



FLORIDA REGIONAL COUNCILS ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL REPORT & DIRECTORY



2014-2015

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



The year 2015 marked change in the 50-year history of Florida's regional planning councils. With the 2015 Legislative Session came revisions to the statutory provisions governing our councils. Those revisions updated the responsibilities of regional planning councils to the State of Florida, confirmed the continued support of the Legislature for the work of the councils, and addressed some changes to the geographic boundaries of the regional planning councils in the north and central regions of Florida. We are now ten regional planning councils strong, serving all 67 counties and 412 municipalities, and supporting agencies throughout the state.

Florida's regional planning councils have evolved into multi-purpose regional entities that provide much more than planning assistance for our members and local governments. In our rapidly growing state, with a population expected to top 21 million by 2020, the role of our councils has never been more important. In the past year, our councils provided an array of award-winning services and delivered value to local governments and small businesses around the state while continuing to advance the State's Strategic Plan for Economic Development. We focused our efforts in five core functional areas: Economic Development, Emergency Preparedness, Transportation, Quality of Life, and serving as Regional Conveners.

The accomplishments cited throughout this Annual Report underscore the unique and varied roles, and the significant impact of regional planning councils around our state. The work of our councils has not gone unnoticed this year. Several councils received awards from the Florida Chapter of the American Planning Association, the Florida Planning and Zoning Association, the National Association of Development Organizations and the National Association of Regional Councils.

These successes are the result of countless partnerships forged with our members, state and federal agencies, and the private sector under the leadership of our ten regional planning council executive directors. On behalf of Florida Regional Councils Association, I thank two outstanding directors who retired this year after lengthy careers serving their councils. Terry Joseph served the West Florida Regional Planning Council for more than 31 years and Manny Pumariega served the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council for more than 35 years. I also thank Commissioner Pat Huff of the Central Florida Regional Planning Council for his leadership and service as President of the Association over the past year.

We are fortunate to live and work in Florida, the third largest and fastest growing state in the nation. With growth comes many opportunities and some challenges. We look forward to continuing to serve our local governments and partners, and work together to solve problems, achieve regional successes, and have positive statewide impact.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lee Constantine". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lee Constantine, President

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FLORIDA REGIONAL COUNCILS ASSOCIATION MISSION STATEMENT

The Florida Regional Councils Association fosters regional strategies, solutions, and partnerships to support economic growth and improve quality of life; promotes a standard of excellence in the delivery of regional planning council programs and technical professional assistance and expertise; and advocates for the role of regional planning councils as the state’s primary organizations to address problems that are of greater-than-local concern.

The Florida Regional Councils Association is an alliance of Florida’s ten regional planning councils, which serves to strengthen regional planning councils, enhance regional economic prosperity, and improve the consistency and quality of regional planning council programs that add value to state, regional, and local initiatives. The Association is governed by a 30-member Policy Board comprising two elected officials and one gubernatorial appointee from each regional planning council. The Policy Board meets to address issues affecting regional planning councils, share information with its partners, and set policy and a legislative agenda. The Policy Board seeks national support of its statewide and regional agenda from Florida’s Congressional Delegation as well as support for state funding of regional planning councils to carry out state mandates and responsibilities. The Association ensures regional planning councils are consensus builders and problem solvers, and serve as conveners of their regions. The Association encourages and promotes opportunities for regional planning councils to become partners in federal and state programs and initiatives, while promoting the uniqueness of each region. Regional planning council executive directors serve as the Policy Board’s Executive Directors Advisory Committee to coordinate statewide initiatives, collaborate with state agencies, and share best programmatic and administrative practices.

As partners to local governments statewide, regional planning councils deliver an array of award-winning services and support in the areas of economic development, transportation, emergency preparedness and quality of life. As regional conveners, regional planning councils bring together stakeholders from the private and public sectors to resolve important issues impacting their region and the state.

**Florida’s Regional Planning Councils provide
cost-effective, professional technical expertise
to counties and cities.**

Apalachee Regional Planning Council

Ms. Lisa Miller, Gubernatorial Appointee
Honorable Jane Sauls, Leon County Commissioner
Honorable Durwood Stewart, City of Bristol Councilman

Central Florida Regional Planning Council

Honorable W. Patrick "Pat" Huff, City of Bartow Mayor
Honorable Juril "Buddy" Mansfield, DeSoto County Commissioner
Ms. Jacqueline Tucker, Gubernatorial Appointee

East Central Florida Regional Planning Council

Honorable Lee Constantine, Seminole County Commissioner
Honorable Sean Parks, Lake County Commissioner
Ms. Jill Rose, Gubernatorial Appointee

North Central Florida Regional Planning Council

Honorable Daniel Riddick, Bradford County Commissioner
Honorable Carolyn Spooner, City of Starke Commissioner
Ms. Lorene Thomas, Gubernatorial Appointee

Northeast Florida Regional Council

Honorable Frank Meeker, Flagler County Commissioner
Honorable Jon Netts, City of Palm Coast Mayor
Mr. Darryl Register, Gubernatorial Appointee

South Florida Regional Council

Mr. Mario Bailey, Gubernatorial Appointee
Honorable Franklin Caplan, City of Key Biscayne Councilman
Honorable David Rice, Monroe County

Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council

Honorable Forrest Banks, City of Ft. Myers Councilman
Mr. Don McCormick, Gubernatorial Appointee
Mr. Alan Reynolds, Gubernatorial Appointee

Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council

Honorable Scott Black, City of Dade City Commissioner
Honorable Victor Crist, Hillsborough County Commissioner
Ms. Barbara Sheen Todd, Gubernatorial Appointee

Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council

Mr. Michael Davis, Gubernatorial Appointee
Honorable James DuBois, Town of Lake Park Mayor
Honorable Tod Mowery, St. Lucie County Commissioner

West Florida Regional Planning Council

Honorable Thomas Abbot, City of Callaway Mayor
Honorable Nathan Boyles, Okaloosa County Commissioner
Mr. J. D. Smith, Gubernatorial Appointee



**Honorable Lee Constantine
President**



**Honorable Barbara Sheen Todd
First Vice-President**



**Honorable Carolyn Spooner
Second Vice-President**

ABOUT REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCILS

Florida's regional planning councils have provided professional technical support to **local governments, state and regional partners**, and the civic and business **communities** for more than **50 years**, in the areas of **Economic Development, Transportation Planning, Emergency Preparedness and Quality of Life**.



- Created by the local governments they serve, regional planning councils meet local government and regional needs, provide award winning services, and collaborate on state and federal initiatives and programs.
- Florida Statutes recognize regional planning councils as Florida's only multi-purpose regional entities that are in a position to plan for and coordinate intergovernmental solutions to growth-related problems on greater-than-local issues, provide technical assistance to local governments, and meet other needs of the communities in each region (Section 186.502(4), Florida Statutes).
- Regional planning councils adopt Strategic Regional Policy Plans to address natural resources, housing, emergency management, transportation, and economic development. Strategic Regional Policy Plans are long-range guides for the physical, economic, and social development of each region.
- All ten regional planning councils are federally designated Economic Development Districts by the U.S. Economic Development Administration, which empower the councils to provide local access to federal funds and engage in a full range of economic development activities as provided for in their federally approved Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Plans.
- In addition to their core functions in the areas of economic development, emergency management, transportation, quality of life, and serving as regional conveners, each regional planning council tailors its services and programs to address regional concerns and meet the needs of their member local governments. A complete list of regional planning council services and programs is on pages 18 and 19.
- Each regional planning council is governed by a Board of Directors comprising two-thirds local elected officials and one-third gubernatorial appointees from its member counties. These governing boards range in size from 18 to 48 members, and include at least four ex-officio, nonvoting members from the following entities: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Florida Department of Transportation, and the jurisdictional water management district(s). Funding for regional planning councils comes from local government membership dues; federal, state, and local grants; and a variety of contracts for services.



RETURN ON INVESTMENT

- Through regional planning councils, the U.S. Economic Development Administration invested \$74.9 million in 39 projects in Florida, creating 5,623 jobs, retaining 10,310 jobs, and leveraging more than \$606 million in private capital investment (from January 2005 to September 2015).
- In 2014-15, through revolving loan funds, three regional planning councils loaned \$1.97 million to grow small businesses and encouraged business retention and expansion, resulting in the creation/retention of 155 jobs. Over the past ten years, these regional planning councils loaned \$41.9 million, resulting in the creation/retention of 3,760 jobs.
- In 2014-15, regional planning councils conducted 53 regional economic impact analyses and studies, often in support of local economic development organizations, helping them compete nationally and globally for investment and skilled jobs. In the past ten years, 560 economic analyses have been completed by regional planning councils.
- In 2014-15, regional planning councils trained 3,996 first responders/emergency management personnel. In the past ten years, 38,573 first responders/emergency management personnel have been trained.
- In 2014-15, regional planning councils validated 685 projects under the Federal Consistency Review Program, ensuring access to hundreds of millions of federal infrastructure and economic development investment dollars. Under this program, 12,673 projects were reviewed in the past 10 years.

