

TURNING LOCAL DATA INTO LOCAL STORIES THAT STICK



1. Core Idea: What Works and Why It Matters

Florida has a proven formula, and it works. By keeping decisions local, cities deliver the essential services residents count on without runaway tax bills.



Save Our Homes caps increases in the assessed value of your home, creating a gap between market value (what you could sell your home for) and assessed value (what you actually pay in taxes). It all adds up to a major “Homefield Advantage” for full-time Florida homeowners. It’s not a loophole—it’s a safeguard. And it’s working.

Local decision-making delivers. Cities provide the essential services residents rely on: clean water, safe neighborhoods, parks, and roads. They do it efficiently and consistently, even as other costs (like insurance) skyrocket.

Next up: how to connect that message to real stories from your city.

2. Personalize a Local Success Story

Goal: Show how smart local policy protected residents from larger pressures.

Steps:

1. Pick a recent moment where your community stayed steady in a time of volatility, like keeping tax rates level, protecting services, or holding the line during cost spikes.
2. Gather your proof points: budget data, millage history, data packet visuals, or examples of residents (TIP: Your city’s data packet could be helpful here, see below)
3. Choose the issues that matter to you, especially those where local decision-making made the difference.
4. Use this story format to craft your 30-second version:
 - **Risk:** What broader challenge or pressure did your city face?
 - **Resilience:** What local actions helped maintain stability?
 - **Result:** What stayed strong for residents?

EXAMPLE:

Risk:

Rapid population growth after the pandemic strained infrastructure and services.

Resilience:

The city held rates steady while maintaining reliable public services using targeted capital planning and federal relief funds.

Result:

All residents were served without shifting tax burdens onto longtime homeowners.

“After COVID, our population surged—but our millage rate didn’t. We stayed smart with spending and used flexible revenue to meet new needs without raising taxes.”

3. Use Your City's Data Packet

Purpose: Ground your message in real numbers that matter to residents.

Tips for putting it to work:



- Download your city's packet on flcities.com/property-tax-toolkit.
- Pick one chart to support one story. Use the "just vs. taxable value" gap to show how protections work, or highlight the public safety spending gap chart when discussing budget decisions.
- Use your personalized story, combined with the data to reinforce your message with local proof points.

4. Quick Message Starters

For speaking, posts, or newsletters—fill in with local specifics.

Tax Stability / Save Our Homes:

"Thanks to Save Our Homes, our full-time homeowners have predictable property tax bills, even as market prices rise. That keeps families in their homes and puts full-time Floridians first."

Local Decision in Action:

"When [risk] threatened our neighborhood, we acted locally by [resilience]. That decision meant [result]. It was a decision made here, locally, with residents at the center."

Defending Services:

"Our city maintains essential services without raising local tax rates because we can make the local decisions that are best for our community."

5. Talking Points to Anchor Conversations

Purpose: Ground your message in real numbers that matter to residents.

Tips for putting it to work:



Local decision-making keeps tax rates stable, costs low, and services accountable.



Full-time Florida residents save the most, thanks to Homestead and Save our Homes protections. Those protections are worth keeping.



The real affordability pressure is soaring insurance costs—not property tax rates.



Property taxes support public safety, infrastructure, and quality of life; disrupting the system risks those services.



Use city-specific data to back every claim and make it local.

**GET YOUR CITY'S PACKET.
USE IT. SHARE IT. MAKE YOUR STORY SPECIFIC.**

flcities.com/property-tax-toolkit

