

# NEFLC

## Highlights

### Monthly Report of the Northeast Florida Regional Council

June 2009

#### Leadership Series tackles topic of economic development and local government finance at June program

With the economy being such a critical topic of discussion among many, it seemed logical that the Northeast Florida Regional Leadership Series would address the subject in some way as part of its program to educate Regional Leaders. And that's just what it did on June 17, 2009 at its monthly program held at the Northeast Florida Regional Council.



*Jacksonville Economic Development Commission panelist Darryl Register, Executive Director, Baker County Chamber of Commerce; Nick Sacia, Executive Director, St. Johns County Economic Development Council; and Joe Whitaker, Business Development Recruitment and Retention Coordinator.*

Drawing on the expertise of those who work in various capacities of the economic sector, the participants were treated to a diverse scope of topics and educational information.

The day was kicked off by a presentation given by Wilfredo J. Gonzalez, North Florida District Director for the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA). Gonzalez, who was a graduate of the Inaugural Class of the Northeast Florida Regional Leadership Academy (RLA) in 2005, welcomed the new class members and then led a discussion about the services of the SBA and how they impact the Region.

Cathy Chambers, Vice President for Business Development for Cornerstone Regional Development Partnership, Jacksonville Regional Chamber of Commerce made a presentation covering all aspects of Cornerstone and the Chamber and then served as moderator of a lively panel discussion. The topic of the discussion was "The Continuum of Economic Development from Rural to Urban" and featured panelists representing each segment from the counties within Northeast Florida: Darryl Register, Executive Director, Baker County Chamber of Commerce; Nick Sacia, Executive Director, St. Johns County Economic Development Council (2006-08 RLA Graduate); and Joe Whitaker, Business Development Recruitment and Retention Coordinator, Jacksonville Economic Development Commission.

The Regional Council's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) was covered by Council staffer, Guy Parola, and Melissa Terbrueggen, Director of Business Services for WorkSource shared about workforce development initiatives within the Region.

Concluding the day was Skip Cramer (RLA graduate, 2006-07)

who shared details from the recently released study produced by the Jacksonville Community Council, Inc. entitled: "Our Money, Out City: Financing Jacksonville's Future."

The program is the tenth offering in a series that will conclude for this year in July 2009. Recruitment for the Class of 2010 is already underway. The new Class is slated to commence in January 2010.

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

#### Region panel discusses greatest concerns to Northeast Florida's future

On Wednesday, June 10, 2009 a Northeast Florida Regional Panel gathered in St. Augustine to discuss the Region's economic future. Regional Council staff attended to represent the Agency, and absorb issues of importance for future Regional visioning efforts.

Jacksonville's ports, roads and educating and maintaining a skilled workforce seemed to be among the top of the list of priorities. This particular panel, was one of several organized statewide that encouraged the feedback of both government and business entities. This feedback is being gathered to the State's five-year plan for economic development. The plan which is maintained by Enterprise Florida, is called "Roadmap to Florida's Future."



*From forefront to background Jerry Mallot, President of the Cornerstone Regional Development Partnership; former Florida House Speaker John Thrasher; Vice President of Communication for WorkSource, Candace Moody; and City of Jacksonville Councilman and Regional Council Board Member, Art Graham.*

Members of the panel included Jerry Mallot, President of the Cornerstone Regional Development Partnership; City of Jacksonville Councilman and Regional Council Board Member, Art Graham; Vice President of Communication for WorkSource, Candace Moody; and former Florida House Speaker John Thrasher.

Audience feedback expressed concern for the readiness of local roads to handle future port traffic, retention of the State's college graduates in the workforce and support for small businesses, more accommodation for the military and additional preparedness for hurricanes.

For more information, contact Ameera Sayeed at (904) 279-0885 x 151.

## JCCI new study evaluates financing the future

The Northeast Florida Regional Council has worked closely over the years with the Jacksonville Community Council Inc. (JCCI) on a variety of issues that affect our Region. Council staff was present on June 10, 2009, for the newly released study entitled "Our Money, Our City: Financing Jacksonville's Future."