AWARDS

2014 National Association of Development Organizations Innovation Awards

Apalachee Regional Planning Council
Wakulla Environmental Institute

Central Florida Regional Planning Council
Heartland 2060

**Central Florida Regional Planning Council,
Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council &
Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council**
Florida Local / Regional Broadband Planning Project

North Central Florida Regional Planning Council
Incorporating Safety into Transportation Planning

Northeast Florida Regional Council
Regional Action Plan for Sea Level Rise

2014 American Planning Association Florida Chapter Awards of Merit

**Central Florida Regional Planning Council &
Shimberg Center for Housing**
Affordable Housing Toolkit for Heartland 2060

Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council
Seven50: Southeast Florida Regional Partnership Plan

2015 National Association of Regional Councils Major Metro Award

**Central Florida Regional Planning Council,
Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council &
Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council**
Florida Local / Regional Broadband Planning Project

2015 Florida Planning & Zoning Association Grassroots Initiative Award

Central Florida Regional Planning Council
Heartland 2060

2015 Florida Planning & Zoning Association Redevelopment Plan Award

Central Florida Regional Planning Council
Bartow Community Redevelopment Plan

2015 Congress for the New Urbanism Charter Award

Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council
Seven50: Southeast Florida Regional Partnership Plan

DIRECTORY



REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL	COUNTY	EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Apalachee	Calhoun Franklin Gadsden Liberty Gulf Jackson Jefferson Leon Wakulla	Chris N. Rietow 2507 Callaway Road, Suite 200 Tallahassee, FL 32303 PH: 850.488.6211, x102 FAX: 850.488.1616 Email: crietow@thearpc.com Website: www.thearpc.com
Central Florida	DeSoto Hardee Highlands Okeechobee Polk	Patricia M. Steed 555 East Church Street Bartow, FL 33830 PH: 863.534.7130, x130 FAX: 863.534.7138 Email: psteed@cfrpc.org Website: http://www.cfrpc.org

REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL	COUNTY	EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
East Central Florida	Brevard Lake Orange Osceola	Seminole Sumter Volusia
		Hugh W. Harling, Jr. 309 Cranes Roost Boulevard, Suite 2000 Altamonte Springs, FL 32701 PH: 407.262.7772, x303 Fax: 407.262.7788 Email: hharling@ecfrpc.org Website: http://www.ecfrpc.org
North Central Florida	Alachua Bradford Columbia Dixie Gilchrist Hamilton Lafayette	Levy Madison Marion Suwannee Taylor Union
		Scott R. Koons 2009 Northwest 67th Place Gainesville, FL 32653 PH: 352.955.2200, x101 FAX: 352.955.2209 Email: koons@ncfrpc.org Web Site: http://www.ncfrpc.org
Northeast Florida	Baker Clay Duval Flagler	Nassau Putnam St. Johns
		Brian D. Teeple 6850 Belfort Oaks Place Jacksonville, FL 32216 PH: 904.279.0880, x103 FAX: 904.279.0881 Email: bteeple@nefrpc.org Web Site: http://www.nefrpc.org
South Florida	Broward Miami-Dade Monroe	
		Isabel Cosio Carballo 3440 Hollywood Boulevard, Suite 140 Hollywood, FL 33021 PH: 954.985.4416, x220 FAX: 954.985.4417 Email: isabelc@sfrpc.com Website: http://www.sfrpc.com
Southwest Florida	Charlotte Collier Glades	Hendry Lee Sarasota
		Margaret A. Wuerstle 1400 Colonial Boulevard, Suite 1 Ft. Myers, FL 33907 PH: 239.938.1813 FAX: 239.938.1817 Email: mwuerstle@swfrpc.org Website: http://www.swfrpc.org
Tampa Bay	Citrus Hernando Hillsborough	Manatee Pasco Pinellas
		Sean T. Sullivan, Executive Director 4000 Gateway Centre Boulevard, Suite 100 Pinellas Park, FL 33782 PH: 727.570.5151, x17 FAX: 727.570.5118 Email: sean@tbrpc.org Website: http://www.tbrpc.org
Treasure Coast	Indian River Martin	Palm Beach St. Lucie
		Michael J. Busha 421 Southwest Camden Avenue Stuart, FL 34994 PH: 772.221.4060, x15 FAX: 772.221.4067 Email: mbusha@tcrpc.org Website: http://www.tcrpc.org
West Florida	Bay Escambia Holmes Okaloosa	Santa Rosa Walton Washington
		Austin L. Mount 4081 East Olive Road, Suite A Pensacola, FL 32514 PH: 850.332.7976, x201 FAX: 850.637.1923 Email: austin.mount@wfrpc.org Website: www.wfrpc.org

VOTING MEMBER GOVERNMENTS



REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL	COUNTY	MUNICIPALITY (BY COUNTY)	GUBERNATORIAL APPOINTEE COUNTY	BOARD MEETING DATE/TIME
Apalachee	Calhoun Franklin Gadsden Gulf Jackson Jefferson Leon Liberty Wakulla	Altha Carrabelle Quincy Wewahitchka Malone Monticello Tallahassee Bristol St. Marks	Calhoun Franklin Gadsden Gulf Jackson Jefferson Leon Liberty Wakulla	Every other month: Fourth Thursday 10:30 a.m.
Central Florida	DeSoto Hardee Highlands Okeechobee Polk	Arcadia Wauchula Sebring Okeechobee Lakeland, Winter Haven, and Ridge League of Cities	DeSoto Hardee Highlands Okeechobee Polk	Monthly: Second Wednesday 9:30 a.m.
East Central Florida	Brevard Lake Orange Osceola Seminole Sumter Volusia	Space Coast League of Cities Lake County League of Cities Orlando and Tri-County League of Cities Tri-County League of Cities Tri-County League of Cities To Be Determined Volusia County League of Cities	Brevard Lake Orange Osceola Seminole Sumter Volusia	Every other month: Third Wednesday 10:00 a.m.
North Central Florida	Alachua Bradford Columbia Dixie Gilchrist Hamilton Lafayette Levy Madison Marion Suwannee Taylor Union	Alachua, Archer, Gainesville, Hawthorne, High Springs, Newberry, and Waldo Starke Lake City No Voting Municipal Member No Voting Municipal Member Jasper No Voting Municipal Member No Voting Municipal Member Madison No Voting Municipal Member Live Oak Perry No Voting Municipal Member	Alachua Bradford Columbia Dixie Gilchrist Hamilton Lafayette Levy Madison Marion Suwannee Taylor Union	Monthly: Fourth Thursday 7:30 p.m.

VOTING MEMBER GOVERNMENTS

REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL	COUNTY	MUNICIPALITY (BY COUNTY)	GUBERNATORIAL APPOINTEE COUNTY	BOARD MEETING DATE/TIME
Northeast Florida	Baker Clay Duval Flagler Nassau Putnam St. Johns	MacClenny Keystone Heights Baldwin Bunnell Callahan Palatka St. Augustine	Baker Clay Duval Flagler Nassau Putnam St. Johns	Every other month: First Thursday 10:00 a.m.
South Florida	Broward Miami-Dade Monroe	Lauderhill and Cooper City Key Biscayne and Miami Lakes Key West	Broward Miami-Dade Monroe	Every other month: First Monday 10:30 a.m.
Southwest Florida	Charlotte Collier Glades Hendry Lee Sarasota	Punta Gorda Marco Island, Naples, and Everglades City Moore Haven Clewiston and Labelle Bonita Springs, Cape Coral, Ft. Myers, Ft. Myers Beach, and Sanibel Longboat Key, North Port, Sarasota, and Venice	Charlotte Collier Glades Hendry Lee Sarasota	Monthly: Third Thursday 9:00 a.m.
Tampa Bay	Citrus Hernando Hillsborough Manatee Pasco Pinellas	No Voting Municipal Member No Voting Municipal Member Plant City, Tampa, and Temple Terrace Bradenton and Palmetto Dade City, New Port Richey, and Zephyrhills Clearwater, Dunedin, Gulfport, Largo, Oldsmar, Pinellas Park, Safety Harbor, St. Petersburg, St. Pete Beach, Seminole, South Pasadena, Tarpon Springs, and Treasure Island	Citrus Hernando Hillsborough Manatee Pasco Pinellas	Monthly: Second Monday 10:00 a.m.
Treasure Coast	Indian River Martin Palm Beach St. Lucie	Sebastian and Indian River Shores Sewall's Point Jupiter, Lake Park, Royal Palm Beach, Palm Beach Gardens, and Wellington Fort Pierce and Port St. Lucie	Indian River Martin Palm Beach St. Lucie	Ten Times/Year: Third Friday 9:30 a.m.
West Florida	Bay Escambia Holmes Okaloosa Santa Rosa Walton Washington	Callaway, Lynn Haven, Panama City, and Panama City Beach Pensacola Boniface and Ponce de Leon Crestview, Destin, and Fort Walton Beach Jay, Milton and Gulf Breeze DeFuniak Springs, Paxton, and Freeport Chipley and Vernon	Escambia Washington	Monthly: Third Monday 3:30 p.m.

BY THE NUMBERS

REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL	DATE ESTABLISHED	2014 REGIONAL POPULATION¹	GOVERNING BOARD SIZE	STAFF SIZE (FTE)²	SQUARE MILES	2014-15 BUDGET
Apalachee	Aug. 23, 1977	477,098	27	6	5,855	\$693,785
Central Florida	July 1, 1974	824,958	18	16	5,287	\$3,179,548
East Central Florida	Feb. 22, 1962	3,437,773	32	16	6,502	\$2,792,896
North Central Florida	May 7, 1969	882,113	48	13	9,516	\$1,688,600
Northeast Florida	April 14, 1977	1,568,868	35	10	4,428	\$2,425,910
South Florida	July 1, 1974	4,581,780	19	14	4,091	\$2,284,711
Southwest Florida	Nov. 8, 1973	1,592,622	36	12	6,023	\$2,656,064
Tampa Bay	Feb. 16, 1962	3,369,783	44	12	4,179	\$2,317,120
Treasure Coast	Aug. 19, 1976	1,932,599	28	10	3,555	\$2,010,112
West Florida	Oct. 1, 1964	929,916	33	28	6,026	\$2,954,512

¹Source: [Florida Estimates of Population, 2014](#), Table 1, Bureau of Economic and Business Research, University of Florida, 2015.

²FTE means Full-Time Equivalent.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Marine Industries Career Training

The Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council completed a Regional Waterways Plan for Martin and St. Lucie Counties, which involved an evaluation of economic opportunities with the nearly 140 miles of navigable waterways in the region. A key finding focused on the marine industry sub-sector and its workforce development needs.



The Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council evaluated the workforce needs of the marine industry in the Treasure Coast region.

The plan recommended a new high school/post-secondary career track to expand the local industry workforce. The Council, the local school district, and the Marine Industries Association of the Treasure Coast region collaborated to identify appropriate industry certifications, internship opportunities with marine businesses and in-school mentors, and participated in career expos to recruit students.

