

GOBA 2019 ADVOCACY PRIORITIES

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Standing Positions

Impact Fees

Issue: Impact fees are charges imposed upon newly constructed development projects by local governments and municipalities to pay for new or expanded infrastructure facilities that provide public services to the projects. These fees typically require cash payments prior to completion of the project and are based on a methodology which considers the cost of the facility as well as the nature and size of the development. Despite the new or expanded public infrastructure facilities often benefiting the public at large, their cost is borne solely by the residents of the new development.

Position: GOBA believes that impact fees are a regressive tax that penalizes new homeowners by making the purchase of a home more financially burdensome to the prospective home buyer and negatively affects the affordability of housing. Instead, GOBA favors fairer, broad transaction-based fees.

Action: While GOBA favors equitable transaction-based fees, it also recognizes the unlikelihood that impact fees will be eliminated in the near term. As a result, GOBA has taken a pragmatic approach and focused its efforts on changing how and when impact fees are paid and slowing down proposed increases. GOBA advocates its position by instituting legal challenges, lobbying elected officials, and participating on county and municipal impact fee review and advisory boards.

Education/Labor Force

Issue: According to the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB), the trend of unfilled jobs in the construction sector has been rising in recent years. Builders cite the inability to fill construction sector jobs with skilled workers as a top business challenge.

Position: GOBA promotes and supports efforts to cultivate a qualified and growing workforce in Central Florida.

Action: GOBA partners with local colleges, universities and programs to promote and support construction-based programs that positively impact labor shortages, including Valencia College, Seminole State College, Osceola Technical College, and Future Builders of America. Additionally, GOBA provides a regularly updated job board on its website for building industry employment positions as a service to its members. GOBA also promotes best practices and continuing education in the building industry by hosting numerous educational training events and seminars.

Permitting and Inspection Process

Issue: The permitting and inspection process includes formal approvals of building plans by designated government agencies as meeting the requirements of prescribed codes and regulations. In many municipalities, this process is excessively long and time consuming. Permitted projects require inspection by construction and building code inspectors. These inspections can vary widely from inspector to inspector causing inefficiencies and resulting in costly delays.

Position: GOBA supports and promotes a permitting and inspection process that is proactive, efficient, consistent, and predictable.

Action: At GOBA's bimonthly Joint Building Committee (JBC) meetings, members interact and work collaboratively with county and municipal building officials to accomplish this goal. In addition, GOBA meets with building department staff to address and resolve problems within specific municipalities. GOBA members also routinely participate on county and municipal inspection and permitting advisory boards and task forces.

Land Development Review Process

Issue: As part of the development review process, applicant proposals and plans are reviewed by various boards, commissions, and governmental departments. This is often a convoluted and protracted process that applicants have little, if any, control over.

Position: GOBA supports and promotes a streamlined development review process which is consistent, transparent, and efficient.

Action: GOBA members regularly participate on county and municipal inspection and land development related advisory boards and task forces. GOBA advocates for improvements in the development review process in all the counties and municipalities it serves.

Responsible Pro-Development and Pro-Growth Government

Issue: Ensuring government understands the challenges and concerns of the building industry and works collaboratively with the industry, is vital to the industry's success and the economic health and prosperity of the thousands of workers and their families in Central Florida who work in the industry.

Position: GOBA supports and promotes responsible pro-development and pro-growth elected officials at all levels of government.

Action: GOBA's Political Action Committee (PAC) is committed to electing responsible pro-development and pro-growth government officials. GOBA PAC interviews and endorses candidates for elected office and provides both financial and non-monetary support to endorsed candidates.

Affordable Housing

Issue: According to the recent Regional Workshop on Affordable Housing conducted collectively by the counties of Orange, Osceola and Seminole, along with the City of Orlando, the lack of supply of affordable housing in Central Florida is at crisis levels.

Position: GOBA supports increasing the supply of affordable housing in Central Florida by lowering the costs and barriers of producing quality, safe, and affordable housing.

Action: GOBA advocates for lower governmental and regulatory costs and fees, including impact fees, which drive up the costs of housing. GOBA members regularly partner with other affordable housing related organizations and participate on affordable housing advisory boards and task forces. As a member of the Sadowski Coalition, GOBA and FHBA also advocate for full funding of the Sadowski Affordable Housing Trust Fund and that the funds be utilized for their intended purpose.