIDA'S FY2021-22 BUDGET BY FLORIDA TAXWATCH. THE REPORT WAS STARTED IN 1983 AND PROMOTES ADDITIONAL OVERSIGHT AND INTEGRITY IN THE STATE'S BUDGETING PROCESS BASED ON THE PRINCIPLE THAT: BECAUSE MONEY APPROPRIATED BY THE LEGISLATURE BELONGS TO THE TAXPAYERS OF FLORIDA, THE PROCESS MUST BE TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE, AND EVERY APPROPRIATION SHOULD RECEIVE DELIBERATION AND PUBLIC SCRUTINY. THE BUDGET REVIEW IDENTIFIES APPROPRIATIONS THAT CIRCUMVENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY STANDARDS IN PUBLIC BUDGETING.

BUDGET TURKEYS ARE ITEMS, USUALLY LOCAL MEMBER PROJECTS, PLACED IN INDIVIDUAL LINE-ITEMS OR ACCOMPANYING PROVISIO LANGUAGE THAT ARE ADDED TO THE FINAL APPROPRIATIONS BILL WITHOUT BEING FULLY SCRUTINIZED AND SUBJECTED TO THE BUDGET PROCESS. **THE BUDGET TURKEY LABEL DOES NOT SIGNIFY JUDGMENT OF A PROJECT'S WORTHINESS.** INSTEAD, THE REVIEW FOCUSES ON THE FLORIDA BUDGET PROCESS, AND THE PURPOSE OF THE BUDGET TURKEY LABEL IS TO ENSURE THAT ALL APPROPRIATIONS USING PUBLIC FUNDS RECEIVE THE DELIBERATION, DEBATE, AND ACCOUNTABILITY THEY DESERVE. WHILE A PROJECT MAY BE WORTHWHILE, BUDGET TURKEYS TEND TO SERVE A LIMITED (NOT STATEWIDE) AREA, ARE OFTEN NOT CORE FUNCTIONS OF GOVERNMENT, ARE MORE APPROPRIATELY FUNDED WITH LOCAL OR PRIVATE DOLLARS AND CAN CIRCUMVENT COMPETITIVE BIDDING OR SELECTION AND OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY.

THE \$101.5 BILLION BUDGET PASSED BY THE FLORIDA HOUSE AND SENATE FOR FY2021-22 CONTAINS 115 APPROPRIATIONS ITEMS WORTH \$157.2 MILLION QUALIFYING AS BUDGET TURKEYS. THESE ARE ONLY A PORTION OF THE 675 MEMBER PROJECTS IN THE BUDGET WORTH MORE THAN ONE-HALF BILLION DOLLARS.

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*The annual Budget Turkey Report spotlights legislative projects placed in the budget without proper opportunity for public review and debate*

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## **A SURPRISINGLY FLUSH BUDGET LEFT PLENTY OF MONEY FOR MEMBER PROJECTS AND TURKEYS**

This was a budget year like no other. The COVID-19 pandemic virtually shut down the state's economy and the impact on state revenues was immediate and severe. Legislators were bracing for a very tough budget year. But \$5.8 billion in federal funds from the CARES Act allowed the state to avoid a budget shortfall in 2019-20 and carry significant General Revenue (GR) into the current budget year. Then the economy, and state revenue, started rebounding much quicker than anyone thought, and news arrived that even more federal funds were on the way. The result was the 2021 Legislature passing a record budget totaling \$101.5 billion, \$9.2 billion more than the current year, while keeping a record level of reserves. This outcome was unthinkable only months ago when a multi-billion-dollar shortfall was expected. In addition, the Legislature appropriated \$6.7 billion in federal aid from the Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund and \$9.8 billion in additional federal funds for education and child care from the American Rescue Plan. None of these federal stimulus funds are included in the \$101.5 billion budget total.

So, while all this available money allowed for significant turkeys, it could have been worse. The number of member projects—both requested and funded—decreased considerably this year and positive actions by legislators—fewer projects added during conference negotiations and through supplemental appropriations (the “sprinkle lists”)—coupled with some restraint shown in the face of windfall revenues, helped reduce the number of Budget Turkeys.

The Legislature was also prudent with the federal funds. It did not attempt to fund more local projects, instead allocating the funds to major statewide issues for which non-recurring revenue was appropriate. The Legislature also directed some of the money to the Budget Stabilization fund and a new emergency reserve fund. It also did not spend all the money—there is still \$3.5 billion in ARP funding that is unallocated.

Still, there remains to be excessive spending on local projects. While many of these projects are worthwhile, some are harder to justify. This is especially true when you consider that while the pandemic also negatively impacted local government, they have also received \$3.7 billion federal aid and \$7 billion more is coming to them from the ARP. This is the equivalent of a more than 30 percent property tax increase for cities, counties, and special districts. Moreover, the way local projects are earmarked for funding, often without formal, competitive selection processes, leaves doubt that taxpayers' best interests are being advanced. Highlighting these items is the mission of the Florida TaxWatch Budget Turkey Report.

