

NORTHEAST FLORIDA REGIONAL COUNCIL

BAKER★CLAY★DUVAL★FLAGLER★NASSAU★PUTNAM★ST. JOHNS

2011 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



NORTHEAST FLORIDA
REGIONAL COUNCIL

NEFRC

6850

*“Bringing Communities Together
to Advance the Regional Agenda.”*



2011 Northeast Florida Regional Council Legislative Priorities



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Committee Purpose:

"Work collectively and promote regionally."

Committee Philosophy:

This committee is guided by the Home Rule Philosophy to develop and implement community-based solutions.

Committee Responsibilities:

To serve as the forum for the Northeast Florida Regional Council Board of Directors to collect its local governments' legislative priorities to promote a regional agenda.

*Florida Regional Councils Association Representative

2011 Northeast Florida Regional Council Legislative Priorities



The following Regional Legislative priorities were determined by consensus of the Legislative Policy Committee and are listed below:

Protect Local Revenue



Oppose property tax legislation and initiatives that restrict local government's ability to collect sufficient revenue to provide needed facilities and services.

Transportation Funding



Support transportation funding legislation that provides a dedicated and recurring source of revenue, including local option fuel taxes, rental car surcharges, or other taxes or fees, to fund local government essential transportation projects and programs and the Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP).

Support transportation funding legislation that improves economic development, quality of life, the Small County Road Assistance Program (SCRAP), the Small County Outreach Program (SCOP) and Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP).

Support legislation that ensures adequate funding for maintenance and improvement of evacuation routes.

Water Supply



Support legislation that addresses the need for water conservation, water reuse and an adequate and reliable water supply for Florida and the Northeast Florida Region to meet the future needs of the state's growing population and the needs of the environment, agriculture, industry and mining.

Delegation of Growth Management Authority



Support a pilot program for the delegation of growth management responsibilities from the State Land Planning Agency (Florida Department of Community Affairs) in Comprehensive Planning District 4 to the Northeast Florida Regional Council (NEFRC). The period of the pilot program shall be from October 1, 2011 through September 30, 2016.

Extension of Comprehensive Plan Review Timeframe



Support revision of Ch. 163.3184, Florida Statutes, to extend the Regional Planning Councils' review period for comprehensive plans and amendments from 30 days to 45 days to ensure that the Councils have adequate time to coordinate with local governments and meet monthly meeting schedules.



2011 Northeast Florida Regional Council Legislative Priorities



SMALL COUNTY ROAD PROGRAMS

Background: The Small County Road Programs are critical to meeting Baker County's transportation needs. The Small County Road Assistance Program (SCRAP) and the Small County Outreach Program (SCOP) provide necessary transportation funding for road improvements.

Requested Action: Support continuation and increase monies generated by statewide gas tax collections to the State Transportation Trust Fund to provide essential transportation programs such as the Small County Road Assistance Program (SCRAP) and the Small County Outreach Program (SCOP).

Effect: Continuation of these vital programs will enable counties to make much needed road improvements, create jobs, correct environmental problems created by runoff and stimulate the local economy.

RETURN TO PREVIOUS OPERATING POLICIES OF THE STATE HOUSING INITIATIVES PARTNERSHIP (SHIP) PROGRAM

Background: The need in rural communities is for housing rehabilitation and new construction for low and moderate income persons. The waiting lists for these programs continue to increase. The "Sadowski Act" created permanent funding source that was redirected by the Legislature during the last session.

Requested Action: Reinstate funding source.

Effect: Restoration of SHIP funding will immediately increase the number of low and moderate income individuals receiving assistance, create jobs to stimulate housing industry, eliminate slums and blight and conserve energy by providing more energy efficient homes for citizens.

HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS/SENIOR CITIZENS CENTER

Background: Baker County has two hurricane shelters and a population of 25,000. The County is a "recipient county" for urban Duval and other nearby coastal communities. The County has daily needs for facilities to serve senior citizens. Property has been acquired and plans prepared for a building that can meet both needs. Matching funds assistance from the State would allow the construction of a facility that will meet local and regional needs.

Requested Action: Support funding for dual purpose facility.

Effect: Will provide a multi-purpose building for our senior citizens and also provide a shelter for evacuees and their pets for local and regional residents in the event of a major hurricane.

