

COUNTY MANAGER'S

# **PROGRESS REPORT For 2000**

**On Your Investment  
In County Government**



January 2001

**BREVARD COUNTY  
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

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## **Introduction**

On behalf of the Board of County Commissioners, and in accordance with the Brevard County Administrative Code, this Progress Report is being provided on the work of County Government for 2000.

The first major challenge to the New Millennium was County Government's highly successful response to Y2K. Through comprehensive planning and preparation there were no disruptions to public services, and projected problems were avoided.

Preparing Brevard County to position itself as a World Class community continued to be the priority of the Board of County Commissioners. This annual Progress Report provides our residents an update on those efforts.



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## **Improving the Economy**

- Brevard County, through its tax incentives program for new and expanding businesses, assisted (12) twelve companies during 2000. The twelve (12) companies in turn committed to creating 2,400 new jobs and making over \$71.3 million in capital investments in Brevard County.

To position Brevard to compete in the worldwide marketplace the County Commission in partnership with the Economic Development Commission of Florida's Space Coast, is undertaking the following:

- The competitive characteristics of the leading high tech communities in the U.S. have been identified, and action plans are being formulated to ensure those qualities are present here in Brevard. These include a skilled labor pool, hardware infrastructure, research centers, and higher educational facilities, supportive public policy, industry networking groups, and the availability of venture capital.
- The Brevard County Commission continues to promote regional economic development cooperation. Talks between County Commissioners of six counties in Florida and a number of Chambers of Commerce have lead to a joint agreement to fund a cooperative study of East Central Florida economies to position Central Florida to compete as a leader in world markets.

## **Protecting Your Environment**

- The Brevard County Surface Water Improvement Program:
  - Constructed \$1,910,895 in projects focusing on water quality of the Indian and St. Johns Rivers, and flood control.
  - Assisted the town of Malabar in implementing a stormwater utility. The County's Surface Water Improvement Program now manages utilities for Malabar, Melbourne, and West Melbourne in addition to the unincorporated county.
  - Was selected the first place winner for the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) 2000 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Program for Storm Water Control Excellence Award. The program was nominated for the award by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.
- A Project Cooperative Agreement was signed with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to restore and maintain 13 miles of Brevard County's beaches for 50 years. The project includes beaches in the Cities of Cape Canaveral, Cocoa Beach, Indialantic, Melbourne Beach and unincorporated areas.

- \$11 million in Federal funding was spent on the renourishment of Brevard's beaches. This amount was matched by \$3.3 million in State grants and \$3.3 million in Tourist Development Council (TDC) funds.
- \$77,000 in grant funds were received to construct manatee education and boating safety kiosks at various parks, and boat ramps.
- \$159,170 in grant money was received to remove exotic plants from 200 acres on north Merritt Island.
- Successfully implemented a program to place monofilament recycling structures and collection bins at 67 locations including launch ramps, fishing piers, and bait and tackle shops.



- Comprehensive Plan's Coastal Element was adopted which will provide for greater protection and conservation of natural resources, including air pollution, alternative energy source use, land development practices that encourage maintenance of air quality, surface water protections, unique natural vegetative communities, and imperiled animals such as manatees, scrub jays, gopher tortoises, indigo snakes, wading birds and endangered plants.

## Public Safety

- Public Safety is meeting its commitments to implement the components funded by the Firefighter Support Referendum.



- Sixty (60) Firefighters have been hired to ensure that all engines are staffed with three (3) Firefighters. All engines were provided the necessary equipment, supplies and medicines to provide ALS (Advanced Life Support) services.

- An in-house Paramedic program was successfully conducted which resulted in thirty-eight (38) existing Firefighter Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT's) becoming Paramedic certified.



- State of the art "12 lead EKGs" were purchased and provided to each engine for ALS service, which will assist Paramedics in determining cardiac arrest. This information is simultaneously transmitted to the hospital to determine appropriate treatment.
- A contract to purchase twenty (20) high quality American LaFrance fire engines over a five (5) year period was executed in 2000. The County will receive 4 (four) new engines annually. The first 4 (four) have already been placed into service.
- The fire stations in most need of renovation or replacement have been identified. Station 41 on Alma Boulevard on Merritt Island is being demolished and rebuilt. Station 44 on SR 520 in West Cocoa is receiving an extensive interior modification and several other stations will receive minor to moderate renovations.