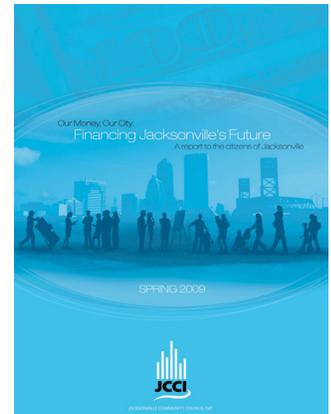
A large crowd attended the event held at the Downtown Jacksonville Main Library. This is the third study released by the JCCI (the others came in 1979 and 1992) and focuses on the cause of the City's financial crisis. In addition to examining the crisis, the study also makes recommendations on how to correct the issues in the long term.

Study Chairman, J.F. Bryan IV presented the high-level overview of the study. Bryan will also lead the two-year effort of outreach into the communities soliciting help from local leaders to facilitate change.

The audience was made up of elected officials, JCCI members, citizens, media, and many others who had an interest in the study's findings and recommendations for increased public trust and an increase in revenue items with a decrease in expenditures.

The results of the study are considered to be timely, hard-hitting and perspective-setting. The conversations spawned by the study will begin immediately. Bryan and other community leaders on the implementation task force will seek community involvement and promote discussions on the study over the next two years.

For more information on the study, or to read it in its entirety, please visit [www.JCCI.org](http://www.JCCI.org).



2009 JCCI City Finance Report

### Council staff conducts exercise with local branch of the Federal Reserve Bank

In June of 2008 the staff of the Northeast Florida Regional Council (NEFRC) developed and implemented a tabletop exercise for the Jacksonville branch of the federal reserve bank of Atlanta. The exercise was a major success in bringing together very different response systems.

With State, local and federal partners at the table to discuss coordination and collaboration needs, plans are reviewed to determine response training needs. Following the success of the Jacksonville exercise the NEFRC staff partnered with the South Florida Regional Planning Council, at the request of the Miami branch of the Federal reserve bank of Atlanta, to apply for funding to conduct an exercise for them. An

exercise was delivered to the Miami branch on June 2, 2009 one year after the Jacksonville exercise.

These terrorism based exercises help to prepare the local responders to address major incidents occurring as a result of a man made disaster. By developing response partnerships among the principle response agencies, responders are able to identify key areas needed for improvement to preserve the lives of disaster victims. Following the exercise the staff of the Northeast Florida Regional Council was asked to begin preparation to coordinate exercises for the New Orleans Branch and for the Central Facility in Atlanta.

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

### Council staff continues in ongoing efforts to combat hurricanes

The State of Florida has been working since 2008 to renovate its emergency operations center with a new look - and a new State Director was named for the first time in nine years. Ruben Almaguer was recently named to fill the shoes of Craig Fugate. Fugate spent nine years as Florida's director before moving to Washington DC to take the helm at the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The State EOC now has millions of dollars in new equipment being put to use for the first time. During the first week on June, the beginning of hurricane season, officials from every state agency, FEMA and in every one of Florida's 67 counties responded to 'hurricane suitor' - a mock storm designed to push emergency management capabilities to the limit.



State emergency managers were also testing a brand-new law enforcement radio system, logistical resource tracking systems and, for the first time, responders have dedicated frequencies they can use to stay in touch if all else fails. In the thick of it all the staffs from the Florida Regional Councils developed and conducted the exercise evaluation. The State contracted with NEFRC to coordinate an evaluation of the exercise using planners from most of the Regional Councils around the State.

The lead evaluator was appointed from the North Central Florida Regional Planning Council (NCFRPC) staff and NEFRC staff served as evaluators and on the exercise senior staff. The first draft the review of the exercise will be delivered to the FDEM to provide an overview to the Governor's office, within 21 days of the exercise and the final report be released mid July 2009.

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