AD VALOREM PROPERTY TAXES

Background: Legislation requires local governments to roll back property millage rates regardless of public supported local needs and priorities. As a result, local governments must raise taxes in other areas to balance the budget. A "one size fits all" approach punishes conservative, fiscally responsible communities and causes public dissention. The State objective of fewer taxes at the local level is diminished.

Requested Action: Review all sources of State Revenue and eliminate exemptions.

Effect: Fair and equitable revenue sources for State and Local governments that are available to meet needs.

OPPOSE EFFORTS TO PRIVATIZE THE NORTHEAST FLORIDA STATE HOSPITAL (NEFSH)

Background: NEFSH is an important employer in Baker County. Efforts by the 2009 legislature to privatize NEFSH were successfully defeated by local lobbying efforts. More than likely this issue will resurface again in the 2011 session.

Requested Action: The State of Florida should direct the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) or other appropriate "independent" agency to objectively determine the effectiveness of outsourcing NEFSH services.

Effect: A factually motivated decision should be made regarding the effectiveness of outsourcing NEFSH services. As one of the largest employers in the County and as the lowest cost-per-patient State facility in Florida, both the local economic and employment benefits of the hospital will be preserved and the State will be able to maintain a fixed amount of mental health services in Northeast Florida.

2011 Northeast Florida Regional Council Legislative Priorities



Clay County 2011 Legislative Priorities



PROTECT LOCAL GOVERNMENTS REVENUE

Background: Recent legislative policies and constitutional amendments have created restrictions and exemptions to the overall tax base of local governments, thereby reducing their overall tax revenue resulting in either higher taxes, reduced services or some combination of the two.

Requested Action: Oppose property tax legislation or other similar initiatives that serve to reduce the overall tax base or revenue streams of local government without providing some offset so local government can exercise 'home rule' and determine what is best for its citizens.

Effect: This will allow local government to best serve its citizens without undue regulations, unfunded mandates or legislative degradation of 'home rule'.

TRANSPORTATION FUNDING

Background: Past growth has resulted in continual needs for transportation network improvements that impact desired quality of life projects, increased traffic congestion and hampered economic development potential.

Requested Action: Replenish the Transportation Trust Fund and use the fund for transportation projects only. Don't use that revenue fund as a bill payer for unrelated budget line items. A fully funded FDOT allows local governments to effectively work with and leverage local and regional projects benefitting the citizens. Initiatives such as TRIP and the Transportation Disadvantaged programs are beneficial to both the state and local government and need to be fully funded.

Effect: Increased traffic network demand with a reduced revenue stream has stressed state and local government's ability to meet regional/community needs and protect quality of life and economic development needs.

AFFORDABLE AND ACCESSIBLE PROPERTY INSURANCE REFORM

Background: Legislative changes have served to reduce the free market competitive pricing and programs provided by civilian companies. The result was the development of a government run Citizens Property Insurance. This put an undue level of risk on all Floridians. The fund for Citizens is not actuarially sound and poses a risk to all insurance holders in Florida.

Requested Action: Restore the free market mechanisms which are now heavily constrained by the existence of legislative restrictions and Citizens Property Insurance.

Effect: This action will reduce the level of financial risk to all Floridians and ensure actuarial soundness into the future.

WATER SUPPLY

Background: As the Northeast Florida Region grows, further impacts to the already diminishing water supply of the aquifer are anticipated. Options to conserve and find more water resources are increasingly becoming the necessity.

Requested Action: Support legislation that addresses the need for water conservation, water reuse and an adequate and reliable water supply for Florida and the Northeast Florida Region to meet the future needs of the state's growing population and the needs of the environment, agriculture and business community. Protection of 'home rule' shall be part of that discussion.

Effect: Properly prioritizing the supply of water at the state, regional and county level will hopefully protect the Region's future water resources.

RESTORING GENERAL FUNDS FOR LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENTS

Background: The reduction of state general funds to the local health department has resulted in tremendous loss of service to the community. State funding reductions of 26% over the last three years have resulted in 25% staff reduction, limited emergency response capability, shutdown of local offices and elimination of critical programs for the underserved population that relies heavily on local health departments.

