



THE WHITE GLOVE EXPERIENCE™ WORKSHOP

The Trust Gap

Why your county's biggest risk isn't the budget.

Dr. Raina Knox, DM/IST, MBA

Co-Founder, President & CEO | Stratex Solutions, LLC

FAC 2026 ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 | 1:45 – 3:15 PM | Lake Nona | Hilton Orlando

THIS NOVEMBER, FLORIDA DECIDES

Your revenue is on the ballot. Your residents' expectations are not.

Voters will decide the largest property tax cut in state history. If it passes, the homestead exemption triples and Florida's counties and cities lose an estimated **\$4.6 billion next year, growing to \$8.4 billion a year**. Schools are shielded. County services are not.

The distance between falling revenue and steady expectations is the Trust Gap. It will not be decided in the budget book. It will be decided at the counter. That is what this workshop is about.

Source: Florida House staff analysis, June 2026 (impact to non-school local governments).

WHO IS IN FRONT OF YOU

A Florida public-sector firm

FLORIDA-BASED, FLORIDA-FOCUSED

Sarasota-based management consulting. We work across the Florida public sector: city governments, tax collectors, and state agencies (FL Department of Children and Families and FL Department of Health).

A DEFINED METHODOLOGY

The White Glove Experience™ framework for constituent trust, and the Ascend 7 Strategic Planning Framework for the long horizon.

A PROCUREMENT ADVANTAGE

Approved vendor on the State of Florida management consulting contract. A county can engage through a request for quote, not a full RFP cycle.

WE KNOW THIS ENVIRONMENT

Sunshine Law, preemption pressure, 67-county heterogeneity, and hurricane-cycle recovery work. The specifics this audience lives in.

90 MINUTES

Today's session

THE TRUST GAP, NAMED

Why the property tax vote makes service your biggest risk | 12 MINUTES

ONE FRAMEWORK, TWO HORIZONS

The White Glove Experience™ and the short game / long game | 8 MINUTES

THE SHORT GAME: RECOVERY AT EVERY ENCOUNTER

PEARL Response Protocol™ in full, plus a working scenario | 35 MINUTES

THE LONG GAME: DECIDING WHAT CHANGES

Strategic and tactical planning for the funding reset | 15 MINUTES

YOUR MOVE

Live self-assessment, two paths, and what you take back | 20 MINUTES

What you will leave here able to do

- 1 Connect the November property tax vote to the service and trust pressure your county will feel in 2027 and beyond.
- 2 Distinguish the two horizons of the Trust Gap: the short game of frontline recovery and the long game of strategic decisions.
- 3 Apply the five-step PEARL Response Protocol™ to a real county service encounter.
- 4 Assess your county's current service-recovery maturity and identify the single gap most worth closing first.

PART ONE

The Trust Gap, Named

Why the property tax vote makes service your biggest risk.

The largest property tax cut in state history

Homestead exemption triples

From \$50,000 today to \$150,000 in 2027 and \$250,000 in 2028.

Non-homestead cap tightens

The annual assessment-increase cap drops from 10% to 5%, slowing growth on businesses and rentals.

Schools are shielded

The exemption does not apply to school taxes. The revenue loss lands on county and municipal services.

It needs 60% to pass

On the November 2026 ballot. Most provisions take effect January 1, 2027.

And it may not stop here

Legislators also advanced full-elimination proposals (HJR 203). This is a multi-year reset, not a one-time cut.

Sources: Florida Legislature, June 2 2026 (SJR/HJR); Florida House staff analysis; Tax Foundation analysis, 2026.

WHY THIS LANDS ON COUNTIES HARDER THAN ANYWHERE ELSE

Property tax is the fiscal backbone of local government

\$4.6B → \$8.4B

Estimated annual revenue loss to Florida's non-school local governments, year one growing forward.

~24%

Share of county revenue from property tax on average, and as high as 47% in some counties.

Few substitutes

Counties have limited taxing authority. Backfilling means new fees, special assessments, or service cuts.

Every dollar you backfill or cut shows up at a constituent encounter: a new fee, a slower permit, a closed program. The revenue decision becomes a trust decision.

Revenue falls. Expectations do not.

The household budget arrives at the counter

Insurance pressure and the cost-of-living revolt mean residents arrive already stretched. Ordinary encounters now carry stakes they did not two years ago.

Trust is tested in public

Sunshine Law and the right to be heard mean every comment period, every records request, every meeting is a trust test. There is no private rehearsal.