## **FISCAL UNCERTAINTY MEANS MEMBER PROJECT REQUESTS ARE DOWN, BUT THEY ARE STILL EXCESSIVE**

The appropriations project rules adopted five years ago have reduced the number of Budget Turkeys. Each House member project requires a bill to be approved by an appropriations subcommittee and the Senate requires a member request form. The House bill and Senate form numbers appear alongside the project in the budget, clearly identifying them as member projects. This has greatly reduced the number of items being added to the budget for the first time during the budget conference committee process, which used to comprise a significant percentage of Budget Turkeys. However, despite the fact that the joint rules of the

Legislature prohibit a member project that was not in either the House or Senate budget as passed by the respective chambers from being in the final budget, this has been happening more and more in recent years. Florida TaxWatch is pleased to announce that the 2021 Legislature reversed that trend and there were no member projects added for the first time in conference (although several were removed during the budget conference only to be added back through the supplemental—or “sprinkle”—lists).

The new rules have increased the transparency of member projects—taxpayers and the media can at least see what was being proposed. While the new rules have (relatively) limited the number of turkeys, they have not limited member projects—they are just added to the budget sooner. But the uncertainty cause by the pandemic did reduce member projects, at least this year. The new budget contains 675 member projects worth more than \$560.1 million. There are far fewer in this budget than the 829 funded last year, but the dollar amount is an increase of \$60 million. This brings the five-year total (since the rules were adopted) to more than 3,300 funded members projects worth \$2.8 billion.

House members in 2021 filed 1,060 bills requesting \$1.7 billion in appropriations projects. The 40-member Senate requested 1,134 projects, totaling \$ 1.5 billion. This is much less than last year. The House and Senate had approximately 1,000 fewer requests asking for \$1.6 billion less (there is significant duplication in the House and Senate requests).

It must be remembered that the state shares approximately \$5 billion of state revenue directly with local governments and school districts and billions of dollars more are sent down to the local level every year through the state budget. Adding more through budget earmarks is done at the expense of statewide priorities, core functions, and accountable programs.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

To further promote the integrity of Florida’s budget process, and to get a handle on the proliferation of member projects, Florida TaxWatch offers these recommendations:

**Legislative Appropriations Project Rules** – The member project rules in place today should be made permanent and be improved upon. The new practice of detailing the recurring projects in the base budget should also be continued.

**Competitive Selection Processes** – The lack of a systematic review and selection process in some areas of the budget has become a glaring problem. Member projects are peppered throughout the budget, but there are several line-items where one can count on numerous projects ending up.

To make sure that these projects are prioritized, funded with a coordinated, statewide vision, compete for limited funding fairly, and meet specified requirements to qualify for funding, Florida TaxWatch recommends that, if the Legislature is going to fund such projects, it creates a competitive review and selection process in statute for each of these areas:

- Water Projects
- Local Transportation Projects
- Housing and Community Development Projects

- School and Instructional Enhancements
- Private College and University Projects
- Special Local Law Enforcement Projects
- Local Fire Service
- Fixed Capital Outlay for Local Fire Services
- Economic Development Projects
- Workforce Projects

**Supplemental Funding Lists** – It has become routine for the budget conference process to end with each chamber accepting the other chamber’s supplemental funding lists worth more than \$100 million each. This is done without public debate or discussion and the lists have been developed and already agreed to in private. The list includes increased funding for some projects already in the budget and can also introduce new projects, sometimes including items that had not been discussed before. This year, The Senate list contained 115 items worth \$165.5 million. The House funded 76 items worth \$ 182.2 million. This means \$ 347.7 million in hard-earned taxpayer dollars were spent as almost an afterthought, after all the various budget areas had been “closed-out”. It should be noted that this year’s list contained significant additional funding for established statewide state government programs. It is understandable that there can be some money left over when negotiations are finished. Adding money to existing programs in this way, while certainly not the best budget practice, is not as bad as adding new projects, but these supplemental funding lists should be discontinued.

**Local Transportation Projects** – A few years ago, the Legislature created the Economic Development Transportation Projects program to fund transportation projects that promote economic development and growth. It became a way to simply add local transportation projects to the budget. After the House unsuccessfully attempted to repeal this program, the budget no longer has a line-item for the Road Fund and there is now a line-item simply called Local Transportation Projects. While this is a more truthful description, it also removes even the appearance of a selection process. Projects that are not part of the FDOT Work Program take scarce transportation dollars away from the vetted and comprehensively planned projects that are in the Work Program. If Local Transportation Projects are going to stay, a formal competitive selection process, with whatever criteria the Legislature sees fit, should be established. Most importantly, a set amount of funding should be established so FDOT may include it in the Work Program and the Legislature should not exceed that amount unless it uses general revenue to fund the additional cost. Florida TaxWatch recommends that the Legislature stop earmarking these projects to allow a process to decide which projects have the highest return on investment and to ensure they are considered within the state’s coordinated transportation planning process. **This year, the Governor recommended, along with a \$50 million appropriation, legislation to resurrect the Economic Development Transportation Projects (EDTP) program and strengthen the selection process and enhance accountability and project oversight. Not surprisingly, the Legislature was not interested. Florida TaxWatch recommends the Governor continue to propose that legislation, and the Legislature enact it.**

## FLORIDA TAXWATCH 2021-22 BUDGET TURKEYS

Florida TaxWatch offers this annual report to help the Governor in his deliberations. In addition to projects that qualify as Budget Turkeys, this report highlights other areas in the budget that contain numerous member projects that, while they do not qualify, certainly deserve close scrutiny by the Governor.