Federal Transit Administration Funding Improves Access to Employment

Regional planning councils administer Federal Transit Administration funding with the specific goal of improving access to employment and employment-related activities for eligible low-income individuals under the Florida Transportation Disadvantaged Program. Funding may be used to transport qualified residents to education and training venues. To identify eligible clients in need of transport, regional planning councils partner with district workforce boards, educational institutions, and vocational rehabilitation agencies. Federal Transit Administration funds may also be used to procure vehicles to provide transport for eligible individuals.

EDUCATION

Regional Schools Work Group

For nearly a decade, the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council has facilitated a Regional Schools Work Group that includes four local school districts with participation by Florida Atlantic University, Indian River State College, Palm Beach State College, two CareerSource districts and local governments. The Work Group meets six to 12 times annually to discuss legislation, population projections, opportunities for capital facilities efficiencies, and workforce development/career training.

Northeast Florida Regional Leadership Academy

The Northeast Florida Regional Council continued a nine-year program by welcoming the Class of 2015 to its Northeast Florida Regional Leadership Academy. The 15 candidates represent a variety of fields including law enforcement, aviation, and education. Each month, the class explored one county in the region, examining regional issues such as transportation, public safety, natural and cultural resources, food, sustainability, and education. Since 2006, the Regional Leadership Academy has produced more than 200 regionalists and lifetime members of the Regional Community Institute.

Curriculum at Florida Polytechnic

The Central Florida Regional Planning Council provided input and guidance in the development of curriculum for programs



The Central Florida Regional Planning Council provided guidance in curriculum development for Florida Polytechnic University.

supporting Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math majors at Florida Polytechnic University. The University curriculum aligns with goals contained in the State Strategic Plan for Economic Development, the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, and Heartland 2060: Building a Resilient Region initiative.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS/ COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES



Regional Planning Councils are Federally Designated Economic Development Districts

Through regional planning councils, from January 2005 to September 2015, the U.S. Economic Development Administration invested \$74.9 million in 39 projects in Florida, creating 5,623 jobs, retaining 10,310 jobs and leveraging more than \$606 million in private capital investment.

Six Pillars™ Communities

The Florida Chamber Foundation's designation of the ten regional planning councils as Six Pillars™ Communities, acknowledges the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies of regional planning councils alignment with the

opportunities for the entire state, including rural areas. This designation brought the Six Pillars™ to the attention of the U.S. Economic Development Administration, reinforcing Florida's commitment to align and focus the public and private sectors on economic development.

FLORIDA STRATEGIC PLAN FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Approved by the Governor in 2014, the Florida Strategic Plan for Economic Development is organized according to the Florida Chamber Foundation's Six Pillars™, and defines the



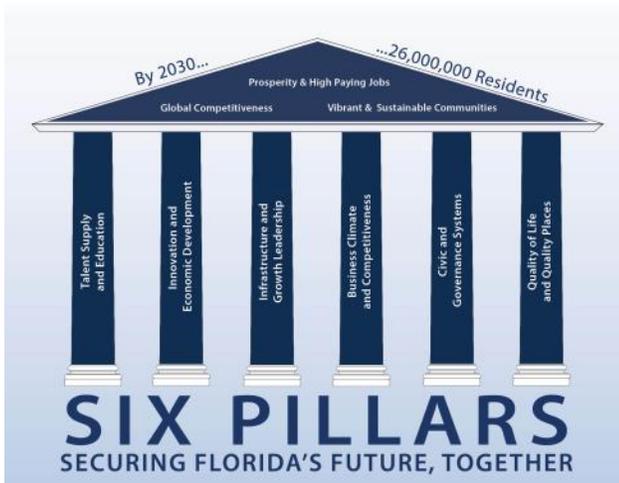
Medical manufacturing and life sciences are growing industry clusters identified in regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies.

goals, objectives, and strategies to move Florida toward its economic vision of being increasingly competitive.

In addition to playing a significant role in the development of the Strategic Plan, regional planning councils developed tactics and metrics to measure and report quarterly on their progress toward achieving the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan. For the 2014-15 state fiscal year, regional planning councils accomplished the following:

- 155 jobs were created or retained through their revolving loan fund programs.
- 90 grants were written in partnership with their local governments or economic development organizations.
- 53 economic impact analyses were completed on behalf of their local governments or economic development organizations.

Regional planning councils engaged in thousands of technical assistance activities in support of the strategies in the Strategic Plan, which were also implemented through actions that supported the Strategic Regional Policy Plans and Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies of regional planning councils.



The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies of regional planning councils are aligned with the Florida Chamber Foundation's Six Pillars for Securing Florida's Future.

Foundation's Six Pillars™. This alignment with Florida's business community leverages the economic development efforts of regional planning councils and fosters more

The New Normal Forum Focused on Regional & National Demographics

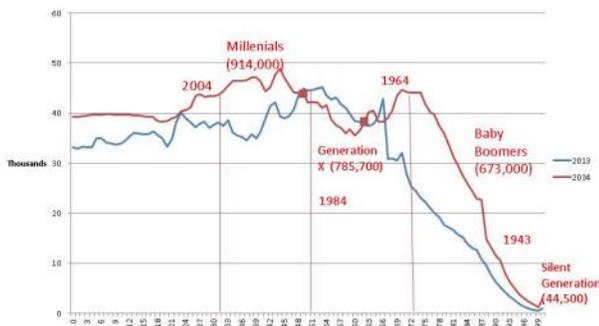
The Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council hosted *The New Normal: Fiscal and Demographic Trends Shaping Florida and Tampa Bay*, a forum on the demographic trends shaping the region's future and the impacts on regional communities and economic development. The forum was led by Dr. Carol Wiessert of Florida State University's Leroy Collins Institute, who presented findings of the *Tougher Choices* report. Beginning in 2005, the Institute's series of reports, *Tough Choices: Shaping Florida's Future*, provided in-depth analysis of Florida tax and spending policy and concluded that Florida's pattern of low spending and low taxes conflicted with the growing demands of the state's residents.

The implications for Tampa Bay were addressed. The region, like Florida and the nation, face a historic shift in the average age of the population. As Baby Boomers retire, more Americans than ever before will leave the workforce. The Council cited this profound impacts of this trend on the regional economy, from the costs of supporting a dependent population to the problems of a smaller workforce.

Regional Community Institute

Aging Trends

- Over 65 population is now 26%, by 2034, 35%
- Over 75 population is now 12%, by 2034 19%



The Regional Community Institute, Inc., a not-for-profit policy affiliate of the Northeast Florida Regional Council, completed policy recommendations regarding its Thriving Small Business initiative. The Institute established baseline data regarding small businesses in the region and developed small business climate indicators in an effort to identify actions that would make Northeast Florida most conducive to small business startups, expanded employment, and long-term success. An Action Plan proposes to use the Economic Development District designation of the Council by submitting at least one project per year for funding to support small business, partnering and sharing information

with key stakeholders to strengthen agriculture and agritourism, and developing a "Main Street" strategy for the region focused on downtowns that present opportunities for small businesses.

RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

The Rural Economic Development Initiative is a coordinated effort among state and regional agencies to provide programs and services to rural and economically distressed communities. The Initiative recommends to the Governor the designations of Rural Areas of Opportunity. The Rural Area of Opportunity designation establishes each as a priority assignment for the Initiative and allows for waivers or reduction of match and assistance from Initiative agencies. Florida's three Rural Areas of Opportunities are:

- **Northwest** - Calhoun, Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, Liberty, Wakulla, Washington Counties and the City of Freeport (Walton County)
- **North Central** - Baker, Bradford, Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lafayette, Levy, Madison, Putnam, Suwannee, Taylor, and Union Counties
- **South Central** - DeSoto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, and Okeechobee Counties and the cities of Pahokee, Belle Glade and South Bay (Palm Beach County) and Immokalee (Collier County)

Within each area is at least one catalyst project undertaken to help bring a skilled workforce and higher paying jobs to these regions. Regional planning councils work closely with the Florida Heartland Regional Economic Development Initiative, Opportunity Florida, and North Florida Economic Development Partnership.



The North Central Florida Regional Planning Council obtained funding for a new water plant at the North Central Florida Rural Area of Opportunity Catalyst Site in Suwannee County.

MANUFACTURING & HIGH TECH

Medical Device Manufacturing Economic Analysis

The Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council received grant assistance from the U.S. Economic Development Administration to analyze medical device manufacturing in the West Central Florida mega-region. Performed in partnership with the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council, the Medical Device Manufacturing Analysis included a detailed analysis of the industry and its sub-components. The project assessed potential infrastructure needs, logistical issues, workforce skill competency and a variety of other factors that can be useful as a framework for analysts concerned with how to grow the industry in Florida.

The medical device manufacturing industry in Florida is the second largest in the nation producing \$2.0 billion in gross state product annually. The medical device manufacturing industry employing 6,800 persons in the West Central Florida mega-region accounts for over 33 percent of the industry employment in the state.

The study identified key players and the strategic actions needed to grow and expand the manufacturing base. A regional website was developed to access those resources and to market to economic development organizations and their manufacturing prospects. As a pilot prototype, the study is transferable to the other economic development districts in Florida. The long-term benefits from the study should yield a pathway that can be duplicated to expedite investing in manufacturing community partnerships.



The Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council, in partnership with the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council, conducted a medical device manufacturing study to identify training and infrastructure needs.

High Tech Industry Economic Impact

The North Central Florida Regional Planning Council partnered with the Gainesville Area Council for Economic Outreach to analyze the economic impact of the high tech industry in the Gainesville Area. Through Innovation Gainesville, a communitywide initiative of the Gainesville Area Council for Economic Outreach, the University of Florida, Santa Fe College, Alachua County and the City of Gainesville, the economy of the area is being transformed by leveraging the applied research conducted at the University and workforce training provided by the College.



The North Central Florida Regional Planning Council partnered with the Gainesville Area Council for Economic Outreach to analyze the economic impact of high tech industries including some of the firms housed at Florida Innovation Hub at the University of Florida.

