

The Briefing

February 25, 2026

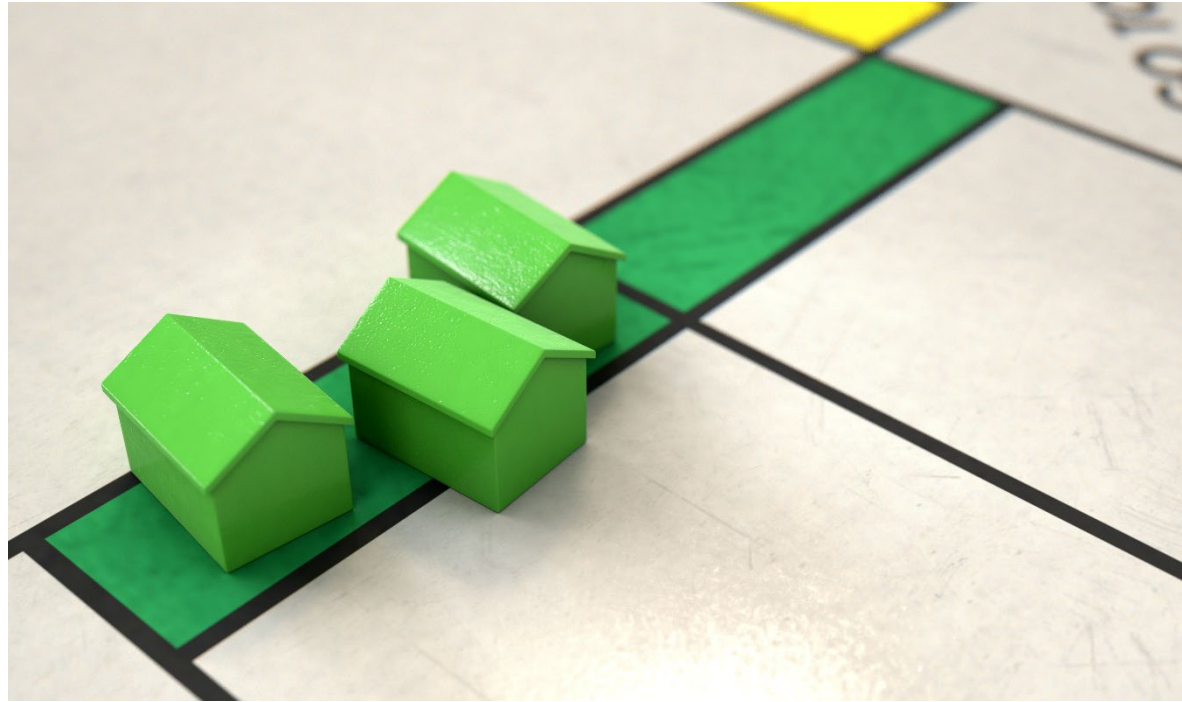
The latest from the government and leadership office of The Chamber

INSIDE

New finds this week

Tiger Bay Lunch

Current Legislative "Trendline" for State, County, Local



Keeping Briefings Brief

Kathy, Andrea, and I were able to attend the Tiger Bay Lunch last Friday. The panel represented Venice, North Port, and Sarasota County. Mayor Pachota, Commissioner Stokes, and County Commissioner Knight respectively; Jon Thaxton moderated. Much like the previous week's Scorecard, several relevant topics were covered effectively with the main theme surrounding a general need of local government(s) to watch their budgets and be leery of State legislation aimed toward preemption of local oversight and legislation of matters that can't be "one size fits all" (state-wide rules vs. locally directed needs).

Drilling down and keeping briefings brief is one of my goals with these briefings, so here is my current focus with the help of our Co-Pilot friend to keep me organized with a "weekly trendline". Give me some feedback as we go for your interest or concerns as a Chamber. This week I picked SB 48 for instance.

Florida Legislature • Sarasota County • City of Venice Business-Impact Focus – Week of Feb 17-24, 2026

Florida Legislature – Key Trendlines

- Housing legislation (SB 48) continues advancing; major workforce implications.
 - a. **If SB 48 passes in its current or similar form, it could:**
 - Expand affordable housing options for entry-level and service-sector workers.
 - Support employer recruitment and retention by reducing housing-related turnover.
 - Encourage infill development and mixed-use density near commercial corridors.
 - Reduce pressure on employers to subsidize housing or transportation.
- But:**

- Local implementation will be key.
 - Infrastructure capacity (roads, water, sewer) may limit actual build-out.
 - Community resistance to density could slow or dilute impact.
- House pushing aggressive property-tax reduction; Senate cautious but engaged.
 - Insurance reform re-emerging as a legislative priority.
 - Appropriations activity shaping infrastructure, workforce, and tourism funding.
 - No new business-regulatory burdens identified this week.

Sarasota County – Key Trendlines

- County signaling long-term budget shortfalls. This is a concern even without the potential impact of what property tax reforms may or may not come.
- Revenue tools (Public Service Tax, MSTUs, fee adjustments) under active discussion.
- Feb 26 Budget Workshop expected to surface specific proposals.
- Infrastructure priorities (transportation, stormwater, Siesta Key) remain stable.
- Potential cost-shifting to businesses if new revenue mechanisms advance. What could this mean, really?

City of Venice – Key Trendlines

- High volume of zoning, annexation, and land-use activity.
- Business Impact Estimates consistently published for all ordinances. Nothing of note currently on this.
- Multiple advisory boards active (Planning, Historic Preservation, Citizen Advisory). Lots of openings exist on boards.
- Council decisions shaping development patterns in downtown, Laurel Road corridor, and airport area.

Cross-Jurisdictional Patterns

- Revenue pressure moving downstream: state proposals → county gaps → city adjustments.
- Workforce housing emerging as the most important long-term competitiveness factor.
- Regulatory environment stable; no new burdens this week.
- Insurance affordability remains a latent but growing concern.

Chamber Priority Watchlist

High Priority

- Property-tax reduction proposals (state).
- County revenue tools (Feb 26 workshop).
- Workforce housing legislation.

Medium Priority

- Insurance reform bills.
- Venice zoning and land-use decisions.
- Infrastructure funding shifts.

Low Priority

- Procedural or administrative bills.
- Non-economic local ordinances.