### CRITERIA

The Florida TaxWatch Budget Turkey criteria are clearly defined. Appropriations must violate sound budgeting practices in at least one of these ways to be designated as a Budget Turkey:

- A project that circumvents established review and selection processes or has completed the established process but is funded ahead of much higher priority projects (as determined by the selection process);
- Appropriations that are inserted in the budget during conference committee meetings, meaning they did not appear in either the final Senate or House budgets; and
- Appropriations from inappropriate trust funds; duplicative appropriations; and appropriations contingent on legislation that did not pass.

### THE PROJECTS

#### College & University Fixed Capital Outlay Projects

Two years ago, the Legislature strengthened the Public Education Capital Outlay (PECO) selection process of the Board of Governors (BOG) and the Division of Colleges for higher education construction projects. It created a point system to prioritize the projects with the focus on finishing projects that are already in the pipeline before adding new ones with significant future year funding needs—a long-time Florida TaxWatch recommendation. This year, in addition to appropriating \$35 million in PECO funds for college and university projects, \$29 million in General Revenue (GR) was added. In addition, \$190 million in federal funds from the American Rescue Plan were appropriated, contingent on the state receiving the money. In total, ten university and 20 colleges construction projects were funded. Of those, all university and all but three college projects were on the approved BOG and Division of College lists. Seven of the top nine university projects were fully funded, along with three others further down the priority list. The top five college projects were given the funds to be completed, almost fully funding the three-year priority list (with the exception of \$2.4 million for a project to begin in year 3. Since the budget does a relatively good job of funding the approved top priorities, in order to provide for legislative discretion, those projects further down the lists were not designated Budget Turkeys. The three projects below were not on the lists and the \$33 million appropriated for them could have instead closed out four of the next five highest college priorities. The \$25 million for Pasco-Hernando State College is twice what was requested.

#### PROJECTS IN THIS CATEGORY

AGENCY	LINE ITEM	PROJECT	GR	TF	H/S	COUNTY	HB	SEN FORM
DOE	20A	CHIPOLA COLLEGE—Repair/Renovation of Welding/Construction Trade Building		\$250,000	H/S	Jackson	3907	2030
DOE	S. 152	COLLEGE OF CENTRAL FLORIDA—Gym/Health Science Renovation	\$7,800,000		S	Marion		1745
DOE	S. 152	PASCO-HERNANDO STATE COLLEGE—Center for Student Success and Community Engagement	\$25,000,000		S	Pasco	3237	1979

### Agricultural Promotion and Education Facilities

Florida has a program (established in Section 288.1175, Florida Statutes) to allow local governments and fair associations to apply for state funding for facilities that can be used to promote agriculture in Florida, such as county fair agricultural exhibition halls. The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACS) is charged with reviewing applications, making sure projects qualify and ranking requests based on factors such as the proposed use of funds, the amount of local match, projected attendance, and history of the requester. This year, the department provided the Legislature with a ranked list of 16 construction projects that met the requirements for funding. Despite this process, the department does not request any money for these projects in its legislative budget request and the Governor did not recommend funding. The Legislature funded 17 projects worth \$10.2 million. Three of these projects were not part of the approved, prioritized list—thereby circumventing the process. While the other projects qualified for funding, the Governor should scrutinize them closely.

#### PROJECTS IN THIS CATEGORY

AGENCY	LINE ITEM	PROJECT	GR	TF	H/S	COUNTY	HB	SEN FORM
DACS	1463B	Hardee County Ag Educational Training Conference Center	\$630,000		S	Hardee	2241	1713
DACS	1463B	Hardee County Citrus Facility	\$16,000		H	Hardee	2667	
DACS	1463B	Madison County Agricultural and Expo Center	\$650,000		H	Madison	3003	1437

### Beach Projects

This was a good year for beach management projects. In addition to the normal \$50 million in recurring funding, there is an additional \$50 million in nonrecurring state funds and \$50 million in federal funds from the American Rescue Plan. The Florida Beach Management Funding Assistance Program provides and manages grants to local governments for the planning and implementation of beach and inlet management projects including beach restoration and nourishment, environmental studies and monitoring, inlet sand transfer, and dune restoration. These grants are reviewed and ranked in priority order and submitted to the Legislature, which this year provided \$150 million for approved projects. The projects below circumvented the grant application and ranking process. Both projects were vetoed last year.

#### PROJECTS IN THIS CATEGORY

AGENCY	LINE ITEM	PROJECT	GR	TF	H/S	COUNTY	HB	SEN FORM
DEP	1647A	Madeira Beach - Beach Groin Rehabilitation	\$1,750,000		H/S	Pinellas	2357	1100
DEP	1647B	Ponte Vedra Beach North Beach and Dune Restoration	\$3,500,000		S	St. Johns	3899	1057

## Local Parks

The Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP) is a state competitive grant program that allows local governments to apply for financial assistance grants to develop and/or acquire land for public outdoor recreational use. It is administered by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), which reviews the grants. This year the department submitted to the Legislature a ranked list of 40 small development projects totaling \$2.0 million and 43 large development projects totaling \$7.9 million. After fully funding both FRDAP lists last year, the Legislature funded the small project list this year, but not the large project list, providing \$2 million for approved projects. The Legislature appropriated \$5.8 million for 12 projects that were not approved through the process. DEP also administers three other grant programs that provide assistance for acquiring and developing land for conservation, parks and trails. One of these, the Land and Water Conservation Fund Program (a federal program administered by DEP), was appropriated \$13.8 million in federal funds in this budget that will be distributed competitively to local governments for acquisition or development of land for public outdoor recreation.

