

## CITY OF ANNA MARIA

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DAN MURPHY ~ MAYOR

Senator Jim Boyd  
404 South Monroe St.  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1100

Representative Will Robinson  
402 South Monroe St  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1300

September 29, 2023

Dear Rep. Robinson and Sen. Boyd:

Thank you for your letter of August 24, 2023 regarding Anna Maria Island and a proposed OPPAGA study to determine the viability of consolidating services on our island. I have discussed the prospects of this study with the Anna Maria City Commission and the following are our recommendations as to moving forward.

We endorse this study and wish to actively participate going forward in its' development. We heartily welcome new ideas which can both reduce taxes as well as provide expanded and enhanced services to our community. With that being the stated goal of the study, you have our whole hearted support with this effort.

You mentioned in your letter that neither of you had made a decision as to governmental consolidation or de-annexation as you await our response. As to the prospects of taking either action, our city opposes both governmental consolidation or de-annexation of the local governments on our island. Even though when viewed individually our cities are small in permanent population, our actual population is six and seven fold higher in reality. With over 70% of our dwellings being up-scale vacation rental homes, our real population continues to grow at a rapid exponential rate while our permanent resident population declines! We struggle to meet the demands and expectations for services to this growing up-scale community and feel this study will help us proactively meet those increased demands and expectations head-on.

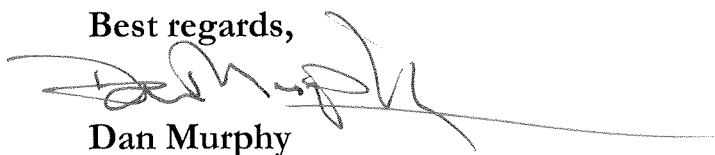
On the other hand, our primary concern with governmental consolidation is a loss of our individuality. Each city on this island presents a distinctly different environment to both full time residents and visitors alike. I cannot speak for Holmes Beach or Bradenton Beach, but speaking for the City of Anna Maria, we have long been and we remain a cultural and quiet residential bastion on the island. We are home to the only seasonal live theatrical productions at our Island Players Theatre. We house the historical archives of the island in the AMI Historical Museum. Our City Pier remains the most visited attraction in Manatee County and our Community Center affords both visitors and residents alike cultural and athletic events throughout the year. We conduct an annual symphony in our park and we stage a parade down Pine Avenue honoring our veterans each year. During season we hold weekly outdoor movies in our park as well as a weekly farmers market. These differentiators make our city a cultural and residential jewel for locals and visitors. We offer quiet narrow streets through neighborhoods and natural unspoiled "Old Florida" beaches for our residents and our visitors. Our concern is that all of these cultural differentiators would become lost through a governmental consolidation process.

Both Holmes Beach and Bradenton Beach offer other diverse but equally valuable venues and experiences to their residents and visitors. We, the three island cities, are able to maintain these distinct attractive qualities because our local government officials are dedicated to doing just that. Combining these three unique and culturally diverse communities into one "vanilla community" would result in the loss of the most valuable asset our island offers, our diverse cultural differences. One size would not fit all in this instance.

While we welcome and will embrace consolidation efforts which can reduce taxes and enhance the scope of services offered to our community, we ask that you not allow this study to go beyond that boundary and water down what has been for generations a unique and one-of-a-kind experience on the West Coast of Florida.

Thank you for your consideration of these thoughts and we look forward to actively working with the OPPAGA going forward.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Murphy", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and cursive.

Dan Murphy