Requested Action: Restore State General Revenue support for the Health Department to levels needed to meet appropriate service mandates and allow protections of minimum level of quality of life needs. Also, don't pass any unfunded mandates involving inspection programs without fully funding needed staff or program requirements.

Effect: Restoring funds as requested would allow the local health department to plan and execute strategic programs and maintain mission critical staffing levels.

STATE HOUSING INITIATIVES PARTNERSHIP (SHIP) FUNDING

Background: Since 2004, County SHIP funds have been reduced, resulting in the wait listing and subsequent stoppage of application acceptance for this affordable housing program. There is no funding in the FY 10/11 budget following a FY 09/10 budget of only \$350K. Previous FYs had funding levels of nearly \$2 million and allowed sustainable service of the low income in the community.

Requested Action: Restore the dollars in the Sadowski Trust Fund specifically designated for affordable housing initiatives. Support legislation that improves affordable housing initiatives.

Effect: Restoration of SHIP funds will help meet the affordable housing needs of the community. In addition, utilization of SHIP funds locally creates an economic impact on a factor of about 7.5 to 1 thus providing much needed jobs and stimulus to local business.



2011 Northeast Florida Regional Council Legislative Priorities



STATE HOUSING INITIATIVES PARTNERSHIP (SHIP) FUNDING

Background: Since 2004, SHIP funds have been reduced, resulting in the wait listing and subsequent cessation of application acceptance for this affordable housing program. The funding level for 2008/2009 was \$1,788,687, and for 2009/2010 is projected to be \$350,000, and is targeted by the Legislature for one Down Payment Assistance Program.

Requested Action: Restore the dollars in the Sadowski Trust Fund specifically designated for affordable housing initiatives, restore full funding of each county's SHIP allowance as projected prior to state level reductions and support legislation to improve affordable housing initiatives.

Effect: Restoration of a maximum SHIP fund amounts will immediately increase the number of individuals receiving housing assistance and reduce the current waiting list.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAM

Background: The Affordable Housing Program's primary purpose is to improve housing opportunities for the benefit of low and moderate-income families. The goal of the Housing Program is to create partnerships, maximize resources, and identify new strategies to develop and preserve affordable housing.

Requested Action: Support repeal of the cap on the Housing Trust Funds, and urge the Governor and Legislature to adopt statutory changes during the 2011 Legislative Session to repeal the cap. Council also supports full appropriation of housing trust fund monies for housing in the Fiscal Year 2011-2012 Budget.

Effect: Ensures continued funding of Affordable Housing Program, which is extremely important given the current economy, and number of home foreclosures.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT / MOBILITY PLANNING

Background: In 2009, S.B. 360 designated certain areas as dense urban land areas and required them to create mobility plans. Traditional performance measures are inadequate to affect the intent of the legislation.

Requested Action: Make explicit in Chapter 163.3180, Florida Statutes, that DULAs may use area-wide performance measures that weigh transportation mode by the urban context of the area being measured.

Effect:

- Maximizes the use of transportation infrastructure by testing the performance of the system as opposed to the individual parts of the system;
- Allows for the failure of one mode to support another mode; and
- Provides local elected official guidance when allocating scarce fiscal resources to the various transportation modes.

TRANSPORTATION FUNDING

Background: Transportation infrastructure is a vital component to the well being of the State and to the local governments. Raiding the transportation trust fund endangers that vitality.

Requested Action: Replenish the Transportation Trust Fund, restore TRIP dollars, fund FDOT and enhance financial resources for local transportation improvements, including public transit initiatives.

Effect: Reduce traffic congestion and increase the quality of life and vitality of the State.



MAINTAIN TRANSPORTATION PRIORITIES

Background: The Florida Department of Transportation remains a key element in keeping county and regional infrastructure safe and abreast of continued growth. Therefore, planning and oversight to coordinate the funding and the time schedule for projects is essential to ensure orderly growth.

Requested Action: Maintain funding from the State gas tax and other sources for all aspects of transportation, to include the FDOT 2.5% matching funds for FAA airport projects. Specific Flagler County Projects include: Matanzas Woods / I-95 Interchange Design; Palm Coast

Parkway 6-Laning; Protection of State Road A1A; and Flagler County Airport 5-Year Plan

Effect: Transportation projects will ensure that long-term needs will be met during an affordable cost period and an economically critical period for employment in the Region and the State.