One of the five priority projects areas of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy adopted by the North Central Florida Regional Planning Council is to support the creation and expansion of business incubators and research parks. Florida Innovation Hub at the University of Florida is a high tech business incubator constructed by the University of Florida with funding from the U.S. Economic Development Administration. The Hub provides office space, laboratories, conference rooms and other capabilities to technology-based start-up companies.

The analysis evaluated a projected five-year impact of over 1,200 jobs created by 12 high tech firms that either started, relocated or expanded within Alachua County. The analysis indicated that the creation of these direct jobs will result in over 2,000 estimated direct jobs. In addition, the economic impact of the creation of these jobs is estimated to generate an increase of over \$200 million in gross county product. Real disposal personal income is estimated to increase by over \$70 million.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Comprehensive Planning

The Community Planning Act governs local government comprehensive planning in Florida. Local government comprehensive plan amendments are reviewed by regional planning councils for extra-jurisdictional impacts and consistency with the applicable Strategic Regional Policy Plan. Under the Expedited State Review process, regional planning councils send their comments to the local government and the State Land Planning Agency (Florida Department of Economic Opportunity). Under the State Coordinated Review process, regional planning councils send comments to the State Land Planning Agency.

Local Government Technical Assistance

Some regional planning councils serve as the county or city planner for local governments that may not have full-time planning staff. Regional planning councils provide affordable, high-quality technical assistance to local governments in a variety of areas related to:

- comprehensive plan map and text amendments
- development proposals
- grant writing and administration
- redevelopment master plans
- evaluation and appraisal assessments
- rezoning applications
- sea level rise and climate resiliency initiatives
- land development regulations
- water supply plans
- special permits and special exceptions
- traffic studies
- lane elimination projects
- mobility plans
- complete streets projects
- concurrency evaluations
- local site plans
- natural resource easements
- visioning exercises



Redevelopment proposal for existing shopping center on State Road 7 in Palm Beach County.

Geographic Information Systems Mapping

Some regional planning councils provide Geographic Information System mapping and other services to local governments, such as:

- local government map series and regional map series
- delineation of community redevelopment areas
- utility service areas
- natural resource and environmentally sensitive areas
- hurricane surge zones
- soils classifications and floodplain areas
- corridor analyses

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Training, Exercises, and Technical Assistance

Regional planning councils are a source of affordable, high-quality planning and training professionals with expertise in emergency management and preparedness who are available to member local governments and stakeholders. This assistance includes exercise and training activities designed in conjunction with county emergency management staff.



Hazardous materials response training for first responders is provided or coordinated through regional planning councils throughout the state.

Over the past ten years, regional planning councils have trained more than 38,573 first responders and other emergency management personnel. Regional planning councils coordinate training for public and private sector first responders in the following areas:

- hazardous materials and hazardous waste
- incident command
- disaster response
- pre- and post-disaster planning
- post-disaster redevelopment
- continuity of operations and governance

PROGRAM MATRIX

PROGRAM	ARPC	CFRPC	ECFRPC	NCFRPC	NEFRC	SFRC	SWFRPC	TBRPC	TCRPC	WFRPC
Regional Planning										
Broadband Planning		X					X	X		
Energy Initiatives	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Federal Clearinghouse	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Health Initiatives		X	X		X	X	X			
Military Base Compatibility		X	X	X	X	X		X		X
Strategic Regional Policy Plan	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
U.S. Housing & Urban Development Sustainable Communities Initiative		X	X			X				
Visioning Initiatives		X	X		X	X	X	X	X	
Economic Development										
Brownfields Assessments		X							X	X
Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy/Economic Development District	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Eco/Cultural/Heritage Tourism Development			X	X	X		X	X	X	
Economic Development Organization Collaboration	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Economic Impact Analyses Modeling	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Revolving Loan Fund	X	X				X			X	X
Rural Area of Opportunity	X	X		X	X		X		X	X
Rural Economic Technical Assistance	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Community Development										
Affordable Housing Initiatives		X	X	X	X	X		X		X
Areas of Critical State Concern	X	X	X			X	X	X		
Coastal Zone Planning			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Developments of Regional Impact	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Dispute Resolution		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Downtown Redevelopment and Urban Design		X	X	X			X		X	X
Geographic Information Systems Mapping/US Census Data Center	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Grant Writing and Administration	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Local Government Comprehensive Plan Review	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Local Government, Land Use, and Community Planning	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

PROGRAM MATRIX

PROGRAM	ARPC	CFRPC	ECFRPC	NCFRPC	NEFRC	SFRC	SWFRPC	TBRPC	TCRPC	WFRPC
Community Development (Continued)										
Newsletter		X			X		X	X		X
Regional Leadership Training			X		X		X		X	
U.S. Census State Data Center Affiliate	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Emergency Preparedness										
Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan Support	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
Emergency Management and Disaster-Related Training Exercises	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Hazardous First Responder Training	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Hurricane Evacuation	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Local Emergency Planning Committee	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Local Hazard Mitigation Strategies	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	
Post Disaster Redevelopment Planning	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	
Regional Domestic Security Task Force	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Sea Level Rise/Climate Change Studies			X		X	X	X	X	X	
Small Quantity Hazardous Waste	X	X		X	X		X		X	X
Statewide Regional Evacuation Study	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Transportation Planning										
Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning		X	X	X					X	X
Commuter Assistance Programs					X					X
Local Government Transportation		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Metropolitan Transportation Planning		X		X						X
Modal Planning Initiatives		X	X			X			X	
Rural Transportation Planning Services	X	X			X					X
Safe Routes to School Initiatives		X	X				X			X
Transportation Disadvantaged Program	X	X		X	X		X			X
Environmental & Natural Resource Planning										
Clean Cities Initiatives						X				X
Estuary/River/Bay/Ecosystem	X		X			X	X	X	X	X
Springs Protection Initiatives			X							
Wildlife Habitat Initiatives		X	X				X		X	

INFRASTRUCTURE & GROWTH LEADERSHIP

Local Emergency Planning Committees

Regional planning councils coordinate Local Emergency Planning Committees charged with facilitating regional hazardous materials emergency response and compliance with hazardous materials reporting laws under the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act. The State Emergency Response Commission appoints the Committee members who represent various groups of first responders and private partners. The Committees perform the following:

- Serve as a public information repository for inventory reports
- Assist in planning for chemical spill mitigation
- Provide and supports training events
- Design, conduct and evaluate emergency exercises
- Educate the public on reaction to hazardous materials releases

Emergency Management Exercises Protect Public Health and Safety

In 2014, the Local Emergency Committee of the Central Florida Regional Planning Council produced an active shooter scenario at a local high school to train personnel to respond in the event of an active shooter on campus.

The design, development, execution, and documentation of exercises over six months complied with the Department of Homeland Security standard. A table-top exercise for senior leadership, and a full scale event involving school administration, students, and response disciplines were executed. The table-top exercise helped to evaluate policies, plans, and procedures for a response to an active shooter scenario in a Polk County school. Emphasizing the role of local first responders and mutual aid agencies, the exercise focused on coordination, critical decisions, notifications, and integration of the city and county assets that protect lives.

The full-scale event involved more than 100 controllers, evaluators, role players including students, and support personnel from Polk County and local municipalities, as well as fire rescue, emergency medical services, law enforcement and public affairs. Conducted in actual classrooms, the event was shared via live streaming video with more than 500 Polk County School principals, administrators and teachers.

Agencies narrated the events and explained the actions taken. An After-Action Report identified planning, training, and exercise needs to ensure preparedness for response to an actual on-campus shooter event.

2015 HazMat Training Symposium

The 2015 HazMat Training Symposium was conducted by East Central Florida Regional Planning Council in conjunction with Fire Rescue East. Over a three-day period, 29



The 2015 HazMat Training Symposium was co-sponsored by the East Central Florida Regional Planning Council and Fire Rescue East.

classroom and hands-on trainings were conducted at the Volusia County Ocean Center and the Volusia County Fire Services Training Facility. Participation by more than 193 registrants from Brevard, Volusia and Orange Counties, and the City of Orlando represented a 35 percent increase over the enrollment in the program for the previous year.

Regional Domestic Security Task Forces

During the past year, three of the seven Regional Domestic Security Task Forces in Florida were staffed by the Apalachee, East Central, South Florida and Tampa Bay Regional Planning Councils. The mission of the Task Forces is to ensure a safe and secure future; strengthen domestic security prevention, preparedness, protection, response, and recovery capabilities through interdisciplinary and interagency consensus; and build and rely upon a strong regional mutual aid response capability. Under the leadership of these Task Forces, the four regional planning councils coordinated Regional Domestic Security exercises to encourage and facilitate multijurisdictional and multidisciplinary participation.

Hazards Analysis and Response Planning

Regional planning councils play a significant role in the hazards analysis planning process in Florida. The Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act requires all facilities possessing extremely hazardous substances with an amount equal to or greater than certain thresholds, to

submit a report to the State Emergency Response Commission. The process of completing a report on each of the facilities that identifies these chemicals, their quantities, the potential threat of a release, and critical facilities and special locations (i.e., schools, hospitals and nursing homes) is known as a hazards analysis. In addition to the analysis, a map is produced showing the threat zone for each chemical stored on site. The threat zone, or vulnerability zone, indicates the population and identifies special locations for evacuation in a worst-case scenario, in the event of a release. Annually, the State provides a list to all 67 counties, citing the facilities to be analyzed, and many counties contract with regional planning councils to complete their hazards analyses.

Small Quantity Generators of Hazardous Waste

Regional planning councils help the Florida Department of Environmental Protection implement the state-mandated Small Quantity Generators inspection program. Small Quantity Generators are individual businesses that generate or accumulate between 100 to 1,000 kilograms of dangerous waste each month.

