

## Seminole leaders' vision includes keeping penny tax

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Renewing the one-cent sales tax and increasing government efficiency are the top priorities of more than 100 Seminole County leaders who gathered Friday to talk about the county's future.

At the Vision IV conference organized by the nonprofit Envision Seminole, leaders in fields ranging from health care to education worked in groups to brainstorm how the county can establish a new agenda in today's economy.

After a vote, their top priorities included:

- Continuing the penny sales tax. The tax has supported education and transportation projects for nearly 20 years and will expire at the end of next year. County and School Board officials have been at odds about the future of the tax, which requires voter approval.
- Consolidating services, from road work to nonprofit functions, across the county and fostering collaboration among governments.
- Preventing youth crime.
- Concentrating mixed-use development along **Interstate 4**, U.S. Highway 17-92, State Road 417 and SunRail stations.

Envision Seminole hopes that attendees will act on the priorities as they return to their roles in government, business and education.

"These are the kind of people who will end up acting on everything, and that's the good part about it," said Oviedo Mayor Mary Lou Andrews, one of the participants.

The group will be evaluating the results to decide how it wants to proceed.

This is the fourth conference since 1996. The last was hosted in 2004.

Rachael Taylor, Sentinel Reporter