TOURIST BED TAX COLLECTION FROM ON-LINE BOOKING AGENCIES

Background: Of the 67 counties in the State, 60 counties levy Tourist Development bed taxes. Of these, 22 counties have filed suit to compel on-line booking companies to pay the taxes owed for their rental income they obtain from visitors who book their rooms. The companies buy the rooms at wholesale from the hotels and then resell them without paying the tourist tax on their markup. These are existing taxes and not new taxes. No basis for an exemption has been presented. The well known companies (Orbitz, Priceline, Hotels.com, etc.) are all based out-of-state. During the last session, the Legislature tried to pass a bill on behalf of the on-line booking companies but it failed due to a recommendation from Florida Tax Watch that the exemption was not justified. The companies intend to file another exemption bill this session.

Requested Action: Defeat any legislative attempt to pass an exemption from existing taxes for the on-line booking companies.

Effect: Support tourism by ensuring tourist bed taxes are paid to the proper governmental entity in the future.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAM

Background: The Housing Program's primary purpose is to improve housing opportunities for the benefit of low and moderate income families. The goal of the Housing Program is to create partnerships, maximize resources, and identify new strategies to develop and preserve affordable housing.

Requested Action: Support repeal of the cap on the Housing Trust Funds and urge the Governor and Legislature to adopt statutory changes during the 2011 Legislative Session to repeal the cap. Also, support the full appropriation of housing trust fund monies for housing in the Fiscal Year 2011-2012 budget.

Effect: Ensures continued funding of the Affordable Housing Program, which is extremely important given the current economy and number of homes in foreclosure.

ALTERNATIVE WATER SUPPLY

Background: Adequate supplies of drinking water protect public health and safety, support our quality of life and boost our economy. As Florida's population continues to grow, care must be taken to ensure a balance between drinking water supplies and the environment. Future groundwater withdrawals will be limited to protect the environment and ensure a sustainable resource. Because it can take up to 10 years or more to design, permit and construct large-scale regional alternative water supply projects, local utilities are now pursuing new alternative water supplies.

Requested Action: Provide funding for alternative water supply projects, including the Coquina Coast Seawater Desalination Project in Flagler County.

Effect: Alternative water supply projects will ensure a long-term sustainable water supply that will reduce reliance on groundwater and minimize the environmental impacts.



2011 Northeast Florida Regional Council Legislative Priorities



TRANSPORTATION CONCURRENCY AND MOBILITY FEE

Background: The Legislature has made a finding that the State-mandated transportation concurrency system in effect since 1986 does not adequately address the needs of Florida. Nevertheless, SB 360 adopted by the 2009 Legislature did not deal comprehensively with transportation concurrency, instead exempting so-called “Dense Urban Land Areas” from transportation concurrency. The Department of Community Affairs compounded the dichotomy between dense and non-dense communities by requiring comprehensive plan amendments to implement the transportation concurrency exemption. In 2010, the Florida Supreme Court

further confused the issue by declaring SB 360 unconstitutional.

Requested Action: The Legislature tasked the Florida Department of Transportation and Department of Community Affairs to prepare a Mobility Fee Study by December 1, 2009. Nassau County supports amending the transportation planning requirements of Ch. 163.3180, Florida Statutes, to create a replacement to transportation concurrency for all local governments in the State of Florida. Nassau County supports the modified impact fee approach for new development that is generally based upon vehicle miles traveled targeted to specific planning areas to fund localized mobility needs.

Effect:

- Ensures that new development pays its pro rata share of infrastructure costs needed to serve new development;
- Encourages creation of dense, mixed use developments that generate relatively fewer and shorter vehicle trips;
- Focuses growth into core urban areas, suburban activity centers, rural villages and regional transit centers;
- Generates dedicated stream of capital financing for infrastructure needs; and
- Restores equity among and between communities.

PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM

Background: The State Aid to Libraries grant program benefits all libraries in our state including Nassau County. Even though FY2011 will be the last year that Nassau County will receive the Equalization portion of the state aid grant, Nassau County will still be eligible for the Operating portion. As the lower 34 economic counties continue to drop from the Equalization program, Operating grants will increase for all counties.