### PROJECTS IN THIS CATEGORY

AGENCY	LINE ITEM	PROJECT	GR	TF	H/S	COUNTY	HB	SEN FORM
DEP	1693A	Chattahoochee Mountain Bike Trail	\$50,000		S	Gadsden	2435	1432
DEP	1693A	Green Cove Springs Public Safety and River Access Project	\$300,000		H	Clay	2985	1482
DEP	1693A	Gulf Breeze Shoreline Park Wetlands Trail Boardwalk	\$492,595		H	Santa Rosa	2113	1851
DEP	1693A	Gulfport Linear Breakwater Park Project	\$735,000		S	Pinellas	2359	1472
DEP	1693A	Naples Botanical Garden - Horticulture Campus	\$750,000		H	Collier	2129	1064
DEP	1693A	Pahokee King Memorial Park Improvements	\$250,000		S	Palm Beach	2025	1959
DEP	1693A	Pembroke Park Community Gardens Solar Safety Lighting	\$50,000		S	Broward		1563
DEP	1693A	Pinellas County Gladys Douglas Property Acquisition	\$1,500,000		H	Pinellas	3487	1968
DEP	1693A	Town of Jay Bray-Hendricks Park Master Plan	\$300,000		H	Santa Rosa	3623	1831
DEP	1693A	Winter Park Mead Gardens ADA Accessible Nature Trail Improvements	\$95,000		S	Orange	2803	1628
DEO	2230A	Opa-Locka Parks and Recreation	\$100,000		H	Miami-Dade	3173	1780
DEO	2236A	City of Bonifay Memorial Field Improvements	\$1,000,000		S	Holmes	4015	1514

## Transportation Projects Not in the Work Program

The Legislature continues to fund an excessive (and growing) number of local member transportation projects that are not in the FDOT Work Program. The Turkey Watch report consistently flags these projects. The Work Program is developed jointly each year with metropolitan planning organizations, local governments, and the federal government. The Work Program is funded through the State Transportation Trust Fund (STTF) and spending those limited dollars on other projects can leave approved projects unfunded, negatively impacting the Work Program and Florida's coordinated, statewide transportation system. The Legislature created the Economic Development Transportation Projects (EDTP) program to give lawmakers some discretion to add projects that promote economic development and increase jobs.

FDOT, with input from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and Enterprise Florida are supposed to review the projects and give final approval. Florida law contains requirements and criteria for

evaluation; however, this fund simply became a way to get local projects in the budget. Beginning four sessions ago, when the House unsuccessfully attempted to eliminate the Road Fund, the budget no longer has a line-item for the Road Fund, but instead one simply called Local Transportation Projects. While this is a more truthful description, it also removes even the appearance of a selection process. This Local Transportation Projects line-item appears again this year, funding 65 projects at a cost of \$89.5 million. While this is fewer projects than last year, the total is \$8.2 million more.

For years, Florida TaxWatch has recommended that the Legislature stop earmarking these projects to allow the process to decide which projects have the highest return on investment and to ensure they are considered within the state’s coordinated transportation planning process. This year, the Governor recommended, along with a \$50 million appropriation, legislation to resurrect the EDTP and strengthen the selection process and enhance accountability and project oversight. Not surprisingly, the Legislature was not interested. Most of these projects are local roads, which the statutes do not authorize to fund from the STTF, except for specific programs such as the economic development transportation program. Some projects may not even qualify as transportation projects and others have other avenues to pursue funding. Three projects that were funded last year, and not vetoed, are not included on this list.