- Since the wildfires in 1998, many improvements have been made to Brevard County Fire Rescue (BCFR):

- Approximately one hundred (100) BCFR Firefighters have received their "Red Card" Wildfire Certification by the Division of Forestry.
- All Firefighters have been provided with lightweight wildfire gear.

- The Mosquito Control Department has outfitted its two (2) helicopters to perform water bucket drops in support of fire ground operations. In addition, they have recently acquired a fixed wing aircraft, which is capable of performing 400 gallon water drops.
  - BCFR Fleet Services has added nine (9) additional brush trucks to the service bringing the total available to twenty (20).
  - Float-A-Pumps have been provided to all front line engines as an additional resource to draw water from various water sources.
  - County staff has applied for (and expects to receive) approximately \$660,000 in grant funding to improve Firefighter access (wells, etc.) to water in wildland urban interface/intermix areas.
  - Solid Waste tankers have been outfitted with fire pumps with standard fire hose connections to ensure they could be optimally utilized in future wildfire events.
  - Average ambulance response time improved from 6.83 to 6.25 minutes.
- Brevard County Ocean Lifeguards competed in five (5) lifeguard competitions during the 2000 lifeguard season. Brevard County hosted and won 1st place in the Basic Life Support (BLS) Challenge 2000 in May. Additionally, Brevard County had a National winner in the “Beach Flag Relay” category at the National Ocean Lifeguard Competition in California. These competitions raise the level of skill and responsiveness of current lifeguards. Overall, Brevard County Lifeguards were ranked 5th in the state. Hosting competitions also serves as a recruitment tool to attract new lifeguards to the service.



## Animal Enforcement Services

- North Animal Care Center (NACC) began an aggressive adoption program, which included changing the hours of operation. New hours are 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM, six days a week.
- Added a part-time veterinarian to the North Shelter to neuter all animals adopted, and to administer vaccines and conduct health checks on all animals at NACC.
- Established a position for an Outreach Officer who will conduct in-school and public speaking programs on bite prevention, animal cruelty, animal laws and humane education.
- Established beach patrol using All Terrain Vehicles (ATV) to better address violations on the beaches.
- Added a third shift of two (2) officers to extend service hours until midnight Monday through Friday.
- Established an automated mail-merge system to send out reminders for renewal of animal license tags, that will increase revenues generated by the animal tag program.
- Increased the number of retail outlets for citizens to purchase animal license tags.
- Automated data, research and collection with the purchase and installation of the Chameleon database program which has reduced time spent by officers on the phones, and enhanced ability to research data; incident reports completed and stored within minutes as opposed to hours.



## Transportation

- A \$99 million, ten (10) year road improvement plan was adopted. Engineers are now preparing preliminary engineering reports for ten (10) road projects. Twenty-one (21) other road related projects are either under design or under construction, as well as thirty-three (33) other minor transportation related projects. A \$40 million bond issue for twenty-one (21) projects was completed using Gas Tax funds.

- A Greenways and Trails Master Plan is being developed by the Brevard Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The plan will identify access for alternative transportation, recreation, conservation, and public facilities for user groups including bicyclists, hikers, and equestrians while being sensitive to the natural and developed environment.

- Projects completed by the Public Works Department, Traffic Engineering Section include—

- Eber Road Pedway Project: from Dairy Road to Minton Road
- Modified and repaired Air Force Wharf at Canaveral Air Force Station
- Wickham Road and Post Road: Left turn lane
- John Rodes Boulevard and Eau Gallie Boulevard: Right turn lane



- Port St. John Parkway East: I-95 to Grissom Road
- US 1 and Broadway Boulevard Pedway Project
- Main Street at SR 46 Pedway Project
- Central Boulevard/Allen Street/Main Street Pedway and Drainage Project
- Rena Avenue Pedway: Bridge Road to Miramar Street
- Dairy Road South widening project: Palm Bay Road to US 192



Space Coast Area Transit (SCAT)

- Obtained the largest Commuter Assistance grant (\$185,000) in its history to promote private ride sharing and transportation to work.



- Redesigned computer web site to allow service requests, commuter assistance and vanpool service requests to be processed via the web.



- Created Spanish language ads, including Spanish language on the new web site.

- Provided low cost alternative transportation, using existing fixed route, to schools for after-hours tutoring programs and school day environmental events where School Bus service is not available.



- Developed a Transportation Management Program for the Brevard Job Link to supply transportation to clients to access Welfare to Work job training, child care, employment and other related transportation needs.