Requested Action: Nassau County supports the State Aid to Libraries program, at least at the minimal level of \$21.2 million.

Effect: The State Aid to Libraries grant will provide funding for many activities in the Nassau County Public Library, including: all library materials, furniture and equipment, maintenance contracts for software and equipment, internet access, voice and data line connections, etc. The minimum maintenance of effort (MOE) for this program is \$21.2 million. The MOE also allows the continuation of our six Multi Library Cooperatives (MLCs).

FUND THE MULTI LIBRARY COOPERATIVES

Background: Florida has been divided into 6 MLCs. Our local MLC is the Northeast Florida Library Information Network (NEFLIN). The MLCs provide many services for Florida libraries, such as free training for all library staff - both professional and paraprofessional; they encourage cooperation between all libraries, including public, school, college, university and private, and provide the basis for the interlibrary loan system in our state.

Requested Action: Nassau County supports funding the MLCs at least at the minimal level of \$2 million to be divided among the 6 MLCs.

Effect: Funding the six MLCs will continue free training programs for librarians and paraprofessional staff, encourage cooperation among all libraries and counties, and continue the interlibrary loan program throughout our state at a reduced cost to all residents. This is a minimum MOE level. If either the state aid program or the funding of the MLCs drops below the MOE, the State of Florida will lose an equal amount of federal funding through the Library Services and Technology Act.



PROPERTY TAX REFORM – OFFSET FUNDING FOR FISCALLY CONSTRAINED COUNTIES

Background: The passage of Amendment 1 in 2008 has had dire consequences for Florida's 29 small, fiscally constrained counties, where property tax revenues were already inadequate to pay for essential services. Doubling the homestead exemption to \$50,000 is having an especially dramatic impact in small counties and exacerbates their situation. Senate Bill 4d, Section 9, states that the Florida Legislature shall appropriate monies to offset the reductions in ad valorem tax revenue experienced by the 29 fiscally constrained counties.

Action Requested: The Legislature is requested to provide a permanent funding appropriation for the legislative commitment to offset Amendment 1 for fiscally constrained counties, which does not replace or reduce existing programs and revenues for small rural counties.

Effect: With a dedicated recurring resource appropriation to offset the loss of revenues for the fiscally constrained counties, Putnam County will be in a more tenable position to provide a moderate level of services to our citizens.

POTABLE WATER SYSTEMS AND WASTEWATER FACILITIES FUNDING

Background: Counties and other local governments have increasingly become involved in providing the public with potable water and effective wastewater treatment facilities through publicly owned and operated utility systems.

Action Requested: Increase the amount of funding available for wastewater and potable water supply utility systems.

Effect: Enable counties to expand or establish systems that will result in improved drinking water and reduce environmental pollution from ineffective and inefficient wastewater systems.

SMALL COUNTY ROAD PROGRAMS

Background: The small county road programs are critical to assisting Putnam County in addressing transportation issues. The Small County Road Assistance Program (SCRAP) and the Small County Outreach Program (SCOP) have provided necessary transportation funding for continued road improvements.

Action Requested: Support continuation of monies generated by statewide gas tax collections to the state transportation trust fund to ensure that essential transportation programs such as the Small County Road Assistance Program (SCRAP) and the Small County Outreach Program (SCOP) are fully funded.

Effect: Continuation of these vital programs will enable small counties to carry out much needed road improvements.



2011 Northeast Florida Regional Council Legislative Priorities



UNFUNDED MANDATES

Background: Many statutory and constitutional restrictions have been placed on local property taxes, while at the same time general purpose local governments have been assigned unfunded mandates in growth management, environmental protection, pensions, workers' compensation and other policy areas. A majority of these unfunded mandates have originated in the Legislature.

Requested Action: Request the State to cooperate with local governments to collectively serve the citizens of Florida in the best way and be considerate of local governments when passing down unfunded mandates.

Effect: A reduction in unfunded mandates would increase local government's ability to collect sufficient revenue to provide needed facilities and services.

TRANSPORTATION

Background: St. Johns County's road network has not kept up with the County's rapid growth, resulting in severe congestion on several key roadways.

