

NEFRC Highlights

Monthly Report of the Northeast Florida Regional Council

September 2008

DCA Community Planning Director and staffers visit Regional Council

On Wednesday, September 24, 2008, the Northeast Florida Regional Council staff hosted a site visit with Mr. Charles Gauthier, Director of the Division of Community Planning with the Florida Department of Community Affairs (DCA).

Mr. Gauthier was joined by Mr. Joseph Addae-Mensa, Principal Planner and Ms. Jeanette Hollock-Solomon, Senior Planner from the DCA.

The meeting was held at the request of Mr. Gauthier in an effort to reach out to local government agencies, like the Regional Council, and begin a dialogue which will enable improved communication and accomplish collaboration between the DCA and other entities.

The day encompassed a thorough overview of all NEFRC activities and presentations on the Council's strategic initiatives with highlights on Reality Check First Coast, the First Coast Vision and the Strategic Regional Policy Plan. The DCA guests were also privy to detailed presentations on the region's Emergency Preparedness Programs as well as issues related to planning and development in the region such as comprehensive plan review, technical assistance issues, the future of developments of regional impact, sector planning and DCA funding.

The day was a positive collaboration of the two entities that will undoubtedly promote positive future work within the Northeast Florida Region.

For more information, please contact Brian Teeple at (904) 279-0885 x 103.



From left to right, Mr. Joseph Addae-Mensa, Mr. Charles Gauthier and Ms. and Ms. Jeanette Hollock-Solomon, from the DCA make a visit to the Regional Council for a day of information sharing.

Regional Council receives funding for development of Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

On Wednesday, September 10, 2008, the Northeast Florida Regional Council received confirmation from the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration that it has received a financial assistance award to develop a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).

CEDS is a regional planning process focusing on economic development. The CEDS process results in a five-year strategic plan for regional economic development that is updated annually. The report is submitted to the Economic Development Administration for review and approval. Once the CEDS report is approved, the region may apply to receive funding assistance for public works and planning projects related to economic development.

For more information, please contact Margo Moehring at (904) 279-0885 x 161.

Workshop focuses on violent crimes in Northeast Florida

The NEFRC assisted in planning and facilitating the "North-east Florida Violent Crimes Workshop" on September 3, 2008 at the University of North Florida (UNF) on behalf of Project Safe Neighborhoods and the Alachua County Sheriff's Office.

The Workshop consisted of a variety of speakers in the morning session, Sheriff Joey Dobson of Baker County, Professor Michael Hallett of UNF, Mr. Matthew White with Jacksonville Sheriff's Office, and Mr. Brian Stamper of the Navy Criminal Investigative Service. Sheriff John Rutherford of Duval County was the keynote speaker during the Workshop Luncheon. The afternoon session was composed of several breakout groups to discuss various topics of violent crime in our community, such as Violent Crimes and Its Causes, Crime Indicators and Measures, and Crime Prevention and Tactics. After these sessions the participants gathered together for the final general session to report on the breakout groups findings, observations, and summarize the dialogue that took place. Members of the law enforcement community from across Northeast Florida were able to come together and discuss these issues in a collaborative environment and determine how it will effect growth and development in our area, identify the threats posed to our communities and develop possible solutions.

For more information, please contact Jeff Alexander at (904) 279-0885 x 134.

SJRWMD holds technical symposium on surface water withdrawals

The St. Johns River Water Management District held a technical symposium Sept. 17-18, 2008, for the District's scientists and its outside experts to discuss the first phase of the District's investigation of potential cumulative effects of surface water withdrawals from the St. Johns and Ocklawaha rivers.

The symposium was intended to afford the technical working groups that are conducting the investigation the opportunity to become more fully aware of all of the interrelated aspects of the study, share technical information and exchange ideas between the working groups. The meeting offered an opportunity for these experts with diverse areas of expertise to collaborate and discuss any preliminary findings of the study as it relates to their disciplines and experience.

Public comment was taken at the end of each day's proceedings. Comments were also submitted through Sept. 25 via a special link provided for that purpose on SJRWMD's Web site at www.sjrwmd.com.

For more information, please contact Brian Teeple at (904) 279-0885 x 103.

Water Congress addresses the future of Florida's water resources

On September 25 - 26, 2008, staff from the Northeast Florida Regional Council attended the 2008 Water Congress hosted by the Century Commission for a Sustainable Florida.

The Century Commission is tasked with envisioning the future of Florida, to help residents and state leaders prepare for a continued increase in population and to craft a plan that meets the challenges and opportunities of a growing population.

During the 2008 Water Congress, the delegates attending considered, discussed and evaluated the information presented. After discussion, the delegates prioritized the information and created a set of priority actions to be taken to provide statewide, long-term water supply and conservation practices.

Speakers at the 2008 Water Congress included: Charles C. Aller, Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Director of the Office of Agricultural Water Policy; Rick Baker, Chairman of the Century Commission and Mayor of St. Petersburg; Tim Center, Vice President of Sustainability Initiatives for the Collins Center for Public Policy; Steve Seibert, Senior Vice President and Director of Policy for the Collins Center for Public Policy and policy advisor to the Century Commission; and others.

Northeast Florida's delegates to the 2008 Water Congress included: Karen Ahlers, Putnam County Environmental Council; Neil Armingeon, St. Johns Riverkeeper; Kirby Green, SJRWMD; Rebecca Griffith, Ph.D., U.S. Army Corp of Engineers; Col. Paul Grosskruger, U.S. Army Corp of Engineers; Susan Hughes, SJRWMD; Linda Braddock King, St. Johns River Alliance; Mayor John Meserve, Atlantic Beach; Mayor John Peyton, City of Jacksonville; Commissioner Brad Purcell, Putnam County; Darrell Smith, SJRWMD; Paul Steinbrecher, JEA; David Still, Suwanee River Water Management District; Shannon Strickland, Strickland Sod Farm Inc.; Greg Strong, FL DEP; Brian Teeple, Northeast Florida Regional Council; David Tillis, The Bonita Bay Group; Cathy Vogel, Assoc. of Community Developers. Margo Moehring, NEFRC Director of Strategic initiatives was a facilitator for the Congress.

For additional information, please contact Brian Teeple at (904) 279-0885 x 103.