- Obtained Florida Department of Transportation Grant to implement new Trolleybus service for Cocoa Beach/Cape Canaveral.

- Provided Park & Ride Transportation to community events such as:

- Seafest at Port Canaveral
- Melbourne Art Festival
- City of Cocoa Millennium Street Party
- City of Cocoa Mardi Gras
- Brevard County Fair's Senior Day
- Brevard Zoo's Boo at the Zoo
- Cocoa Beach Surf Festival

- Added an additional fixed route bus in the City of Palm Bay.

## Providing for Health and Social Needs

- Established in 2000, the Commission on Aging has identified issues that are important to the overall quality of life for our elders. Task force groups have been established to further examine each of the issues and to identify and prioritize recommendations on how Brevard County can take a proactive approach to planning for the current and future needs of this increasing elder population.
- The Together in Partnership planning committee, submitted an interim plan with recommendations to enhance Brevard's ability to reduce juvenile crime. After a series of Community Workshops and review of the community baseline for risk and protective factors, Family Management and Early School Failure were identified as priority predictors of adolescent problem behavior in Brevard. The County's Juvenile Justice Planner continues to coordinate efforts to implement those recommendations and provide the community with a final 3-5 year strategic plan to reduce those priority adolescent problem behaviors and subsequently, juvenile crime in Brevard.
- A five (5) year Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Consolidated Plan which anticipates bringing \$26,000,000 to Brevard County over the next five (5) years was completed. Urban County agreements were signed with eleven (11) municipalities to increase the amount of federal funds the County will receive over the next three (3) years.
- \$1,505,978 in Federal Funding was spent on capital improvements, demolition and clearing, public services agencies, acquisition of land to construct affordable housing and economic development.
- The Harry T. Moore Center project was awarded a HUD Local Best Practice Award for obtaining multiple funding sources and leveraging funds needed to restore the Harry T. Moore Center. This center is used as a Daycare/Head Start facility, which provides parent education, a community meeting room, teen meeting room and a neighborhood playground. The center serves 1,500+ people per year.
- Brevard County Housing and Community Development Program received a HUD local Best Practice Award for the continued efforts of the Brevard County HOME Consortium. The Consortium consists of the following members: Brevard County and the cities of Palm Bay, Melbourne, Cocoa, and Titusville.



- Federal funds were used to assist seventy-six (76) first time homebuyers with down payments and closing costs, repairs to fifty (50) homes, four (4) replacement homes, and the construction of two (2) group homes for the developmentally disabled.
- \$101,745 in grant money was awarded to assist the homeless in their immediate need for housing.
- Money was redirected to allow for the expansion of the Primary Access to Health Care Clinic (PATH) in the North and South areas of the county. The clinic provides free medical services, to clients below 100% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines, as well as being the medical home for uninsured clients needing acute and episodic care, and clients with chronic health conditions. Besides providing free medical care, lab services are provided at no charge and all the hospitals provide free diagnostic services. Medication is also available at a reduced rate.

## **Leisure Services for Residents and Visitors**

### **Parks & Recreation**

- Voters approved a referendum which provides \$73 million to improve and expand parks facilities throughout the County.
- Spessard Holland Golf Course was fully renovated, dramatically improving the appearance and condition of this public golf facility.
- Space Coast Communities Sports Complex, Port St. John Community Center and Fay Lakes Wilderness Park (Phase 1), funded by the Port St. John Parks Referendum, were opened.
- Major improvements were made to the following parks: Bonsteel, Coconut, Paradise Beach, Long Point, Wickham, McLarty, Stradley, Raider, Travis, Rockledge, Kelly East, Kiwanis Island, Woody Simpson, Joe Lee Smith, Cherie Down, and North Merritt Island Little League.



## Environmentally Endangered Lands Program

- The Environmentally Endangered Lands Program (EEL) acquired 1,645+ acres of land in 2000. The Brevard Coastal Scrub Ecosystem CARL project boundary was increased by 9,500 ± acres.



- \$1,128,560 in acquisition reimbursement funds were received from the State.

- Land acquisition projects included additional acres to: Mullet Creek Islands, Micco Scrub Sanctuary, Brevard Coastal Scrub Ecosystem Conservation and Recreation Lands project.

- \$240,417 in matching grants were awarded by the state for scrub restoration.

- Prescribed burning was conducted on 192 acres of EEL's land to manage and restore natural habitats.