The goal of the program is environmental protection by providing assistance through the identification, notification, and on-site verification of businesses that are considered active or potential generators of hazardous waste. Regional planning councils identify and monitor facilities that produce hazardous waste, either as a product or a by-product of day-to-day activities. These may include automotive repair facilities, dry cleaners, medical facilities that use x-ray machines, and manufacturing businesses among others.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

The Heartland Regional Transportation Planning Organization is a new and important part of the transportation planning process for DeSoto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, and Okeechobee Counties and the urbanized area of Highlands County including the Cities of Sebring and Avon Park. Designated by the Governor as the 27th Transportation Planning Organization in Florida, the Organization will assist in preparing the region for increasing urbanization and infrastructure investment through the creation of a 20-year Long Range Transportation Plan and a five-year Transportation Improvement Plan, as well as transportation planning activities. The Organization is the first organization of its kind to include both urbanized and rural counties in Florida. The linkages between these counties are economic, environmental, cultural and collaborative. With their history in agriculture, mining, ranching and small businesses based on abundant natural

resources, and with health care a major regional employer, the Heartland counties have worked together collaboratively through changing times.



The Central Florida Regional Planning Council provides staff services to the Organization as the region and its Heartland 2060 partnerships prepare for greater urbanization and infrastructure investment, including a planned multimodal transportation system to move people and goods.

Rural Transportation Work Program

During the past year, the Apalachee Regional Planning Council and West Florida Regional Planning Council, pursuant to contracts with the Florida Department of Transportation, assisted the Department by bringing information from the Department's five-year work program to counties in the rural areas, thereby strengthening regional transportation planning priority setting in these areas. In the West Florida region, the counties included Escambia, Holmes, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, Walton, and Washington. In the Apalachee region, the counties served were Calhoun, Franklin, Gulf, Jackson, and Liberty. Regional planning council and county staff reviewed current projects and discussed potential future projects. The majority of the needs identified included bicycle/pedestrian facilities, bridge replacements, maintenance of paved shoulders, and roadway resurfacing.

HOUSING

79th Street Corridor Initiative Community Action Plan

The South Florida Regional Council assisted the Neighborhood Housing Services of South Florida, the 79th Street Corridor Initiative, residents, and others with the development of a Community Action Plan. The Plan builds on the assets of the community and is being used to guide community enhancement and strategic investment in order to advance economic, environmental, and social well-being. The Plan provides a framework around the following six action areas, and will be updated regularly to reflect accomplishments, tasks, new partners and new community and economic development priorities.

- Create a range of housing options
- Improve appearance and vitality of built environment

INFRASTRUCTURE & GROWTH LEADERSHIP

- Foster economic development
- Create an environment that supports healthy behaviors
- Create ladders of opportunity through lifelong learning
- Build and maintain community and steering committee capacity and engagement



The South Florida Regional Planning Council assisted the 79th Street Corridor Initiative in the development of a Community Action Plan designed to advance economic, environmental and social well-being.

The remaining challenge is to bridge the gap between research and planning, and investment and implementation. Broad-based political will and commitment from diverse partners will be required for the investment of professional and financial resources of the magnitude necessary to change the conversation from one of assisting a community of need to one of realizing the potential of a community of opportunity. The establishment of the 79th Street Corridor Steering Committee was a key first step. A multi-disciplinary team of public, private, non-profit, and philanthropic organizations and champions, led by Neighborhood Housing Services of South Florida, came together and applied talent, knowledge and influence to garner needed investment for the community. Another important element of the process was the ongoing engagement of residents and the fostering of community leadership.

Kissimmee and Osceola County Housing Studies

The East Central Florida Regional Planning Council worked with the City of Kissimmee and Osceola County to prepare housing studies for both jurisdictions. The studies provide an inventory of the existing housing stock, project housing demand based on the demographic and economic profile of the area, and analyze small neighborhoods and districts.

State Housing Initiative Partnership Programs

The West Florida Regional Planning Council successfully managed the State Housing Initiative Partnership programs for Holmes, Walton and Washington Counties over the past year. The Council provided \$1,038,498 in housing rehabilitation services to very low, low-, and moderate-income households. The Northeast Florida Regional Council managed two State Housing Initiative Partnership programs - one for Baker County and one for Putnam County. The Council administered \$377,972 to provide housing and housing rehabilitation services to very low, low-, and moderate-income households.

Affordable Housing Toolkit for the Heartland

The Central Florida Regional Planning Council Affordable Housing Toolkit is a three-pronged analytical tool, which includes an Affordable Parcel Inventory for the six rural counties of the Florida Heartland - DeSoto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, and Okeechobee Counties. The Toolkit was created with guidance from the Heartland 2060 Consortium, a partnership of local governments, economic development organizations, environmental groups, the University of Florida, and the Central Florida Regional Planning Council. The Toolkit estimates and examines the affordability of residential parcels in the counties by estimating their combined housing and transportation related costs. The Toolkit received a 2014 American Planning Association-Florida Chapter Award of Merit.

WATER & ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS



Indian River Lagoon is an important regional resource of natural significance spanning the East Central Florida region and the Treasure Coast region.

Indian River Lagoon

The East Central Florida Regional Planning Council, and Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council, with funding through the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, engaged in a data collection and mapping process for outfalls along the Indian River Lagoon. The Councils developed a Basin Management Action Plan Impediments report for the stakeholders. The project was conducted to advance regional collaboration and data collection in an effort to improve the health of the Indian River Lagoon. The collaboration involved Brevard, Indian River, Martin, St. Lucie, and Volusia Counties.

The Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council and East Central Florida Regional Planning Council continue work on phase two of this project. The efforts associated with this phase of the project include an economic valuation study of the lagoon, an assessment of sea level rise on the outfall and counties, a review of and recommendations for best practices for outfall maintenance, and an update of water quality data.



The North Central Florida Regional Planning Council, in partnership with county tourist development councils, promotes north central Florida for nature, culture and heritage based tourism.

Original Florida Tourism Task Force

For many rural communities in north central Florida, tourism is a primary component of economic activity. The Original Florida Tourism Task Force markets the 12-county "Natural North Florida" region by promoting its nature, culture, and heritage based assets for tourism. Task Force representatives from each of the participating counties in the region support and direct the tourism development effort. The North Central Florida Regional Planning Council provides staffing to the Task Force to maintain the Natural North Florida website, coordinate travel show participation, create publicity campaigns, and produce marketing materials.

Funding from a Rural Regional Development Grant from the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, as well as grants from VISIT FLORIDA, help implement the marketing plan in order to build capacity in the rural communities. Recently, the Task Force also completed web-based bicycle maps for each of the counties in the region. In partnership with VISIT FLORIDA, the Task Force participated in international and domestic travel trade shows to promote "Natural North Florida."

ENERGY

Energy Summit Tampa Bay

The Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council hosted the 2015 Energy Summit Tampa Bay. Stakeholders from the energy



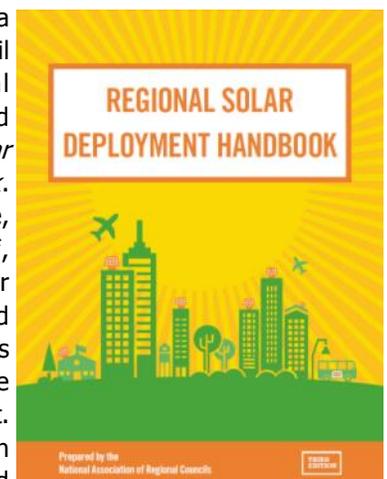
ENERGY SUMMIT
TAMPA BAY

industry, elected officials and policy makers, business and economic development partners, citizen leaders, and students gathered to focus on energy resilience and assurance.

An educational component presented alternative and renewable solutions/options currently available through energy industry stakeholders. Future energy sources and resources were also explored. The full-day program included presentations on energy demand and supply, state and national perspectives on solar energy, renewables, energy infrastructure security and resilience, energy efficient buildings, solar photovoltaic systems and alternative energy for transportation.

Regional Solar Deployment Handbook

The Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council and Tampa Regional Planning Council contributed to the *Regional Solar Deployment Handbook*. With this new resource, regional council staff, energy, sustainability or environmental planners, and local government officials can learn how to advance solar energy deployment. The Handbook focuses on regionally specific tools and



INFRASTRUCTURE & GROWTH LEADERSHIP

examples of other regional planning council efforts, and is a practical and applicable resource for regional solar energy deployment.

Solar Ready Florida

Solar Ready Florida is a collaborative effort to improve and expand the solar markets in the Tampa Bay and Southwest Florida regions. Led by the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council and Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council, Solar Ready Florida implements solar best management practices, training materials, and other strategies. Key solar electric stakeholders are engaged in this process, including city and county governments, solar contractors, and other solar industry groups, electric utilities, business leaders, and citizens. Together, with support from local governments, Solar Ready Florida achieves more streamlined and standardized solar practices, resulting in measurable improvement in solar market conditions.

Santa Rosa Island Authority Organizational and Financial Analysis

Since the Santa Rosa Island Authority was created by the Florida Legislature in 1947, the Authority has been fully funded from lease fees collected from residents and businesses. The West Florida Regional Planning Council was engaged by the Authority to analyze its existing organizational structure and funding sources in order to recommend how it could balance funding received from lease fees and property taxes, and maintain existing levels of service.

An organizational and financial analysis was conducted in partnership with the West Florida Regional Planning Council general planning consultant team, and the fundamental fiscal purpose, organizational intent, and transactional relationships involved in providing goods and services between Pensacola Beach and Escambia County were explored. The findings indicated Escambia County should earmark, allocate or redistribute available revenue sources of at least \$4 million for the municipal-type services currently being funded by the Authority. An equitable, fair share redistribution of these revenue sources could result from direct funding, elimination of expenses paid to Escambia County, or sharing of the responsibility for complementary provision of services between Escambia County and the Authority. This level of commitment for the services provided by the Authority would allow for the reduction of lease fees on Pensacola Beach properties.

