



A Message from  
Broward County Vice-Mayor  
Lois Wexler

People often ask questions about Broward County government and how it operates. I thought I would dedicate this column to providing information to help you understand the unique relationship that Broward County has with citizens and other levels of government.

Counties were originally organized to carry out administrative duties of the state. State mandated duties included property assessments, maintenance of roads, elections, maintaining law and order in the community and helping the poor. A county helped to manage a portion of the overall state. Broward was formed from portions of Dade and Palm Beach Counties in 1915 and named for former Florida governor Napoleon Bonaparte Broward. Over time the duties of a County evolved and expanded. Eventually, as populations grew counties were given more authority to govern and more responsibility. Broward County delivers a variety of quality services to its residents daily. Some of these services are detailed below.

County services include the operation of parks, libraries, land use planning, social services, roads and traffic engineering, airport and port facilities, animal regulation, consumer protection services, garbage disposal and collection services, environmental protection, emergency services, sewer and water services, the list goes on and on.

When you turn on your faucet, a county employee inspected the quality of that water. Visiting a park? County workers are there providing recreational and educational programs. We have a state-of-the-art library system: county employees are there to assist you. When a hurricane approaches, county workers unite to protect residents at the emergency operations center. When you travel out of town you encounter county employees at the airport. Food and goods that are at a store may have arrived on a cargo ship, and county employees were at the port to bring that ship in. The county maintains most roads, traffic lights and stop signs. A number of county services provide for those who can not help themselves. We operate a homeless shelter for individuals and their families. The county provides mental health services to our veterans and the elderly and those addicted to drugs and alcohol. We also fund Family Success Centers in every region of the County. The air that you're breathing as you read this is being monitored by a county employee. Recently, the Broward County Medical Examiner's office has been making worldwide news after the celebrity death of Anna Nicole Smith. The Medical Examiner's office is under the jurisdiction of Broward County.

County Commissioners are responsible for the operation of the county and the delivery of all county services. We oversee county activities and set policies that are

carried out by the County Administrator. Commissioners develop and approve the annual budget and make decisions on how a percentage of our taxpayer's money is spent. We meet with constituents and work to insure that residents concerns are being addressed. Commissioners must ensure that the county meets and complies with government mandates.

No two counties in Florida are alike. Each has a different population, a different budget and each offers different services to best provide for residents. My job as your Vice-Mayor and Commissioner is to ensure that government is running smoothly and cost-effectively and that needs of the all residents are met.

I appreciate receiving your input and ideas and look forward to seeing you at a budget workshop or public hearing. Of course, you can always reach me at my office (954) 357-7005 or via e-mail at [lwexler@broward.org](mailto:lwexler@broward.org)

Sincerely,  
Lois Wexler  
Broward County Vice-Mayor  
District 5 Commissioner