The county is the visible level of government

When the math breaks, residents see you. Tallahassee is not on the November ballot the way your services are.

THE INSIGHT THAT ORGANIZES EVERYTHING THAT FOLLOWS

The Trust Gap is multifaceted. It has two horizons.

It is not one problem with one fix. Absorbing the funding reset while protecting trust takes a **short game** and a **long game, run on one framework**.

THE SHORT GAME

This year. Every frontline encounter.

Train the entire workforce on service-recovery conversations, so trust is protected the moment it is at risk: at the counter, on the call, in the comment period.

→ PEARL Response Protocol™

THE LONG GAME

Multi-year. The whole county.

Decide, deliberately, what the county will change to absorb the funding reset. Careful strategic and tactical planning instead of reactive cuts.

→ Ascend 7 Strategic Planning

One framework underneath both: the White Glove Experience™.



WHITE GLOVE
EXPERIENCE™

PART TWO

One Framework, Two Horizons

The White Glove Experience™: five elements that work as one system.

Five interconnected elements. One coherent system.

- 1 Service Credo**
The promise the county makes about how it serves.
- 2 Service Standards**
Observable, coachable behaviors at every encounter.
- 3 Empowerment Guardrails**
Where staff can act, and where the boundary holds.
- 4 Moments That Matter**
The high-stakes encounters where trust is won or lost.
- 5 PEARL Response Protocol™**
How trust is recovered when a moment falls short.



Without PEARL, White Glove is aspirational. With PEARL, it is operational.

Each element answers a pressure this audience already feels

Service Credo	The commitment that holds when the revenue base contracts and public promises are renegotiated on the ballot.
Service Standards	The county's controllable lever when the policy field is preempted. How staff communicate and execute, regardless of what the statute changed.
Empowerment Guardrails	Confidence in published procedure as preemption re-draws what a department head can decide and what needs board action.
Moments That Matter	The appraisal mailer, the homestead counter, the new fee notice. Three per group: the short list a commissioner can act on.
PEARL Response Protocol™	A standing recovery capability for the encounters this environment keeps producing: post-storm, post-preemption, post-budget.



PART THREE

The Short Game

Recovery at every encounter. Every employee, a protocol.

THIS YEAR | TRAIN THE WORKFORCE



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Most lost trust never files a complaint

THE SILENT MAJORITY

1

complaint,
visible

25

silent departures,
invisible

The residents who complain are your early-warning system. The silent ones already decided you had no way to make it right.

THE SERVICE RECOVERY PARADOX

A well-handled failure can leave a resident **MORE** trusting than if nothing had gone wrong at all.

Recovery is not damage control. It is the one move that builds trust prevention alone cannot create, which is why it cannot be left to whoever happens to answer the phone.

Sources: TARP / Applied Consumer Research; McCollough & Bharadwaj (1992); Smith & Bolton (1998).

THE DIFFERENCE IS ARCHITECTURE, NOT EFFORT

Same committed people. Different result.

WITHOUT STRUCTURED RECOVERY

- Response quality depends entirely on who answers
- No consistency across staff, shifts, or situations
- Each failure treated as isolated
- No data, no organizational learning
- The county relies on heroics

WITH STRUCTURED RECOVERY

- Every response follows a defined protocol
- Consistency regardless of who responds
- Patterns surface and drive redesign
- Every incident becomes organizational learning
- The county relies on a system

Every county will fail a resident eventually. The question is whether you have built the architecture to recover.

The standing capability you train into every employee



Pause Stop and acknowledge. Do not defend, explain, or minimize.



Empathize Name the specific impact on this resident. Skip generic apology.



Act Take visible action now, inside pre-authorized decision space.



Resolve Confirm it explicitly. Silence is not satisfaction. Follow through.



Learn Document the event. Classify isolated vs. systemic. Improve the system.

Sequential. The most common recovery failure is skipping Pause and Empathize to jump straight to Act. R is Resolve, never Recovery.



PAUSE Stop and acknowledge

BEHAVIORAL REQUIREMENTS

- Stop what you are doing. Give full attention.
- Do not defend, explain, or minimize.
- Acknowledge explicitly: “I can see this is not what you expected.”

RECOMMENDED LANGUAGE

- “Thank you for bringing this to me.”
- “I can see this has caused a real problem, and I want to address it.”
- “I hear you. Let me make sure I understand what happened.”

WHY THIS STEP EXISTS

- The instinct to defend or cite the statute is the single biggest recovery killer.
- The pause lets the resident feel heard before any action is taken.
- Skip it and every step that follows feels transactional.