**PROJECTS IN THIS CATEGORY**

AGENCY	LINE ITEM	PROJECT	GR	TF	H/S	COUNTY	HB	SEN FORM
DOT	1915A	Belleair - Indian Rocks Roadway, Drainage, & Pedestrian Improvements		\$1,147,000	S	Pinellas	3507	1670
DOT	1915A	Best Foot Forward for Pedestrian Safety - Central Florida		\$100,000	H/S	Orange	2753	1409
DOT	1915A	Blount Streetscape Improvements Project - Pompano Beach		\$1,000,000	H/S	Broward	2933	1623
DOT	1915A	Blum Ambulatory Greene Cancer Center Road - Miami-Dade		\$3,650,000	S	Miami-Dade	3847	1427
DOT	1915A	Bonifay - Etheridge Street Roadway and Drainage Improvements		\$680,000	H	Holmes	4023	1511
DOT	1915A	Boynton Beach Town Square Enhanced Pedestrian Crossing		\$75,000	H	Palm Beach	2141	1990
DOT	1915A	C-21 Bridge/Lake Okeechobee Access - City of Clewiston		\$3,652,000	H/S	Hendry	3781	1682
DOT	1915A	Central Palm Beach County Historical Infrastructure Improvement		\$3,000,000	H	Palm Beach	2723	1381
DOT	1915A	Charlie Johns Street Traffic Signal - Blountstown		\$350,000	H/S	Calhoun	3051	1735
DOT	1915A	City of Crestview Downtown Streetscape Renovation		\$1,000,000	S	Okaloosa		2081
DOT	1915A	City of Miami Springs - South Royal Poinciana Median		\$1,000,000	H/S	Miami-Dade	3091	1009
DOT	1915A	City of Ocala SW 44th Avenue Expansion		\$1,000,000	H	Marion	2103	1361
DOT	1915A	City of Oldsmar - Douglas Road Improvement Project Phase 2		\$1,500,000	H/S	Pinellas	3059	1078
DOT	1915A	City of Pinellas Park Roadway Safety & Community Mobility Project		\$108,550	H/S	Pinellas	2513	1150
DOT	1915A	Coral Way (SR 972)/Granada Blvd Hardening/Intersection Imps - Coral Gables		\$375,000	H/S	Miami-Dade	3679	1920
DOT	1915A	Crosswalks to Classrooms - Tampa		\$350,000	H	Hillsborough	2495	2125
DOT	1915A	Crystal Lake Paving Improvements		\$750,000	H	Washington	4027	1905
DOT	1915A	DeFuniak Springs Airport Runway 9-27 Widening and Extension		\$650,000	S	Walton	4073	1536
DOT	1915A	Firehouse 1 Emergency Traffic Signal on SR 188 - Ocean City		\$150,000	S	Okaloosa	2975	1909
DOT	1915A	Florida Gulf & Atlantic Railroad Track Rehabilitation		\$740,000	H	Holmes, Washington	2705	2045

DOT	1915A	Fort Walton Beach - Lewis Turner Blvd Area Traffic Analysis		\$100,000	S	Okaloosa	2977	1524
DOT	1915A	Fort Walton Beach - Stormwater Imps on Martisa Road NW		\$500,000	S	Okaloosa	2997	1520
DOT	1915A	Freeport - South Jackson Street Improvements		\$312,000	S	Walton	4111	1823
DOT	1915A	Gainesville Regional Transit Eastside Transfer Station		\$300,000	S	Alachua	3309	1804
DOT	1915A	Green Mountain Connector - Lake		\$2,000,000	S	Lake	2387	1585
DOT	1915A	Gulf County Airport Infrastructure		\$500,000	S	Gulf	3043	2043
DOT	1915A	Hamilton School Entrance Signal Enhancement		\$200,000	S	Hamilton		1733
DOT	1915A	Jackson County Mashburn Road Pavement Completion Design		\$197,000	S	Jackson	4011	1515
DOT	1915A	Jewish Transportation - Rales Rides (JTRR)		\$150,000	S	Palm Beach	2093	1019
DOT	1915A	Lois Avenue Complete Streets Project - Tampa		\$350,000	H/S	Hillsborough	2311	1913
DOT	1915A	Ludlam Trail Corridor - Miami-Dade		\$1,000,000	S	Miami-Dade	2263	1138
DOT	1915A	Madeira Beach Roadway Improvements		\$549,400	H	Pinellas	2351	1034
DOT	1915A	Miami - Little Havana Pedestrian Priority Zones		\$3,000,000	S	Miami-Dade	3107	1886
DOT	1915A	Nassau CR 121 Phase I Repairs		\$9,000,000	S	Nassau		2094
DOT	1915A	Neighborhood Traffic Calming Plan Phase I - West Park		\$300,000	H/S	Broward	3749	1784
DOT	1915A	North Miami Beach - NE 153rd Street Roadway Improvement		\$495,000	S	Miami-Dade	2409	1176
DOT	1915A	North Ridge Trail - Polk		\$9,500,000	S	Polk		1845
DOT	1915A	Northeast Florida Greenway Trail		\$500,000	H/S	Clay	2989	1750
DOT	1915A	NW 89th Avenue Road and Drainage Improvements - Medley		\$400,000	S	Miami-Dade	2593	1008
DOT	1915A	NW 97th Avenue Road and Drainage Improvements - Medley		\$500,000	H	Miami-Dade	2595	1039
DOT	1915A	NW 99th Terrace Connector Roadway and Drainage - Medley		\$500,000	S	Miami-Dade	2597	1028
DOT	1915A	Okaloosa Live Oak Church Road Bridge and Intersection Imps		\$1,500,000	S	Okaloosa		2085
DOT	1915A	Old Town of Santa Rosa Regional Stormwater Mgt Facility/ Event Venue		\$1,200,000	H/S	Santa Rosa	4079	1992
DOT	1915A	PD&E and Design for Phase III of Philip Griffiths Sr. Parkway		\$2,000,000	S	Bay		2061
DOT	1915A	Sewall's Point Road Phase 2 - Sewall's Point		\$450,000	S	Martin		1701
DOT	1915A	Southwest Ranches Safety Guardrail - Apalooosa Trail		\$350,000	H/S	Broward	2071	1194
DOT	1915A	St. Cloud Seaplane Base		\$500,000	H/S	Osceola	3911	1902
DOT	1915A	St. Pete Beach Roadway Improvements		\$1,500,000	H/S	Pinellas	2353	1103
DOT	1915A	State Road A1A Corridor from Mickler Road to Marsh Landing Parkway		\$1,650,000	H	St Johns	3407	1098
DOT	1915A	Steel Mill Creek Road Roadway and Drainage Improvements - Laurel Hill		\$300,000	S	Okaloosa	3139	1822
DOT	1915A	Sunny Isles Beach Pedestrian Bridge - Collins Avenue at Gov Center		\$500,000	H	Miami-Dade	2499	1667
DOT	1915A	Tampa Bay Area Regional Transit Authority		\$1,500,000	S	Hillsborough	2037	2127
DOT	1915A	The Bluffs Entrance/Transportation Upgrades - Escambia		\$2,500,000	H/S	Escambia	2005	1796
DOT	1915A	The Underline Multi-Use/Multimodal Corridor - Miami-Dade		\$3,000,000	S	Miami-Dade	2789	1929
DOT	1915A	Traffic Calming Horace Mann Middle School		\$300,000	S	Miami-Dade	3737	1660
DOT	1915A	Transportation Disadvantaged Discounted Bus Passes		\$994,550	H	Palm Beach	2497	1468
DOT	1915A	Village of Royal Palm Beach - La Mancha Extension		\$450,000	S	Palm Beach	3469	1332
DOT	1915A	Washington County - Davidson Road Paving Improvements		\$1,062,627	S	Washington	4017	1818
DOT	1915A	Wekiva Trail Expansion		\$2,000,000	S	Lake		1588
DOT	1915A	Widening of Ortiz Avenue - Lee		\$2,175,000	S	Lee	2591	1910
DOT	1915A	Zephyrhills Municipal Airport - Runway 1-19 Extension		\$3,000,000	S	Pasco	2343	2020

