



Friday Facts

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AIA Florida News

Where will budget cuts be made?

As lawmakers prepare to chop over \$1 billion in spending during a special session in September, citizens need to be prepared for the consequences. House and Senate committees this week began sifting through possible cuts that likely will touch a wide range of programs and services.

Top issues include: funds cut from public schools, health and human services, and reducing the amount the state pays hospitals and nursing homes to care for Medicaid recipients.

The 2007 Florida Taxation and Budget Reform Commission ("TBRC") is well underway. The Commission, which meets every 20 years, organized itself in March and April and divided its work among four committees: Finance and Taxation, Governmental Services, Governmental Procedures and Structure, and Planning and Budgetary Processes. And it is meeting regularly now to hear educational presentations on a range of tax and budget issues.

Topics discussed thus far include: the sales tax base and **current exemptions and exclusions from tax**; collection of sales taxes from remote sellers; portability of the Save Our Homes assessment cap; various budget components including education, health care and public safety; special taxing districts; and the history of the Florida Constitution.

Jim Anstis, FAIA warned members to, "Beware the professional services tax train that may run us over in this process. Under the Martinez administration in the 80's we had that imposed upon us and it didn't work. It resulted in the export of professional services across the state line which was followed by efforts to assure that



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taxes had been paid before the issuance of building permit. [It caused] a real mess and so much so that after about two years the legislature removed the professional services tax. I suggest that we avoid a repetition of the same type of fiasco again."

Florida LEEDs the way

Florida is leading the way for energy efficient buildings in the country. The Tamiami Automotive Group of Miami announced that it will relocate and expand to a facility that will be the first-ever LEED Gold certified dealership in the country. The new dealership will be located at a former Superfund site and is set to open in late 2008. The development team of Tamiami's new location will include the Flagler Development Group and Revuelta Vega Leon Architecture.

According to an article in *Southeastern Construction* magazine, more developers are also seeing an increase in architects incorporating sustainable features, public owners encouraging green building and developers are starting to realize they can save money in the long term. SIKON Construction Corp. in Deerfield Beach began site work on The Promenade at Lyons in Coconut Creek, Florida, one of the nation's largest mixed-use projects seeking LEED certification. Senior Vice President of SIKON, Dale Scott stated that, "about two years ago LEED certification added about 10-12% to the cost of construction. Now it's only about 3-7% and a lot of that is recovered extremely fast."

Victor Yue, AIA of Dorsky Hogdson Parrish Yue, architects of The Promenade, says that costs have come down because there are more manufacturers producing more kinds of materials, the technology has improved, and there are set procedures to follow.

Discovery Channel is looking for architects

The Discovery Channel is looking for anyone who is involved in the field of infrastructure; architects, civil engineers, contractors or urban planners, etc and would be interested in being a host on the new show, "Hidden Cities." You don't need to be an expert in every area, just someone who loves what they do.

"Hidden Cities" will explore the vast and often invisible machinery that allows modern metropolises to function like clockwork. From how water makes its way to your tap, to how commuter systems work, it will all be covered. If you are interested please contact Alissa Haight Carlton at hiddencitiescasting@yahoo.com.

