

NEFRC Highlights

Monthly Report of the Northeast Florida Regional Council

June 2007

JCCI releases Air Quality study with recommendations to empower NEFRC to manage regional planning

Air Quality in the Jacksonville area is an important issue due to the history of air pollution and odor problems and the impact of the ever-growing population. These critical issues prompted the Jacksonville Community Council Inc. (JCCI) to produce an in depth study regarding the history and state of air quality and the impacts and strategies of polluted air in Northeast Florida.

The study focuses on air quality and pollutants, but does not try to address directly the link between human behavior and climate change. JCCI believes that Jacksonville has the opportunity to become a national leader for improving air quality through the use of innovative technologies and strategies, along with strong community encouragement.

The study releases many recommendations, one of which states, "The Florida Legislature should empower the Northeast Florida Regional Council with authority to coordinate and enforce regional planning including transportation, land use, and the natural environment. The Legislature should provide the Northeast Florida Regional Council with a dedicated source of revenue for sufficient, broad-based resources and staffing to perform these additional functions effectively."

JCCI believes that with the Northeast Florida Regional Council's management, the area can become a leader in enhancing air quality.

For more information, please contact Brian Teeple at (904) 279.0885.

Boot Camp for New Dads, a unique program for new fathers is being offered in our community

Started in the fall of 2006, the Male Responsibility Initiative (MRI) of the Healthy Start Coalition strives to ignite conversation of the male figure in each child's life. Statistics prove that families with an active father are far healthier than those without. Sixty percent of rapists and 75% of teens charged with murder grew up in fatherless homes.

A pivotal component of the Male Responsibility Initiative is the "Boot Camp for New Dads", a unique program in which bringing "rookie" fathers-to-be with "veteran" [recent] dads and their newborns. This program is being implemented through a partnership between the Coalition and Shands Hospital.

June 9, 2007, launched the critical program in northeast Florida and was a great success. "Boot Camp for New Dads" sessions at Shands Jacksonville are a single, three-hour program held monthly.

Please call Read Holman at (904) 279.0885 x 139 for more information.



Nassau County Prepares for the threat of pandemic influenza by hosting the Nassau County Pandemic Flu Summit

Due to the threat of pandemic influenza, Nassau County Emergency Management and the Nassau County Health Department hosted the *Nassau County Pandemic Flu Summit* on Friday, June 22, 2007.

A pandemic refers to global disease outbreak and the flu pandemic occurs when a new strain of an influenza virus emerges for which people have little or no immunity, and for which there is no vaccine.

The *Nassau County Pandemic Flu Summit* featured topics relevant to first responders, public officials and critical agencies in the First Coast Region. Topics included a pandemic flu update, personal protection equipment and pan-flu and its effects on first responders and leaders in the community. Nassau County has taken responsibility by being proactive by helping ensure the safety of the citizens in our region.

For more information, please contact Joe Garcia at (904) 279.0885 x.133.

Community Transportation Coordinator for Transportation Disadvantaged Program soon to be determined



As the Designated Official Planning Agency for the Transportation Disadvantaged program in Nassau County, the Northeast Florida Regional Council has been involved in a very thorough Request for Proposal (RFP) process to decide which of two proposers – MV Transportation or Nassau County Council on Aging – should be recommended for the next five-year contract for the Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC). This was a very competitive bidding process, as both entities provided detailed and comprehensive proposals and made exceptional presentations. Nassau County Council on Aging is the incumbent CTC and its five-year contract will expire September 30, 2007.

After careful consideration of all aspects of the RFP process, the Selection Committee recommended to the NEFRC's Board of Directors that Nassau County Council on Aging be awarded the new five-year contract, and the Council's Board unanimously approved. The Nassau County Local Coordinating Board also endorsed this recommendation.

The final decision will be determined by the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged on August 6 at its meeting in Orlando, Florida, when NEFRC Selection Committee staff presents the recommendation.

Please contact Jeanie Palmer at (904) 279.0885 x.146 for more information.

Emergency Operations Software demonstration was hosted at the Northeast Florida Regional Council building

The Northeast Florida Regional Council Emergency Preparedness section hosted a demonstration of Emergency Operations Software, as well as Public Warning Systems on June 29, 2007. The demonstration will be open to all the Emergency Management staff from the Jacksonville Urban Area Security Initiative, which includes Alachua, Baker, Bradford, Clay, Duval, Gilchrist, Flagler, Levy, Marion, Nassau, Putnam, St. Johns and Union Counties.

Six vendors were present at the demonstration, including E-Team, WebEOC, Previstar, E-Sponder, CodeRED, and City Watch. The purpose of the demonstration was to address Urban Area Security Initiative funding that will be available for EOC software, public warning systems, and other Emergency Management projects.

For more information, please contact Pamela Kirchner at (904) 279.0885 x.131

Northeast Florida Regional Council facilitates the Local Mitigation Strategy Task Force

The Local Mitigation Strategy Task Force for Clay, Baker, Nassau, St. Johns and Putnam counties held their second quarterly meeting in June 2007. The Northeast Florida Regional Council is contracted by the counties to facilitate and develop their Local Mitigation Strategy. The NEFRC also provides support and information to all of our counties in order for them to have successful hazard mitigation procedures.

Adopting a Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) helps strengthen communities by reducing their vulnerability to natural disasters and protecting them for future loss. The Local Mitigation Strategy serves as a bridge between local governments' growth and emergency management plans, land development regulations, building codes and other ordinances. By working together to produce community-wide mitigation strategy, cities and counties can help reduce the soaring cost of recovery and rebuild after disasters, and move Florida closer to becoming a disaster-resistant state.

For more information, please contact Ana Estrada at (904) 279.0885 x.136.

Northeast Florida Safe Sleep Partnership efforts represented at news conference regarding safe sleep, infant mortality

Dr. Mark Hudak, division chief of Neonatology at Shands, and New City Council President Daniel Davis, represented efforts to reduce sleep-related infant mortality at a news conference at Shands Jacksonville on June 26, 2007.

The Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition of North Florida, a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the health of mothers and babies across the region, announced its partnership with Shands Jacksonville for "Cribs for Kids," a national crib donation program intended to reduce Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and other sleep-related infant deaths. The Coalition also distributed 7 cribs to expectant mothers.

Shands Jacksonville and Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies are two of over 25 partners in the Northeast Florida Safe Sleep Partnership, a community-based education and awareness campaign on SIDS and other sleep-related deaths in the area. Between 2000-2005, there were 134 sleep-related deaths in the region; 76% were in Duval County. SIDS and other sleep-related deaths are the leading cause of death for babies before their first birthday. Duval County and Northeast Florida have some of the highest recorded infant mortality rates in the state and in the nation.

Infant mortality is an important community issue in Northeast Florida. Expanding education efforts around our area is critical to saving the lives of innocent babies.

For more information, please contact Sarah Holdstein at (904) 279.0885 x.129