### Acquisition, Restoration of Historic Properties

The Department of State has grant programs to fund historic preservation—Small Matching (up to \$50,000) and Special Category (up to \$500,000) grants. The Legislature funded the Small Matching list in its entirety, without earmarking other projects. The Legislature did not fund the Special Category grants. Instead, seven additional projects were earmarked. Two of those submitted applications and were recommended for Special Category grants and are therefore not on the list below. Two of the projects below were vetoed last year and the two New Smyrna Beach projects were added back by the sprinkle lists.

#### PROJECTS IN THIS CATEGORY

AGENCY	LINE ITEM	PROJECT	GR	TF	H/S	COUNTY	HB	SEN FORM
State	3081A	Historic Bush House Renovations - Crestview	\$250,000		S	Okaloosa	2981	2051
State	3081A	Jackson House Restoration - Tampa	\$500,000		S	Hillsborough	3759	1010
State	3081A	Old Fort Wall Stabilization & Restoration - New Smyrna Beach	\$900,000		S	Volusia		1573
State	3081A	Richloam Museum - Webster	\$100,000		S	Sumter	2083	1939
State	3081A	Women's Club Stabilization & Restoration - New Smyrna Beach	\$600,000		S	Volusia		1572

### Library Construction Grants

None of the 36 approved library construction projects on the ranked lists was funded, including 23 projects in Miami-Dade County.

AGENCY	LINE ITEM	PROJECT	GR	TF	H/S	COUNTY	HB	SEN FORM
State	3101A	Library Construction - Homestead	\$250,000		S	Miami-Dade	2517	1320

### Cultural and Museum Grants

The Legislature provided \$23.2 million for the Department of State 2021-2022 Cultural and Museum General Program Support Grants ranked list. This is about half of the request so the more than 500 recipients will receive proportionately reduced amounts. The Legislature also awarded six recipients that bypassed the competitive evaluation and prioritization process. Two of these will receive many times over what most of the approved grant recipients will receive. It is not surprising when an organization avoids the grant process and instead approaches a legislator to submit a request for funding. The Legislature did not fund any of the approved recipients in the Cultural Facilities Grants program but funded five other projects.

**PROJECTS IN THIS CATEGORY**

AGENCY	LINE ITEM	PROJECT	GR	TF	H/S	COUNTY	HB	SEN FORM
State	3107	200th Anniversary of the Raising of the American Flag in Pensacola	\$50,000		H/S	Escambia	2329	1674
State	3107	Bascom Museum and Cultural Center Renovation	\$15,000		S	Jackson	4007	1970
State	3107	Great Explorations Children's Museum Guest Experience Improvement - Pinellas	\$242,260		S	Pinellas		1036
State	3107	Sarasota Performing Arts Center - Resiliency-Focused Architecture and Design	\$284,000		S	Sarasota	2213	1106
State	3112A	Bascom Museum and Cultural Center Renovation	\$80,000		S	Jackson	4007	1970
State	3112A	Bringing Science Back to Life - Pinellas	\$500,000		S	Pinellas		2049
State	3112A	Hardee County Cracker Trail Museum & Pioneer Village Expansion	\$150,000		H	Hardee	2249	1712
State	3112A	Harry S. Truman Little White House Exterior Painting & Repair Project	\$250,000		H	Monroe	2317	1241
State	3112A	Outdoor Community Arts & Education (Ruth Eckerd Hall)	\$250,000		S	Pinellas	2155	1080