MOST COMMON FAILURE

- Jumping to explanation or defense.
- “Well, the reason that happened is...” signals the county’s perspective matters more than the resident’s experience.



Empathize Express genuine understanding

BEHAVIORAL REQUIREMENTS

- Name the specific impact on this resident.
- Do not use generic empathy.
- Connect this failure to this resident's actual experience.

RECOMMENDED LANGUAGE

- "I understand this delay meant another trip downtown and another day off work."
- "I can see how frustrating it is to expect one thing and get another."
- "That should not have happened, and I want to make it right."

WHY THIS STEP EXISTS

- Empathy is what converts a complaint into a connection.
- Without it, any action you take feels transactional.
- The resident needs to know you understand how this affected them.

MOST COMMON FAILURE

- Generic empathy.
- "Sorry for the inconvenience" is the government version of "thoughts and prayers." It checks a box without making a connection.



Act Take immediate corrective action

BEHAVIORAL REQUIREMENTS

- Act in the moment. Do not defer unless necessary.
- Make the action visible. Narrate what you are doing.
- This step depends on Empowerment Guardrails.

RECOMMENDED LANGUAGE

- “Here is what I am going to do right now.”
- “I have the authority to do this, and I am doing it now.”
- “You will see this result by Friday.”

WHY THIS STEP EXISTS

- Action without acknowledgment feels like the county trying to make the problem go away. ACT is third for a reason.
- Guardrails make ACT possible: staff must know what they can do, cannot do, and what needs escalation.

MOST COMMON FAILURE

- Deferral.
- “Let me check with my supervisor” is a second failure. Without clear guardrails, even committed staff default to inaction.



RESOLVE Ensure the resident is satisfied

BEHAVIORAL REQUIREMENTS

- Ask explicitly: “Does this fully address your concern?”
- If the answer is no, return to ACT.
- Follow up within the committed timeframe.

RECOMMENDED LANGUAGE

- “Does this fully resolve it for you?”
- “Is there anything else I can do to make this right?”
- “I want to be sure this is resolved before we close it out.”

WHY THIS STEP EXISTS

- Resolution is defined by the resident, not the county.
- Organizations routinely close issues internally without confirming the resident agrees.
- If they do not consider it resolved, it is not resolved.

MOST COMMON FAILURE

- Assuming resolution.
- Closing the ticket and moving on without explicit confirmation. Silence is not satisfaction. You must ask.



LEARN Document and share

BEHAVIORAL REQUIREMENTS

- Document quickly (designed to take under ten minutes).
- Ask “Why did this happen?” not “Who did this?”
- Classify: isolated incident or systemic pattern.

RECOMMENDED LANGUAGE

- “I am going to document this so we can see if it is a pattern and fix it.”
- “I want to address not just this, but whatever caused it.”

WHY THIS STEP EXISTS

- Without LEARN, PEARL is a recovery tool. With LEARN, it is an organizational intelligence system.
- Just Culture: root causes are usually systemic. Blaming committed staff shuts down reporting.

MOST COMMON FAILURE

- Not documenting “small” issues.
- Small issues are often the earliest signal of a systemic pattern. Miss them and you miss the warning.

The call you didn't cause, that lands on the county

THE SETUP

A constituent calls the county. Hurricane Milton, October 2024. The family has been in FEMA Direct Housing since November; the program is ending, and this is the call asking what happens next. The county did not fund the program and does not control when it ends, but it is the level of government the family knows by name. The caller is calm, exhausted, and asking what the county will do.

AT YOUR TABLE

- 1 What does Pause sound like in the first ten seconds of this call?
- 2 Write the Empathize sentence, specific to this family, without over-promising.
- 3 Act and Resolve: what can the county commit, and how does staff name it so the caller can write it down?

PART FOUR

The Long Game

Deciding what changes. Strategic and tactical planning for the funding reset.

MULTI-YEAR | TRUST BY DESIGN

A workshop changes behavior for a while. The decisions behind it have to change too.

TRAINING ALONE

- Changes behavior for a while
- Focused on individual skills
- Delivered in cycles
- Stops when attention moves elsewhere

STRATEGIC DECISION-MAKING

- Changes what the county chooses to do
- Built into how the board and leaders decide
- Becomes organizational muscle memory
- Holds when leadership attention moves on

The **short game** protects trust this year. The **long game** decides what the county changes to survive the reset. **You need both.**

A funding reset forces choices. Made reactively, they fracture trust. Made deliberately, they protect it.