- Restoration projects were initiated at: Buck Lake Conservation Area, Dicerandra Scrub, Malabar Scrub and Jordan Scrub Sanctuaries.

- Design of the Environmental Education Center at the Enchanted Forest Sanctuary continues. Ground breaking is anticipated by mid-year 2001.

- City of Palm Bay and County EEL Program agreed to partner on a project to construct a new 600 foot boardwalk at the Turkey Creek Sanctuary.

- Area residents participated in developing a public access plan for the Malabar Scrub Sanctuary including, trails for hiking, biking and horseback riding.

- The Pine Island Conservation Area which is a joint property of three (3) agencies, will open in 2001.



- \$140,417 in Grant money was awarded by the state's Bureau of Invasive Plant Management for pepper tree removal.

- \$75,000 in matching funds were awarded to the EEL Program by the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) to develop public access trails at two (2) barrier island sanctuaries.

## Library Services

- The nonprofit Brevard Library Foundation was announced with its first annual fund raising event—“A Novel Affair”. The Foundation was established to raise funds to enhance existing public funding.
- The Adult Literacy Program was expanded to include Family Literacy through two (2) State Grants. This is intended to break down the intergenerational cycle of illiteracy.
- 138,664 new books were added to the Library Systems book collection. Over 1 million books are now available in the countywide system ranking Brevard fifth in the State.
- Renovation and additions for the Melbourne Beach, Port St. John and Suntree/Viera Public Libraries are currently being designed.
  - Melbourne Beach Public Library is currently being designed. The new library will be 15,000 sq. costing \$1.875 million.
  - Port St. John Public Library will renovate 9000 sq. ft. and add an additional 6,000 sq. ft. at a cost of \$1.425 million.
  - Suntree/Viera Public Library is relocating. The new building will be 15,000 sq. ft. costing \$1.813 million.



## Improving Community Appearance

- Five (5) existing billboards were removed due to code violations, site improvements and hurricane damage.
- During this budget year, Code Enforcement created the Strategic Neighborhood Abatement & Revitalization Project (SNARP) to clean up, restore, and eliminate code violations including unsafe structures. Designed as a cooperative effort between Code Enforcement and neighborhoods, the initial project began with the West Cocoa Homeowners Association. Code Enforcement Officers and residents walked door to door distributing over 350 flyers asking residents to dispose of all accumulated trash,

debris and junked vehicles that were in violation of County Codes. Nearly 92% of all violations were abated and Western Waste Industries removed fifteen (15) tons of trash and debris. In November, a similar operation was conducted in East Mims where Western Waste Industries removed over 42 tons of trash and debris.

- Various landscape projects were completed by Landscape Operations. The landscaping of the Port St. John Parkway and Grissom Road & SR 405 medians was completed in North Brevard. The SR 405/US1 Department of Transportation Grant which supported landscaping and irrigation was completed in October, 2000. In December 2000, Merritt Park Place on Merritt Island was irrigated and landscaped.

## **Public Access**

- Information/Communication Systems migrated to a new host domain: "countygovt.brevard.fl.us". Related efforts went into increasing web-pages and upgrading standards to start building an e-Government infrastructure.
- Planning began to create a Citizens Academy in Brevard County. The inaugural class is expected to be held in the summer of 2001.
- Space Coast Government Television (SCGTV) provides information to the public 24 hours per day/ 7 days per week. This includes live and tape-delayed broadcasts of County Commission Meetings, County Advisory Board Meetings; Palm Bay, Titusville and Cocoa City Council Meetings; and live School Board Meetings. In addition, SCGTV broadcasts County public information programs profiling programs and services, the Florida Legislative Session (March through May), certain Florida Supreme Court Oral Arguments, and live election results coverage. SCGTV serves 160,000+ households.



## **Financial Management**

- Property taxes were reduced in Fiscal Year 2000 from the previous year.
- A state of the art Budget preparation software system developed and used by Sacramento County, California was adapted by the Budget Office for use here. This achieved a \$150,000 cost avoidance by not buying off the shelf software.

- Reimbursement requests to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for damages, resulting from Hurricanes Floyd and Irene, totaled approximately \$8.75 million. These funds reimbursed the County for storm-related expenses.
- An ordinance was passed granting the Senior Citizen Homestead Exemption that will provide tax relief for qualified low income senior citizens in Brevard County.
- The Budget Office was awarded the Government Finance Officer Association's (GFOA) Distinguished Budget Presentation award.

