



REALTOR® ASSOCIATION
of Sarasota and Manatee

Public Policy Guide

REALTOR® ASSOCIATION OF SARASOTA AND MANATEE
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General Policies
Amended January 2015

Section 9. Public Policy (Adopted July 16, 1997; Revised April 13, 2015)

A. Land Use/Development

- a. Private Property Rights: We support the preservation of private property rights.
- b. Downzoning: We oppose any “downzoning” or a reduction of economic value without compensation to property owners.
- c. Notification: We support adequate notifications of any property owner whose property may be affected by changes proposed by government regulations.
- d. Eminent Domain: We support legislative or administrative actions that would effectively keep compensation to owners of condemned property to an amount which is equal to the full present market value of the full interest in the property being taken and the costs to cure if applicable. Further, we support the original definition of “Public Use” for schools, roads, parks and public buildings and oppose expanding that definition to include “Public Benefit.”
- e. Development Costs: We support reasonable development costs which will contribute a fair and reasonable portion of the cost of providing public services and infrastructure.
- f. Planning Efforts: We support planning efforts that focus on infill and redevelopment that incorporates the principles of sustainability in mixed use, transportation, health and the environment. To encourage infill and redevelopment projects, we support more flexible density and intensity land use decisions within the Urban Service Boundary Area. We support and encourage community dialogue regarding land use decisions and will encourage our membership to participate in those discussions. Our support is blended with the interest of private property rights to develop land within allowable uses as spelled out in comprehensive land use maps.
- g. Planning Amendments: We support development outside the Urban Service Boundary Area that would expand employment opportunities, expand the tax base and follow the principles of sustainability and enhance the quality of life in Sarasota and Manatee Counties.
- h. Moratorium: We oppose moratoria which affect construction except where the imminent health, safety and welfare of the public is endangered.

B. Taxation

- a. Transfer Taxes: We oppose Transfer Taxes on real property. We will not support an increase to the current Transfer Taxes and will work with other associations and industries to oppose such taxes.
- b. Services Taxes: We oppose professional service taxes.
- c. New Taxes: We oppose new taxes without demonstrated need and elimination of waste in current revenues. We will consider supporting alternative forms of financing necessary services and facilities, consistent with other policies and which are broad-based taxes that include all potential users of the service or facility. We are committed to working with other recognized business partners and will consider their needs and recommendations when requested to support or oppose any new governmental revenues.

C. Environment

- a. Sustainability: Our natural environment is a key element to the quality of life in Florida. We support the principles of sustainable development. We will educate our membership on the benefits of sustainable development and construction practices. We support efforts that incentivize sustainable development and redevelopment rather than governmental mandates.
- b. Energy Sources: We support and encourage the use, development and ownership of alternative energy sources for homes, businesses and transportation.
- c. Water Conservation: We support efforts that encourage water conservation, the development of additional water resources that have no negative impacts on the natural environment; and water mitigation plans that protect and enhance natural habitats and appropriate uses for water supplies.
- d. Incentives: We support these efforts to meet sustainable principles through the use of incentives or encouraging private market efforts rather than the imposition of government mandates.

D. Infrastructure

- a. We support the orderly development and maintenance of infrastructure systems in an economically responsible manner.

E. Landlord/Tenant

- a. Rent Control: We oppose rent control of any kind.
- b. Rental Housing Code: We oppose a separate rental housing code.

F. Government Budgets

- a. Financing: City and county services should be financed through 100% cost recovery user fees to fairly distribute the cost to the beneficiaries of the services.
- b. Spending: We support reasonable efforts to control government spending through the reductions in collected revenues. We support tax policy that encourages private investment and economic growth.

G. General

- a. Business Growth: We encourage the fostering and continued success of existing businesses and recruitment of new businesses to Sarasota and Manatee Counties, such as providing incentives and efficient permitting processes.
- b. Mandatory Inspection: We oppose any ordinance that would mandate any form of home inspection or code compliance as a prerequisite to the sale, transfer or exchange of real property.
- c. Signs: We support reasonable sign ordinances that allow REALTORS® to effectively market property.
- d. Ordinances - Legal Liability: We oppose state, county or city ordinances which may cause legal liability for REALTORS® based on unreasonable disclosure.

H. State Government Issues

Generally, we will support legislative initiatives of the Florida Association of REALTORS® and will keep our members informed of the issues pending before the legislature. We will encourage our members to become active participants in the REALTOR® Day program in Tallahassee.

I. National Government Issues

Generally, we will support legislative initiatives of the National Association of REALTORS® and will keep our members informed of the issues pending before the legislature.

J. Legislative Advocacy

- a. Key Contacts: We will encourage members to become Key Contacts and Team Members to State Senators and Representatives through the Florida REALTORS® program.
- b. Local Liaisons: We will work to develop an active city and county liaison program.
- c. Calls for Action: We will encourage our members to respond to calls for action and to participate in other ways that will help carry the REALTOR® message to our elected officials at the local, state and national levels.

K. Local Elections

- a. Member Participation: We will encourage and support the membership's participation and leadership in political and community activities.
- b. Candidate Screening Committee: It is the policy of the Association to convene a Candidate Screening Committee for local, state and national elections. Procedures for screening are established by the Board of Directors.
- c. Voter Registration: The Association shall encourage and support members to become registered.
- d. Candidate Support: REALTORS® are encouraged to run for public office; however a REALTOR® member will not automatically be endorsed, given support from the Realtor® Party or receive a campaign contribution from the REALTORS® Political Action Committee.

L. Education

- a. We support quality education in schools.
- b. We support varied types of educational opportunities, including but not limited to, public, private, faith based, charter, home school, vocational, technical and higher education.
- c. Funding: Education should be adequately funded. The Association supports varied funding sources for education, particularly savings from increased government efficiencies.
- d. Capital Improvement Plans: We encourage school districts to maintain, regularly update and pursue a strong capital improvements plan that is designed in conjunction with other appropriate governmental agencies.