CLIMATE CHANGE/SEA LEVEL RISE

Climate Change/Sea Level Rise Adaptation Action Areas

The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity initiated a five-year project to integrate sea level rise adaptation into current planning mechanisms, including local comprehensive plans, hazard mitigation plans, and post-disaster redevelopment plans. The Department is developing statewide guidance and a replicable model for coastal communities on implementing an Adaptation Action Area at the local level. Through funding from the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the Department engaged the South Florida Regional Council to assist in the research for Adaptation Action Area implementation strategies. The South Florida Regional



Miami Beach experiences seasonal high tides on days with no rain.

Council worked with the City of Fort Lauderdale, one of the Adaptation Action Area pilot communities, and Broward County to test the adaptation policy options to be incorporated into the City's comprehensive plan.

The South Florida Regional Council, Broward County, and the City explored and developed an interactive menu of options available to local governments that wish to designate Adaptation Action Areas and policies in their comprehensive plans. The results of the process were compiled in a series of guidance documents which include a Policy Options Report, a Fort Lauderdale Case Study, a practical "how-to" *Adaptation Action Areas Guidebook*, and a series of informational video interviews with stakeholders. The City recently adopted Adaptation Action Areas into the coastal management element of their comprehensive plan by unanimous City Commission vote. The Council subsequently assisted Miami-Dade County and the City of Pinecrest in implementing Adaptation Action Areas in the coastal management elements of their comprehensive land use plans.

Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council Receives Grant to Prepare for Sea Level Rise

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration awarded Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council a grant through the Coastal Resilience Networks grant program. The grant allows Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council to leverage the existing ONE BAY: Livable Communities Working Group for the purpose of improving the capacity of the Tampa Bay area to withstand adverse impacts of sea level rise, storm surge and extreme weather. ONE BAY augments a network of developers, planners, business and community leaders and citizens, to tackle various regional quality of life issues.

The Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council is bringing together efforts related to sea level rise and coastal hazards currently underway by extending the existing ONE BAY framework to specifically address vulnerability to sea level rise and other potential climate-induced changes to the frequency and intensity of weather events. The goal is for local governments to establish a common approach to understanding, communicating and planning for coastal hazards and ensure that the region will continue to thrive in the future.



Satellite Beach, in partnership with the East Central Florida Regional Planning Council, refined sea level rise adaptation action plan policies.

policies, conduct a more thorough analysis of hazards, and further engage residents and businesses in resiliency planning. The project phases included:

- Public engagement
- Vulnerability assessment for sea level rise, flooding, storm surge, and coastal erosion
- Policy recommendations and strategies

Upon completion, the City and its partners in the project submitted a proposal to Sea Grant to continue to move its coastal resiliency efforts forward, using the outcomes of the project as the basis. The City of Satellite Beach project is viewed as the pilot project for communities across the state.

Award-Winning Florida/Local Regional Broadband Planning Project

Representing 15 counties, the Central Florida Southwest Florida, and Tampa Bay Regional Planning Councils were jointly awarded funds to implement the Florida/Local Regional Broadband Planning Project. Designed to educate and empower communities to plan for broadband infrastructure, the award-winning project led to the development of a broadband planning toolkit and training manual. The toolkit contains the databases, surveys, models, and other tools necessary to assess broadband demand and create a strategic broadband. The broadband training manual provides guidance through the planning process and instruction on the use and applicability of the broadband toolkit.

As a result of the project, Broadband Polk and Broadband Charlotte/Collier/Lee emerged as local advocates for robust broadband infrastructure as an essential part of a 21st Century community.



The Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council provides technical assistance to local governments as they incorporate sea level rise and other coastal hazards into comprehensive plans, land development regulations, and local mitigation strategies. Data produced by this collaboration is used to enhance business continuity plans in the public and private sectors.

City of Satellite Beach Adaptation Action Area

The City of Satellite Beach City Council submitted to the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity for review, comprehensive plan amendment language which incorporated sea level rise into its comprehensive plan. The Department commended the City for “proposing designation of an Adaptation Action Area for the protection of its residents, prevention of property damage and for a reduction in flood insurance premiums.” The City Council adopted the recommended amendments.

In partnership with the East Central Florida Regional Planning Council, the City of Satellite Beach received the Florida Department of Environmental Protection Coastal Partnership Initiative Grant to further refine the Adaptation Action Area

BUSINESS CLIMATE & COMPETITIVENESS

Exemplifying regional cooperation, the project has received awards from the National Association of Development Organizations, National Association of Regional Councils, Florida Planning and Zoning Association and the Heart of Florida Section of the American Planning Association. The project was also featured in the National Association of Development Organizations brief, *Creating Opportunity and Prosperity through Strengthening Rural-Urban Connections*.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Promoting regional economic development in partnership with local economic development organizations is a key focus for regional planning councils. Regional planning councils prepare and administer grant applications for federal and state economic development infrastructure funds and projects on behalf of local economic development organizations and local governments.

LaBelle Farms Tours Promote Agricultural Economy

As competition from large agricultural corporations increases, and high operating expenses and low commodity prices challenge small agricultural businesses, Florida's small farmers and ranchers are increasingly considering sale or conversion of their agricultural lands for urban development projects.



The Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council, in collaboration with the University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, developed a business plan for marketing LaBelle Farms Tours.

In response to this trend, the LaBelle Farms Tours program was conceived with a \$25,000 grant from the Florida Department of economic Opportunity to promote and protect the City of LaBelle and Hendry County significant agricultural

economy and agri-tourism. The LaBelle Farms Tours program first required a business plan, marketing materials and a map illustrating the tour stops at citrus, sod, sugar cane, and vegetable production operations, as well as ornamental nurseries and beef cattle ranches. Each of the 12 tour options showcase the rich agriculture industry of LaBelle. The Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council in collaboration with the University of Florida - Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, the City of LaBelle, LaBelle Chamber of Commerce and the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity developed the business plan and marketing program for the LaBelle Farms Tours.

Economic Development Administration Grant Funds Wakulla Environmental Institute

The Apalachee Regional Planning Council provided technical assistance to Tallahassee Community College to obtain a \$1.5 billion U.S. Economic Development Administration grant that has been transformed into "bricks and mortar." The grant for the Wakulla Environmental Institute was matched by the College for the core infrastructure which includes an



Tallahassee Community College, in partnership with the Apalachee Regional Planning Council, developed the Wakulla Environmental Institute.

entrance road and utilities, site work, and a parking structure-mounted photovoltaic electrical system to supply the new Institute's electrical energy. Styrofoam block structural walls, high efficiency insulation, and state-of-the-art energy efficient design contribute to the Institute's minimal environmental impact. The first building is scheduled to be completed in early 2016.

Agriculture & Economic Development: Town of Pierson

The East Central Florida Regional Planning Council was awarded a Community Planning Technical Assistance grant from the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity to create an economic development strategic plan for the Town

of Pierson. The rural, agriculture-based community markets itself as the “Fern Capital of the World.” Numerous challenges to this niche industry prompted Town leaders to consider diversifying the local economy to include other agriculture enterprises as well as non-agricultural industries. In addition to recommendations for economic diversification, the resulting plan contains strategies to enhance the public realm including the development of public wastewater facilities, pedestrian and bicycle safety enhancements, and protection of the Town’s historic Main Street character.

Kissimmee Medical Arts District

The East Central Florida Regional Planning Council, in collaboration with the City of Kissimmee, developed an economic strategic plan for a Medical Arts District. Analysis of current existing conditions, an economic profile of East Central Florida’s health care industry and national trends, and a discussion of similar case studies were the basis for the strategic plan.

Glades Region Master Plan

The Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council assisted Palm Beach County as part of a countywide team to prepare a comprehensive master plan for the Glades Region of Palm Beach County through a \$1.98 million Community Challenge Planning Grant awarded to the County by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The plan enhances economic competitiveness, infrastructure sustainability, transportation choices, workforce training, and housing options near employment centers. The Glades Region includes the Cities of Belle Glade, Pahokee, South Bay, and the community of Canal Point. The project, known as the Glades Region Master Plan, serves as a guide to enhance economic competitiveness, focusing on major employment centers. The Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council completed the public participation, economic development and environmental components of the Master Plan.

The Florida Turbine Initiative

The East Central Regional Planning Council and Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council partnered with Energy Florida on a proposal for a “Manufacturing Communities” designation under the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership. This initiative of the U.S. Economic Development Administration is designed to encourage communities to strengthen their competitive edge for attracting global manufacturer and supply chain investments. The collaborative Florida Turbine Initiative effort produced some important findings:

- The Initiative region was granted 277 patents for rotary technologies between 2000 and 2013, making it the third largest in the nation for the development of turbine technologies.
- The study identified more than 120 companies that comprise this technology cluster, including seven global headquarters, 21 research and development facilities, parts and other technologies suppliers, and related services.

Industry Cluster Analysis

The East Central Florida Regional Planning Council has identified the high technology industries that are driving the region’s economy using a cluster analysis methodology. The Council has identified several important business sectors, including avionics, boating, photonics, modeling simulation and training, as well as turbines.

REVOLVING LOAN FUND PROGRAM

The Apalachee, Central Florida, South Florida, Treasure Coast and West Florida Regional Planning Councils administer revolving loan fund portfolios composed of federal and state funds to help grow small businesses, create jobs, encourage business retention and expansion, and undertake brownfield revitalization projects. Over the past ten years, regional planning councils loaned \$41.9 million, resulting in the creation and retention of 3,760 jobs.

Brownfields Revolving Loan Program Funds Affordable Housing Development



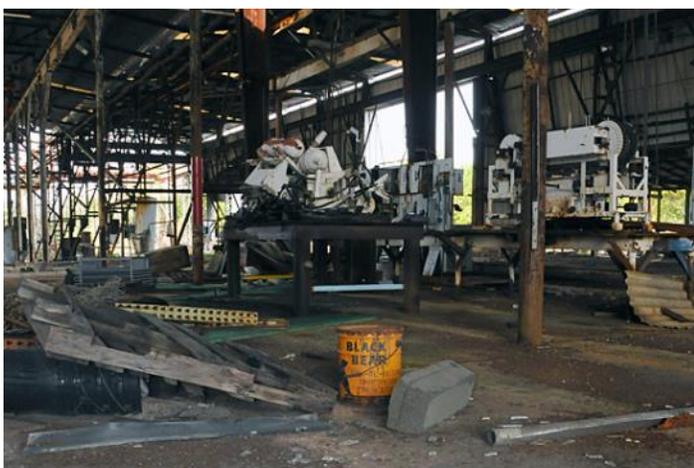
The South Florida Regional Planning Council Brownfields Revolving Loan Program funded the site cleanup for redevelopment of Malibu Bay Apartments project in West Palm Beach.

