



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NEFRC Spearheads Regional Application for \$5 Million Housing and Urban Development Sustainability Grant

The Northeast Florida Regional Council (NEFRC) is pleased to announce, in coordination with five partners and a 30 + member consortium, the submission of an application to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for a Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant under the name First Coast Consortium. If this application is successful, this grant will provide \$5 million to create the “First Coast Vision”, a regional plan for sustainable development for the seven-county Region that includes Baker, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Nassau, Putnam and St. Johns Counties. A list of the partner organizations and consortium members is included at the end of this announcement.

Over the past five years, the Northeast Florida Regional Council has been developing leadership in the Region through its Regional Leadership Academy (RLA). The RLA trains leaders from all sectors of society to address regional issues, and recognize the benefit of viewing problems and opportunities regionally. RLA graduates become members of the Regional Community Institute of Northeast Florida, Inc., (RCI) a not-for-profit created by the Regional Council to track the progress of the Region and create the First Coast Vision, a 50-year vision for growth and development in the Region,. First Coast Vision will be a regional plan for sustainable development, so the timing of the HUD grant is perfect for Northeast Florida.

First Coast Vision was kicked off last May with the regional visioning exercise Reality Check First Coast, followed by County Checks in each county, and a youth-only Generation Check. The work begun last year is being continued by the Regional

Community Institute, as their committees work on the First Coast Vision. Ultimately, First Coast Vision will be considered by NEFRC as it updates its plan for the Region, the Strategic Regional Policy Plan, called “Strategic Directions”.

HUD funding would allow First Coast Vision to be more robust by including more input and education, a pilot planning exercise in urban, suburban, rural and coastal communities, a review of and clearinghouse for sustainable initiatives throughout the Region, and a toolkit that our local governments can implement to be more sustainable. At a minimum, collaborating with the diversity represented by the First Coast Consortium will help us to make First Coast Vision more representative. For more information on the First Coast Consortium’s application for the HUD Regional Sustainability Planning Grant, please contact Margo Moehring at mmoehring@nefrc.org, or 904-279-0880.

First Coast Consortium Organization Chart

