

MIRAMAR GAINS FROM GAS TAX CITY'S POPULATION GROWTH MEANS AN ADDED \$1.4 MILLION

By Kenneth D. MacHarg

A population grown of 11.1% in Miramar will bring increased income into city coffers through a normal yearly adjustment of the county's Local Option Gas Tax.

"We do this every year," said Robert Bell, Miramar's Assistant City Manager, Administration. "The money that comes to the county is distributed to each of the cities by a formula based on their population."

Each city plus Broward County government divides up the gas tax according to population statistics provided annually by the University of Florida.

"If a city grows, it will receive more of the money," Bell explained. "Also, a city can gain additional income based on any areas annexed during the past year."

In turn, a city can lose income if there is a downturn of gasoline sales, or another city grows faster, thus drawing a larger portion of the total amount. "The amount distributed is based on what comes in," Bell said.

The Local Option Gas tax, plus additional transit and other local option gas taxes were budgeted to supply Miramar with approximately \$1,435,088 in fiscal year 2003.

The revenue is used to pay for existing and future transportation needs in the city, to fund city roadway improvements and to provide funds for the city's Capital Improvement Program. The city may also add funds from its General Fund to increase spending on road if needed.

According to a memo sent by Bell to City Manager Robert A. Payton, there are three interlocal agreements between the cities of Broward County and the county government to distribute ten cents of local option gas tax per gallon sold.

These include:

- The original local option gas tax adopted in 1983 which provides the cities with 37.5% of the proceeds of six cents of the gas tax.
- An additional local option gas tax adopted in 1993 which provides the cities with 37.5% of three cents of the gas tax
- A transit gas tax adopted in 2000 which provides the cities with 26% of the proceeds of a one cent gas tax.

Because Miramar's population increased from 78,813 to 87,537 last year, an 11.1 increase, the amount the city receives will increase by that percentage. The city's population increased by 8.3% in 2002.

The gas tax measure was recently passed by the city commission. "It's a regular procedure," said City Manager Robert Payton. "There is no controversy over it.

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