BUSINESS CLIMATE & COMPETITIVENESS

The South Florida Regional Council, in partnership with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Housing Finance Authority of Palm Beach County, financed the brownfields site cleanup and construction of Malibu Bay Apartments, a \$25 million, 265-unit, affordable housing project in West Palm Beach. The project came to market as the recession began in 2009 and fell into financial difficulty. South Florida Regional Council staff worked with their partners to refinance the project, and today, the affordable housing development is stable, occupied, and an asset to the community. With the repayment of the loan to the Brownfields Revolving Loan Program, additional brownfields projects are under development, creating value for the economy, the environment and southeast Florida communities.

South Florida Regional Council has revolved more than 2.5 times for total lending of \$20 million. Since its first U.S. Economic Development Administration loan made in 2001, and the transfer of four additional U.S. Economic Development Administration loan funds to the South Florida Regional Council for management, the Revolving Loan Fund programs have brought value to the region through job creation, retention and private investment. The loan funds have been consolidated in one loan fund and since the initial transfer, the fund has serviced more than 115 loans for a total of \$62 million in total project investment. In addition, 2,643 jobs have been created or retained in the region by the financing projects.

BROWNFIELDS REVITALIZATION



Brownfield sites limit redevelopment opportunities due to real or perceived environmental contamination.

Brownfields are abandoned or underutilized industrial and commercial facilities and sites where redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived environmental contamination. Sites may include abandoned factories,



An amphibious vehicle used to cross challenging terrain was demonstrated at a regional Brownfields Redevelopment Forum.

commercial buildings, dry cleaning establishments, gas stations, and agricultural and mining facilities.

With funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Central Florida, South Florida, West Florida and Treasure Coast Regional Planning Councils undertake brownfield revitalization projects. The funds are used to conduct environmental assessments and reuse planning in order to place economically obsolete properties into productive use and revitalize impacted neighborhoods.

The West Florida Regional Planning Council co-hosted the Third Annual Brownfields Redevelopment Forum in 2015. More than 70 participants were provided information by experts from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection on tax incentives and grant opportunities for leveraging brownfields redevelopment. A legislative update, a grant writing session and a roundtable discussion offered opportunities for participants to engage experts from local government, private sector redevelopment, and contamination resolution.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency awarded a \$500,000 Brownfields Assessment Coalition Grant to the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council and its partners South Florida Regional Council and Palm Beach County. Grant funds are used to address communitywide hazardous substances and petroleum sites with particular focus on sites proximate to the Florida East Coast rail corridor. Funds support up to 14 Phase I and Phase II environmental site assessments, and the preparation of up to ten cleanup plans. Grant funds are also used to conduct community involvement activities, including up to 12 community meetings.

REGIONAL ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS MODELING

Regional planning councils use economic impact analysis modeling tools to measure the economic and fiscal impacts of project development or policy initiatives in their communities. These modeling tools (REMI, IMPLAN®), designed specifically for the regions, account for business cycles and allow the user flexibility in analyzing the timing of economic impacts.



Climate and economic resilience strategies are critical to the future environmental and economic health of a region.

The information in these assessments is used by local governments and economic development organizations to make decisions regarding incentives for new or expanding economic development projects, and provides background data to support various federal and state economic development grants for local economic development initiatives. Over the past ten years, regional planning councils conducted 560 regional economic impact analyses around the state.

Southeast Florida Delegation Joined National Leaders on Climate & Economic Resilience

In 2015, a ten-member, public-private delegation of economic development, transportation, academic and local government representatives from Southeast Florida participated in a national peer exchange and Leadership Academy on Climate and Economic Resilience, sponsored by the Institute for Sustainable Communities and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The South Florida Regional Council had previously organized the delegation, one of only ten chosen from across the nation, and prepared the successful team application to the Leadership Academy.

The Southeast Florida delegation, including many members from the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact, shared best practices with experts and practitioners from around the country.

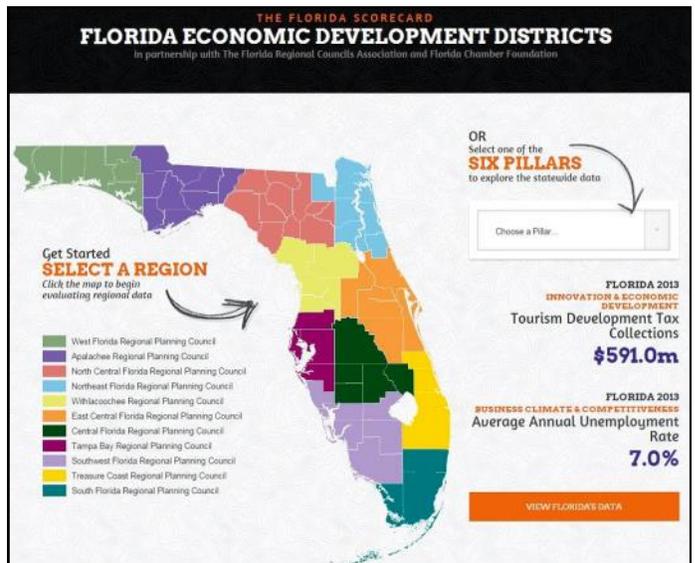
U.S. CENSUS DATA CENTER AFFILIATES

To help local governments and businesses obtain the maximum benefit of a complete count under the decennial census, regional planning councils play an important role as U.S. Census affiliates to support the activities of the U.S. Census Bureau. In this capacity, regional planning councils coordinate with the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, which acts as the U.S. Census Bureau's designated Florida State Data Center, helping to provide official guidance to local government stakeholders statewide. Working with the Florida State Data Center, regional planning councils help distribute information to increase participation in the census.

Each regional planning council is a resource for economic, demographic, social, and development data. Regional planning councils maintain libraries and databases, and provide access to data, as well as research and publications.

REGIONAL ECONOMIC SCORECARDS

In partnership with the Florida Chamber Foundation, launched a website on regional metrics. Now, regional planning councils and their state, regional, and local partners can view measurable results in over 18 separate metrics that align with the Florida Chamber Foundation's Six Pillars™ framework. The aggregate data allows users to generate regional and statewide comparisons.



Regional planning councils partnered with the Florida Chamber Foundation to develop online regional economic scorecards.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

Intergovernmental Coordination and Review (Florida State Clearinghouse)

Presidential Executive Order 12372 and the Florida Governor's Executive Order 95-359 established the Intergovernmental Coordination and Review Process to evaluate and review certain federal programs and projects, to ensure consistency with local, regional, and state plans. The Florida State Clearinghouse within the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, administers this process for Florida projects. Regional planning councils act as a regional clearinghouse for the state, reviewing and commenting on grants and permits from various government agencies, as well as certain proposed plans and projects of statewide and regional significance. Over the past ten years, regional planning councils have provided required federal consistency review for 12,673 projects, ensuring access to hundreds of millions of federal infrastructure and economic development investment dollars annually.

REGIONAL CONVENERS

All Aboard Florida Public Outreach

All Aboard Florida is the proposed high-speed express passenger rail service between Miami and Orlando, with intermediate stations in Fort Lauderdale and West Palm Beach. While the project could provide significant benefits statewide and in cities where rail stations would be located, it could also impose costs and impacts on communities without stations. Since the inception of the project in 2012, the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council has convened 120 public meetings and workshops with community leaders, and citizens and 75 one-on-one briefings with elected officials to communicate All Aboard Florida project details, gain public input, work on local quiet zone designations, establish a public website as a forum for Environmental Impact Study review and project update, and help identify other possible mitigation strategies.

Good Food Central Florida

The East Central Florida Regional Planning Council has been an active member of Good Food Central Florida, East Central Florida's food policy council. Food policy councils bring together diverse stakeholders interested in advocating for policy changes and programs that could help build a healthier and sustainable food system. Good Food Central Florida comprises volunteers representing state agencies, local governments, non-profit organizations, and a local food hub. The group seeks to educate the general public about the regional food system, increase access to healthy food, and

build capacity among all sectors of the farm-to-table network (consumers, distributors, government, growers, non-profits, retailers, processors, and waste recyclers). The East Central Florida Regional Planning Council was recently awarded a Florida Department of Economic Opportunity Community Technical Assistance Planning Grant to assist with the development of a communitywide food assessment for Good Food Central Florida.

Smart Growth America Partnership

The East Central Florida Regional Planning Council was one of 18 applicants selected by Smart Growth America to participate in its technical assistance program. As part of the program, Smart Growth America conducted a Cool Planning workshop to help the region develop and implement a Regional Resiliency Initiative by providing planners, architects, and engineers with tools and techniques to achieve resilient communities and economies. The workshop focused on land use and building practices that could mitigate the impacts of climate change in Brevard, Lake, Orange, Osceola, Seminole, and Volusia Counties. In recognition of this work, the East Central Florida Regional Planning Council was selected to participate in the first Building Blocks Training Academy, a program sponsored by the Environmental Protection Agency - Office of Sustainable Communities and Smart Growth America. During the training, regional planning council staff acquired new tools to help incorporate the smart growth principles of walkability, complete streets design, and green infrastructure in regional communities.

Transportation Disadvantaged

The Transportation Disadvantaged coordinated system for Florida is governed by the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged. Its mission is to ensure the availability of safe, efficient, cost-effective, and quality transportation services for individuals who, because of physical or mental disability, income status or age, are unable to transport themselves or purchase transportation. The Commission also designates an Official Planning Agency in each county, which is



responsible for Transportation Disadvantaged Program planning. In most rural areas, regional planning councils are the Designated Official Planning Agency and help ensure access to employment, health care, education, and other life-sustaining resources for qualified individuals.