**Appropriations Added in Conference**

This appropriation below was added in the conference committee, meaning it was not in either the House and or Senate budget as passed by the respective chambers. Conference additions used to make up a large portion of the Budget Turkey list, but the appropriations (member) project reforms have limited such additions, since the inclusion of a member project that was not in either budget is supposed to make the budget out-of-order, but that issue has not been raised. It appeared the practice was starting to resurface as last year's budget had 12 projects added in conference, the most we have seen since the new rules. This year, no member projects were added during conference. But this project was, and it was added through the sprinkle lists. A new \$8 million project making its first appearance without comment at the very last minute of the budget negotiations puts it on our list. But it must be mentioned that Florida's manatees are in crisis, with more than 700 dying so far this year, a rate several times above normal. The federal government has begun an investigation into this "Unusual Mortality Event." The Governor's office should examine whether the plan for using these dollars meshes with the federal investigation, as well as the state's current restoration plans for springs (\$76 million provided this year) and other water resources.

**PROJECTS IN THIS CATEGORY**

AGENCY	LINE ITEM	PROJECT	GR	TF	H/S	COUNTY	HB	SEN FORM
DEP	1809A	Manatee Habitat Restoration	\$8,000,000		C	NA	NONE	NONE

**Projects Added Back to Budget by the Sprinkle Lists**

The appropriations below were added back to the budget through the sprinkle lists after they had been removed earlier in conference. While many projects had their appropriation increased significantly in the sprinkle lists, the below projects would not have received funding without being added at the very last minute. Some of these projects appear in other sections of the Budget Turkey Report, but they are only counted once in the item and dollar totals.

**PROJECTS IN THIS CATEGORY**

AGENCY	LINE ITEM	PROJECT	GR	TF	H/S	COUNTY	HB	SEN FORM
DCF	310A	4Kids of South Florida - Foster Family Recruitment	\$750,000		S	Statewide	3375	1779
DCF	310A	ChildNet - Preventing Opioid /Sub Abuse Based Removals	\$360,000		S	Broward	3453	1308
DCF	310A	Florida Caregiving Youth Expansion	\$250,000		H/S	Palm Beach	2617	1232
DCF	323A	Guardians for New Futures 4Kids Advocacy Center Facility	\$1,351,230		S	St. Lucie	3271	1704
DCF	345	HOPE Mission Center (Helping Our People Everyday)	\$100,000		H/S	Miami-Dade	3843	1470
DCF	345	Zebra Coalition - Youth Housing Project	\$50,000		S	Orange	3657	1933
DCF	356A	Zebra Coalition youth transitional housing project	\$700,000		S	Orange	3657	1933
DOH	444	Nova Southeastern University - Clinic-Based Outreach	\$3,500,000		S	Broward	2009	1000
DOH	444	St. John Bosco Clinic	\$300,000		S	Miami-Dade	2419	1088
DJJ	1187A	Pace Center for Girls, Hernando Building	\$3,500,000		S	Hernando	2337	1941
DLE	1208A	Liberty County Jail Improvements	\$1,000,000		S	Liberty		2132
DLE	1244	Jefferson Co. Sheriff's Emergency Communication System	\$1,200,000		S	Jefferson	3001	1436
DEP	1607A	Hialeah Water and Sewer Capital Improvement Project	\$935,000		S	Miami-Dade	3393	1147
DEP	1607A	Lauderhill Southeast Water Service Project	\$250,000		S	Broward	3765	1684
DEP	1607A	Margate Utilities Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition	\$500,000		S	Broward	2203	1687
DEP	1693A	Gulfport Linear Breakwater Park Project	\$735,000		S	Pinellas	2359	1472
DEP	1693A	Winter Park Mead Gardens ADA Accessible Nature Trail	\$95,000		S	Orange	2803	1828
DOT	1915A	Blount Streetscape Improvements Project - Pompano Beach		\$1,000,000	H/S	Broward	2933	1623
DOT	1915A	City of Miami Springs - South Royal Poinciana Median		\$1,000,000	H/S	Miami-Dade	3091	1009
DEO	2191A	Florida Ready to Work	\$1,000,000		S	Statewide	2837	1636
State	3081A	Old Fort Wall Stabilization & Restoration - New Smyrna B	\$900,000		S	Volusia		1573
State	3081A	Women's Club Stabilization & Restoration - New Smyrna B	\$600,000		s	Volusia		1572

## Other Projects Recommended for Scrutiny by Governor

The member projects below do not qualify as Budget Turkeys because they followed the appropriations project rules, were not added in conference, and there is no established selection process for these projects (see Recommendations); however, they are areas that have historically contained numerous member projects that deserve special scrutiny.