When \$4.6 to \$8.4 billion comes out of local budgets, every county faces the same decisions. The question is not whether to change, but whether the changes are chosen with rigor or forced in a panic.

What to fund, what to stop

Service priorities re-ranked against a smaller base, with the trust impact of each cut named in advance.

What to charge for

New fees and special assessments designed so residents understand the why, not just the bill.

How to restructure

Staffing, service models, and shared services reshaped to deliver more trust per dollar.

ASCEND 7 STRATEGIC PLANNING FRAMEWORK

A board-adopted process for making achievable strategic choices, with the capacity confirmed up front to actually execute them, across the long term and the tactical year. It connects elected-official priorities to department-level action, so the funding reset is navigated by design rather than absorbed by accident.

From a program, to a process, to how the county works

YEAR 1

Decide and launch

The board sets priorities against the new base, the architecture is built, and staff are trained on the protocols.

YEAR 2

Integrate

Embedded in workflows and refined in the field. Standards into supervision; recovery into reflex; choices into budgets.

YEAR 3

Sustain

Not a program. Simply how the county works. Self-sustaining, and trusted because it is consistent.

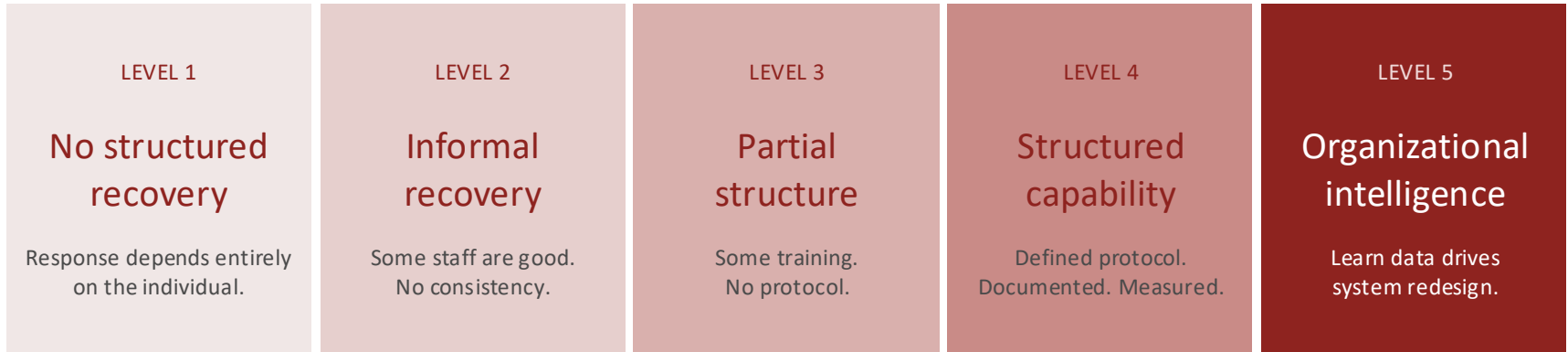
PART FIVE

The Move

Where your county sits today, and the two ways forward.

Where does your county sit on recovery maturity?

Circle your level on the worksheet in your packet. We'll read the room.



Most counties sit at Level 1 or 2 today. Levels 4 and 5 are not about effort. They are about architecture.

Take the Assessment

THE TRUST GAP WORKSHOP | FAC 2026

County Service Experience Self-Assessment



Use this worksheet during the session and take it back to your county. It has three parts: where you sit on recovery maturity, a diagnostic across the five elements of the White Glove Experience™, and three questions that name your single most important next move. **There are no wrong answers. The honest ones are the useful ones.**

PART A | RECOVERY MATURITY

Check the circle of the lever that best describes your county today.

LEVEL 1 No Structured recovery Response depends entirely on the individual. <input type="radio"/>	LEVEL 2 Informal recovery Some staff are good. No consistency. <input type="radio"/>	LEVEL 3 Partial structure Some training. No protocol. <input type="radio"/>	LEVEL 4 Structured capability Defined protocol. Documented. Measured. <input type="radio"/>	LEVEL 5 Organizational intelligence Learn data drives system redesign. <input type="radio"/>
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Reading it: most counties sit at Level 1 or 2. Levels 4 and 5 are not about effort. They are about architecture.