### **In Pursuit of Excellence**

- Continuous Improvement remains a major initiative. The practices used in Continuous Improvement include: emphasizing quality customer service, receiving customer input; measuring employee performance; enforcing employee accountability; emphasizing teamwork and employee training; empowering employees with responsibility and decision-making authority; recognizing and rewarding outstanding employee performance; involving residents in identifying their needs and finding solutions; and using state of the art technology.
- The year 2000 brought an expanded commitment to Strategic Planning to ensure and enhance the quality of life for Brevard residents.
- Continuing progress was made on achieving the goals in the Strategic Plan and Growth Management Comprehensive Plan.
- The first annual monitoring report on 63 Community Quality of Life measurements was issued.
- Numerous awards were received by County agencies and employees for innovative and outstanding performance.

## **Challenges for 2001**

Many of the initiatives of 2000 will continue in 2001. Efforts to improve the quality of life in Brevard County continue as a priority.

The local economy continues to prosper, with high tech companies growing and expanding. Developing public policy that will support that trend, and working to provide the necessary support structure for quality economic growth will be priorities.

Identifying funding for infrastructure and program needs of the County continues to present the biggest challenge. Many of these needs were not resolved in 2000 and include:

- Additional road and bridge improvements
- Additional jail space
- Sheriff's Precinct Building in South Mainland
- Courthouse expansion
- Expansion of the Emergency Operations Center
- New animal shelter in North Brevard
- Expansion of the capacity of FMIS (Financial Management Information System)
- Additional salt water boat ramps
- Additional funding for law enforcement services
- Additional funding to provide competitive salaries to retain experienced Firefighters and Paramedics
- Additional staffing for Animal Services & Enforcement
- Funding to operate and expand libraries

## **In Closing**

This Progress Report provides the highlights of the year's accomplishments. It is also important to recognize that the 23 (twenty-three) departments and offices under the jurisdiction of the Board of County Commissioners provide a wide range of quality services on a daily basis. Here are some examples of County Government "routine" activities:

- Number of books checked out from libraries: 3.66 million
- Number of compliance verification inspections performed: 720
- Number of hazardous waste small quantity generator inspections: 433
- Number of petroleum related matters requiring assistance: 3750
- Number of Natural Resources Environmental permit applications reviewed: 5200
- Number of phone in and walk in customers assisted in Environmental Permitting: 2000
- Number of cubic yards of sand placed onto Brevard County beaches: 1.1 million
- Rounds of golf played at County golf courses: 132,529
- Number of linear feet of recreational trails installed: 35,338
- Tons of trash removed from Environmentally Endangered Lands (EEL) sanctuaries: 21
- Number of acres of invasive plants treated: 330
- Number of volunteers in EEL Program: 330
- Number of smoke detectors provided to citizens in need: 350
- Number of volunteer hours donated to SCAT to service the frail and elderly: 7,200
- Number of SCAT Vanpool fleet vehicles in service: 106
- Number of SCAT trips made during FY2000: 927,264
- Number of calls for Brevard Animal Services Enforcement (BASE) assistance: 29,312
- Number of bite investigations: 1721
- Number of animals shipped for rabies testing: 62
- Number testing positive for rabies: 5 (3 bat, 2 racoon)
- Number of wildlife transported by BASE vehicles: 2,262





## A COMMUNITY WHICH EXCELS AND IS RECOGNIZED FOR...

- ◆ PROVIDING FOR THE HEALTH, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL NEEDS OF OUR CITIZENS;
- ◆ PROTECTING AND CONSERVING OUR VALUABLE NATURAL RESOURCES;
- ◆ SUSTAINING A STRONG AND DIVERSE ECONOMIC BASE TO FINANCIALLY SUPPORT A QUALITY LIFESTYLE;
- ◆ CREATING COOPERATIVE PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN GOVERNMENT, BUSINESS, COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS AND OUR RESIDENTS.

## OUR MISSION

CONTRIBUTE TO ENHANCING AND ENSURING BREVARD'S QUALITY OF LIFE...TODAY AND ALWAYS!

## OUR VALUES

- |                  |              |
|------------------|--------------|
| ◆ HONESTY        | ◆ LEADERSHIP |
| ◆ ACCOUNTABILITY | ◆ OPENNESS   |
| ◆ QUALITY        | ◆ INNOVATION |