STRATEGIC REGIONAL POLICY PLANS

Pursuant to the State and Regional Planning Act, each regional planning council adopted a Strategic Regional Policy Plan as a long-range guide for the physical, economic, and social development of their region. The Plan is a direction-setting tool, not a regulatory document. Its statutorily mandated elements are Affordable Housing, Economic Development, Emergency Preparedness, Natural Resources, and Regional Transportation. Strategic Regional Policy Plans also document Natural Resources of Regional Significance and identify Significant Regional Facilities. The Plan serves not only the regional planning council, but the cities and counties within each region. As such, several of the plans are being updated to incorporate aspects of the many visioning initiatives taking place in the regions.

VISIONING/SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

Sustainable Communities: Enhance Central Florida

The East Central Florida Regional Planning Council completed work on a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Sustainable Communities Regional Planning grant. The focus of the Enhance Central Florida project was the development of the region's new SunRail commuter rail system, specifically access to station areas and their potential for transit-oriented economic development. The three-year effort involved 26 consortium partners including representatives of county and municipal governments, transit providers, transportation agencies, housing and healthcare organizations, and the development community. With citizen participation in the planning process, station area plans were developed and an Affordable Housing Study and a Fair Housing Equity Assessment were completed for the six-county region. The results of the housing studies and transit-oriented development policy recommendations were widely distributed and are intended to inform future transit projects in the region.

Southeast Florida Clean Cities Coalition

Hosted by the South Florida Regional Council, the Southeast Florida Clean Cities Coalition was designated by the U.S. Department of Energy. The Coalition operates as a public-private partnership concerned with alternative fuel technologies and programs. Its role is to provide a fuel-neutral policy direction to maximize the use of vehicles operating on clean, alternative fuels throughout its region of nearly six-million people in Broward, Miami-Dade, Monroe and Palm Beach Counties.

The coalition has focused on working with the region's National Parks and Preserves in climate preservation efforts,

providing alternative fuels first responder training, developing a statewide fleet recognition program, encouraging idle reduction methodologies, and assisting employers in implementation of workplace charging infrastructure.



U. S. Department of Energy



After partnering with the National Park Service and the U.S. Department of Energy, the Clean Cities National Parks Initiative has gained momentum. Big Cypress National Preserve has deepened its commitment to the Climate Friendly Parks Program and strengthened its relationship with Southeast Florida Clean Cities.

Southeast Florida Clean Cities Coalition presented the Greening Our Rides component of the Green Parks Plan at the Climate Friendly Parks Workshop. The presentation featured methods for greening a fleet focusing on the Big Cypress National Preserve. While the Park Welcome Center is powered by a photovoltaic array, rangers hope to extend alternative fuel options to their fleet.

Measures being considered include:

- Provide more employee commuting options - telework carpooling and public transportation
- Replace conventional mowers with propane or electric powered mowers, and reduce mowing areas
- Add electric car charging stations
- Transition from all terrain vehicles to utility task vehicles
- Idle reduction within the Park



An infographic explains the role of photovoltaic power at the Big Cypress Welcome Center.

QUALITY OF LIFE & QUALITY PLACES

As the partnership between Big Cypress National Preserve and Southeast Florida Clean Cities Coalition continues to develop, the partners plan to continue to lead climate change response among Florida's parks and preserves.

HEALTH, WELLNESS & SAFETY

Central Florida Safe Routes to School

The East Central Florida Regional Planning Council expanded the Safe Routes to School online portal to include the Route Condition Tool, a Geographic Information System-based tool that measures roadways on five critical parameters. Using the Pedestrian Safe countermeasure guidelines, the tool analyzes roadway features-based mobility, pedestrian



The Safe Routes to School online portal expanded by the East Central Florida Regional Planning Council measures roadways for pedestrian safety.

exposure and safety. Information such as road width, annual daily traffic, number of lanes, speed limits, the presence or absence of sidewalks and other roadway attributes are analyzed, giving planners and engineers a complete view of various roadway features that help guide project priorities and determine appropriate countermeasures to create a more walkable and safe corridor. Lake and Volusia Counties have piloted the use of the tool and the East Central Florida Regional Planning Council is currently using the tool to analyze roadways within a two-mile walking distance of 19 Lake County public schools in an effort to update the County's Hazardous Conditions Report.

From Brownfields to Healthfields

Through funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Central Florida Regional Planning Council established the Heartland Brownfields Revitalization Partnership and transformed a brownfield into a health care center for the underserved City of Mulberry. The Central Florida Regional Planning Council assisted with funding, forming innovative partnerships, conducting environmental assessments, planning, and forming a Health Clinic Planning

Committee of residents, City personnel, Central Florida Regional Planning Council staff, and Central Florida Health Care representatives.

After three years of planning, the Mulberry Health Clinic opened in 2015, fulfilling the Healthfields Redevelopment concept by transforming a brownfield into a viable project that improves access to healthcare, decreases health disparities, encourages redevelopment and creates new jobs.

The Mulberry Health Clinic is a National Healthfields Model and is frequently cited as a best practices example of brownfields redevelopment. Central Florida Healthcare is operating this Federally-qualified health center that provides adult and pediatric services, dental services, pharmacy, outreach and enrollment, health education, laboratory and x-ray services. The Mulberry Health Clinic is featured in the video, *The Dream is Possible -Brownfields to Healthfields*.

Santa Rosa County Bicycle-Pedestrian Plan

Santa Rosa County sought technical assistance from the West Florida Regional Planning Council to develop a bicycle and pedestrian plan for south Santa Rosa County. Through a social media/public involvement campaign, residents were encouraged to participate and help create a plan for safe transportation alternatives with the goal of making south Santa Rosa County more bicycle and pedestrian friendly and provide alternatives to vehicular travel on U.S. Highway 98.

The plan identifies two recreational loops and numerous citizen-generated projects, and recommends strategies to advance bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure objectives. Potential funding includes private and public grants from local, state, and federal sources such as:



Community engagement was an important component of the south Santa Rosa County Bicycle-Pedestrian Plan developed with assistance of the West Florida Regional Planning Council.

creation of a payment in lieu of sidewalk fund, the SUNTrail fund, and the Federal Highway Administration Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery Grant Program. Once approved, the plan will help guide future projects, with emphasis on increasing the overall quality of life for residents and improving safety, recreational and tourism opportunities.

South Florida Regional Council Spearheads Regional Data Collaborative

The Southeast Florida Regional Prosperity Institute, a 501(c)3 associated with the South Florida Regional Council, is developing a regional educational resource and tool that will enable stakeholders and residents to access and use valuable data and information. The Southeast Florida DataCommon project seeks to enhance data and understanding about community and regional policy issues through access to, and sharing of, up-to-date spatial data, visualization tools, and technical assistance and support opportunities. A partnership of public, private, nonprofit, and philanthropic stakeholders is working together to create the resources and enhance understanding of the challenges and opportunities of using data to drive positive change in Southeast Florida.

Currently, data, analysis, and lessons learned from data largely reside in organizational and issue-based silos, which limits shared learning, understanding, and the creation of knowledge about the interrelationship of issues. The DataCommon creates a regional coalition of public, private, nonprofit, and philanthropic organizations that will:

- Support enhanced access to data;
- Increase organizational efficiency and maximize the use of limited resources;
- Create strengthened and new relationships across organizations which support enhanced accessibility and usability of data;
- Create better data for better outcomes in planning and program areas and leverage investment; and
- Enhance the ability of organizations to create new opportunities for communities and the region.

MILITARY

A Military-Friendly South Florida

Defense spending is a major economic driver in Florida that is responsible for \$79.8 billion, or 9.5 percent of Florida's total economic output, and 775,000 direct and indirect jobs. According to the Florida Defense Industry Economic Impact Analysis conducted for Enterprise Florida, defense activities play a significant role in the Southeast Florida region of Broward, Miami-Dade, Indian River, Martin, Monroe, Palm Beach, and St. Lucie Counties, injecting \$3.4 billion in

spending into the region. Overall, defense activities accounted for 126,604 jobs in the region and nearly \$12 billion in total Gross Regional Product, accounting for approximately 3.9 percent of all economic activity.

Recognizing the importance of the military to the regional economy, the South Florida Regional Council partnered with the Beacon Council, the Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance, and the Good Government Initiative to co-host the 2015 Community Conversation with key economic development, military, and veteran support stakeholders from Monroe, Miami-Dade, and Broward Counties.



The military industry is the third largest industry in the Florida economy. Photo courtesy of Major Lisa Brownbanic, USSOUTHCOM.

More than 50 participants focused on the economic value of the industry and what is needed to create a military-friendly environment. The critical issues of insufficient affordable housing and transit options, and the importance of educating employers and others to better support military personnel and their families were discussed. Participants also discussed the role of education in the private and nonprofit sectors and the need for coordinated, action-oriented strategies and investments.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT MEMBERSHIP DUES

REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL	COUNTY	MUNICIPALITY
Apalachee	\$4,000 base fee plus \$0.07/capita	N/A
Central Florida	\$0.25/capita	N/A
East Central Florida	\$0.16/capita	N/A
North Central Florida	\$0.30/capita	\$750 minimum \$0.30/capita ¹
Northeast Florida	\$0.41/capita	N/A
South Florida	\$0.175/capita	N/A
Southwest Florida	\$0.30/capita	\$0.30/capita ¹
Tampa Bay	\$2,000 base fee plus \$0.32/capita	\$2,000 base fee only
Treasure Coast	\$0.43/capita	N/A
West Florida	\$1,000 base fee plus \$0.0325/capita	\$500 base fee plus \$0.0325/capita

¹Optional dues paid by municipalities are subtracted from the share paid by the County.

N/A Not applicable, no membership dues assessed.



EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Michael J. Busha, Chair, Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council
Patricia M. Steed, Vice-Chair, Central Florida Regional Planning Council
Chris N. Rietow, Treasurer, Apalachee Regional Planning Council
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