PART B | THE FIVE-ELEMENT DIAGNOSTIC

Check one circle rating per statement. 1 = Strongly Disagree - 2 = Disagree - 3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree - 4 = Agree - 5 = Strongly Agree

ELEMENT	RATE HOW TRUE THIS IS OF YOUR COUNTY TODAY	1	2	3	4	5
Service Credo	Our county has a clear, shared promise about how we serve, beyond the mission statement.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Service Credo	Every employee could state what residents can count on from us, every time.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Service Standards	We have observable, coachable behaviors that define good service at the counter and on the phone.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Service Standards	A supervisor could coach to those standards on shift, in five minutes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Empowerment Guardrails	Frontline staff know what they can decide on their own, what they cannot, and what needs escalation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Empowerment Guardrails	Staff act with confidence rather than defaulting to "let me check with my Supervisor."	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Moments That Matter	We have named the three highest-stakes moments for each resident group we serve.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Moments That Matter	We know which encounters build or erode trust, and we manage them deliberately.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
PEARL Response Protocol™	When something goes wrong, staff follow a known sequence rather than improvising.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
PEARL Response Protocol™	We document service failures and use them to improve the system, not to assign blame.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

TALLY YOUR SCORE (10-50): _____

10-25 foundation gap, start here 26-38 partial system, integrate it 39-50 strong, protect and measure it

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Your Single Most Important Next Move

PART C | THE TRUST GAP DIAGNOSTIC

Three questions to take back to your county. Answer them honestly, and you have your starting point.

1. What is the single biggest gap between what your residents expect and what they experience right now?

2. Which element most directly addresses it?

Service Credo | Service Standards | Empowerment Guardrails | Moments That Matter | PEARL Response Protocol™

3. Do you start with the short game or the long game, and why?

Short game = PEARL Response Protocol™ training for your workforce this year.

Long game = Ascend 7™ strategic planning that builds trust by design.

Bring your answers to Booth 311. We will help you turn these three answers into a first move. Find us at the booth or during the Ice Cream Social, 3:15-3:45pm in the Exhibit Hall.

A note on your score: it reflects how service looks from where you sit; the resident's view is the next conversation. Score this worksheet again in 12 months. The distance between the two numbers is your trust trajectory.

NOTES

LET'S CONNECT Dr. Raina Knox | President & CEO, Stratex Solutions, LLC
 BOOTH 311 Ice Cream Social, 3:15-3:45 PM, Exhibit Hall
 raina.knox@stratexsolutions.com | 941-529-6133 | stratexsolutions.com

Empowering organizations to reach their goals

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Start where your authority and urgency point

START WITH YOUR PEOPLE

PEARL Response Protocol™ training

Give every frontline employee a protocol for the encounters residents already arrive frustrated by. Faster cycle. Often inside existing signing authority, at the county-manager or HR-director level.

START WITH YOUR PLAN

Ascend 7 Strategic Planning

The commission-level engagement that decides what the county changes to absorb the funding reset, across the full strategic horizon. Board-adopted. Multi-month. The substantive engagement.

THE LIVE PROOF POINT

The Florida Department of Children and Families: approximately 150 employees, six PEARL training workshops across West Palm Beach, Fort Lauderdale, and Fort Pierce in May 2026, alongside a concurrent strategic planning engagement for the same agency. Both paths. Same framework. Same procurement vehicle.

THE PROCUREMENT PATH IS CLEARED

The months it would take to award have already been spent

Stratex is an approved vendor on the State of Florida Management Consulting Services State Term Contract. A county can engage through a request for quote to approved vendors, in lieu of a full RFP cycle. The competitive review is already complete at the state level.

WEEKS, NOT MONTHS

A six-to-nine-month RFP cycle compresses to weeks. The same vehicle applies to either engagement path.

BOARD ACTION STILL APPLIES

Your procurement code typically still requires a board action above its local threshold. That step remains. The award timeline does not.

**The booth is open at the ice cream social, 3:15 to 3:45 in the Exhibit Hall.
The conversation starts with your county's hardest constituent moment.**

Built to use Monday, not to file Friday

1

County Service Experience Self-Assessment

A diagnostic by element. Where your foundation is weakest today.

2

Moments That Matter Worksheet

The three-per-group discipline, ready to use with two direct reports next week.

3

The Trust Gap Diagnostic

Three prompts that name the single gap to close first, and whether to start short game or long game.

4

PEARL Response Protocol™ Reference Card

A pocket card for frontline staff: the protocol on one side, the sounds-like phrases on the other.

Let's continue the conversation



Find us at booth

311

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Scan to save my contact

Stop by during the ice cream social, 3:15 to 3:45 PM in the Exhibit Hall.
Bring your county's hardest constituent moment.