**Water Projects (DEP 1607A)** – Restoration and protection of Florida’s valuable water resources has become a top priority for the Governor DeSantis and the Legislature, as evidenced by increased funding and this session’s newly created dedicated revenue source for the Wastewater Grant Program. That program was created last year and funded with \$25 million. Legislation in 2021 now provides \$116 million annually (will change as documentary stamp tax collections change) for this competitive grant program. The legislation also provides \$116 million annually to the new Resilient Florida Grant Program. Under the program, DEP must submit an annual Statewide Flooding and Sea Level Rise Resilience Plan that includes recommended projects for funding to address risks from flooding and sea level rise. Using a scoring system, DEP will assess projects for inclusion in the plan. The budget also allocates \$500 million in federal funds from the American Rescue Plan (ARP) to each of the two programs. The budget includes additional water quality funding of more than \$625 million, plus long-standing local assistance programs such as \$211 million for wastewater treatment facility construction, \$247 million for drinking water facility construction loans and \$36 million for small county wastewater treatment grants. Despite this, the Legislature continues to earmark scores of local water projects that are submitted as member projects, without a formal, competitive selection process. This contrary to the Governor’s and the Blue-Green Algae Task Force’s recommendation that funding for projects should be determined using the best scientific data to ensure that limited funds for a massive need be spent where they will get the best return on investment. Florida TaxWatch has continually recommended in this report a formal grants process, with review and prioritization by experts, for local water projects. This year, the budget contains 128 projects worth \$116.6 million—a record dollar amount. This includes many wastewater and resiliency projects that could potentially receive money through the new grant programs. The Legislature allocated \$25 million in federal ARP funds specifically for septic-to-sewer conversions. This line-item contains a number of those projects as well. Many of these water projects are usually vetoed and we are confident the Governor will give this new crop a very close look, particularly with the new programs and all the other money available.

**Housing and Community Development Projects DEO 2236A/2230A** – 23 projects worth \$24.5 million, down from 40 projects last year but the total price tag is bit higher. This line-item has become a bit of a catch-all for different types of member projects. Projects include \$4.7 million for expansion of a tennis center that opened only eight months ago, an aquarium, parks, sports and recreations projects, historic preservation, a dump truck, new sound and lighting systems for an auditorium, an airport business park, and several local government public buildings. One town, with a population of approximately 250, is getting a community center and a new city hall (along with a new fire station in another part of the budget). Many of the projects in this line-item could have been funded in other places in the budget. All are projects that a local community would love to have, but are they things the state should be funding, especially considering the federal funding local governments have received and will receive? Many of the recipients are small, fiscally

constrained counties for which funding projects such as these is difficult, but if the Legislature wants to have a program to fund these types of projects, a better selection process is needed.

**Economic Development Projects (DEO 2245A)** – Four projects worth \$1.6 million. This line item has tightened up in the last couple of years, with most of the projects seeming to have more of a clear economic development focus.

**Work Force Projects (DEO 2191A/2198A)** – Ten projects worth \$4.2 million. These are in addition to \$262 million in the budget for local workforce development boards. The Legislature significantly revamped the states workforce development system this session. Do these projects fit that new focus?

**School and Instructional Enhancements (DOE 110)** – 43 projects worth \$22.9 million, in addition to ten projects worth \$12 million that have become recurring base projects. This is generally funding for private organizations to provide educational services and programs. There is no formal selection or competitive bid process and no requirements for performance and school districts have discretionary revenue to fund some of these types of programs if they see fit.

**Various Non-State Fixed Capital Outlay** – There is more than \$100 million in the budget for approximately 100 member projects for private organizations and local governments to construct, renovate, repair, or even purchase buildings/facilities the state does not/will not own. This is only a portion of the \$1.4 billion appropriated under the category Grants and Aids to Local Governments and Nonstate Entities - Fixed Capital Outlay (which include hundreds of millions of dollars in environmental projects. Governors have vetoed some of this fixed capital outlay spending because local government facilities are a local responsibility and there is no clear statewide return on investment for constructing, maintaining, or renovating privately-owned facilities.

**Nonstate Entities - Fixed Capital Outlay** — Governors have vetoed some of this fixed capital outlay spending because local government facilities are a local responsibility and there is no clear statewide return on investment for constructing, maintaining or renovating privately-owned facilities.

**Local Law Enforcement Special Projects (FDLE 1244/1249A)** – Twelve projects worth \$5.0 million, half of which are fixed capital outlay.

**DFS 2146A - Local Fire Service (DFS 2377A and 2371A)** – Fourteen projects worth \$11.3 million, including ten fixed capital outlay projects worth \$7.6 million.

## ABOUT FLORIDA TAXWATCH

As an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit taxpayer research institute and government watchdog, it is the mission of Florida TaxWatch to provide the citizens of Florida and public officials with high quality, independent research and analysis of issues related to state and local government taxation, expenditures, policies, and programs. Florida TaxWatch works to improve the productivity and accountability of Florida government. Its research recommends productivity enhancements and explains the statewide impact of fiscal and economic policies and practices on citizens and businesses.

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### RESEARCH PROJECT TEAM


Tony Carvajal	Executive Vice President	
Kurt Wenner	Sr. VP of Research	Lead Researcher & Author
Chris Barry	VP of Communications & External Affairs	Design, Layout, Publication


All Florida TaxWatch research done under the direction of Dominic M. Calabro, President, CEO, Publisher & Editor.



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Florida TaxWatch  
106 N. Bronough St.  
Tallahassee, FL 32301

o: 850.222.5052  
f: 850.222.7476

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