



## **Case Study – Project Hometown Citizens Committee**

Project Hometown Citizens Committee, Inc. (PHCC) was formed to advocate for, and educate various entities and the general public on, the 2006 one penny increase of the tourist development tax for Orange County, Florida. Specifically, the issues relating to the tourist development tax increase to include the promotion of tourism; the development, design, location and financing of a new performing arts center, a new sports and entertainment arena, and renovations to the Citrus Bowl; and a revitalized retail and entertainment district.

This effort involved intricate, interlocal negotiations between the City of Orlando and Orange County to fund the \$1.1 billion community venues project with several votes before each Board over a period of 13 months. PHCC encouraged and promoted good government and civic betterment by improving the quality of life in this region within the Orlando, Orange County and Central Florida area.

To achieve its goals PHCC developed educational materials for outreach purposes and provided those materials to elected officials, opinion leaders, citizens, media, businesses and key stakeholders in the Central Florida region. The organization engaged in direct mail, phone calls, television advertising, radio advertising, and an interactive website and developed and printed electronic brochures and newsletters for use in efforts to support the community venues. All materials were also produced in Spanish.

Christina Johnson served as executive director of Project Hometown and oversaw all grassroots and advocacy efforts, including the volunteer board of directors, five honorary chairs representing the tourism, economic development, home builders and chamber industries, and over 25 civic and community leaders and organizations which represented close to a quarter of a million constituents.

PHCC spearheaded the advocacy grassroots campaign through rallies, town hall meetings, generating personal emails, phone calls and meetings into the Orlando City Council and Orange County Board of Commissioners, opinion editorials, letters to the editor, and talk radio.

The result of the 13 month campaign was successful. The City of Orlando and the Orange County Board of County Commissioners voted to approve the historic partnership in July 2007 between the City, County, State, public and private entities which allows the building and renovation of the events center, the Citrus Bowl and the performing arts center to be completed in 2010, 2011 and 2012 respectively.