Requested Actions:

- State Road (SR) 9B - Make the critical SR 9B roadway eligible for the greatest possible range of funding resources by designating it as a Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) Facility; and include in the FDOT Work Program adequate funds to move this critical project, particularly those sections between County Road (CR) 2209 and I-95, toward construction at the earliest possible date.
- SR 312, including the SR 313 Bypass - Request \$90 million in state funds for the design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction of the SR 313 Bypass from SR 207 to SR 16; and Request \$30 million for the SR 313 Bypass from SR 16 North to Woodlawn Road.
- I-95 Interchange with CR 210 - Request \$45 million in state funds for long-term improvements to the I-95 interchange with CR 210 as specified by the forthcoming Interchange Modification Report.
- CR 210 Overpass at US 1 - Request \$38 million in state funds for construction of the CR 210 overpass over US 1, and \$11 million in state funds for construction of interchange ramps for the CR 210 overpass over US 1.

Effect: Funding these roadway improvements will relieve traffic congestion and reduce the associated risks to the health, safety and well-being of the users of those roadways.

WATER QUALITY/UNFUNDED MANDATES

Background: The costs associated with compliance with new regulations present a significant hardship for local governments when provisions for funding compliance are lacking.

Requested Actions:

- Total Maximum Daily Loads - Request \$60 million in state funds over the next five years to assist in complying with the existing unfunded mandates for TMDL's contained within the County's NPDES MS4 permit. Alternatively, this funding could come from a specific and dedicated revenue source, authorized by the Florida Legislature, which is not currently available to local government jurisdictions.
- New Proposed EPA Regulations (Numeric Nutrient Criteria) - Request the Florida Legislature direct the FDEP to initiate the collection and analysis of adequate, timely, and appropriate data upon which to base the establishment of NNC regulations specific to Florida. Also request, in the strongest manner, that the EPA delay further action until Florida has had sufficient time to study and understand the impact of these new regulations on our unique environment and fragile economy. Finally, request the Florida Legislature provide sufficient funds to allow timely compliance with the FDEP regulations when they are adopted. Ideally, this funding would come from a specific and dedicated revenue source that is not currently available to local government jurisdictions.

Effect: These requested actions will ease the burden of these unfunded mandates on local governments.

FULL FUNDING OF THE FLORIDA COMMUNITIES TRUST'S FLORIDA FOREVER PROGRAM

Background: The Florida Forever Program has resulted in the purchase by counties and municipalities of thousands of acres of land that might otherwise have been lost to development. These purchases have preserved pristine land for the enjoyment of current Florida residents and visitors to the State, some of which is habitat for threatened and endangered species.

Requested Action: That the Florida Legislature in 2011 provide \$66 million to the Florida Forever Program.

Effect: The full funding of the Florida Forever Program will enable local governments throughout the State to purchase valuable properties at a time when property values are declining and land is available at much more reasonable prices than was the case several years ago. Also, full funding will enable the City of St. Augustine Beach to apply for an FCT grant so that it can purchase 4.5 acres of oceanfront land that will then become part of a larger park of 11.5 acres that the City purchased two years ago to save from development.

FUNDING OF BEACH RESTORATION PROJECTS

Background: Beaches are the State's major recreational resource and attract thousands of visitors annually whose spending contributes sales tax revenue to the State and bed tax revenue to cities and counties. While beach restoration projects have been criticized by some as "throwing money into the ocean" because the erosion is caused by natural forces, it is a proven fact that much of the erosion of Florida's beaches is caused by man, i.e., by the creation of inlets and jetties that interrupt the natural flow of sand and thus the natural restoration of the beaches. Beach restoration projects thus are needed to repair what has been caused by man, not nature. There are miles of critically eroded beaches along Florida's Atlantic and Gulf coasts. In Northeast Florida, past renourishment projects have restored beaches in Atlantic, Neptune and Jacksonville Beach, and in St. Augustine Beach.

Requested Action: That the Legislature provide the State's share of money needed to pay for federally-authorized beach restoration projects.

Effect: Continued funding of the State's share will help coastal cities and counties keep intact a vital resource, their beaches, which are powerful economic engines that provide revenue and that, through related tourism business, such as hotels, motels and restaurants, provide employment to thousands of the State's citizens.

2011 Northeast Florida Regional Council Legislative Priorities



The Legislative Policy Committee of the Northeast Florida Regional Council (NEFRC) was created to address critical concerns within the member counties which comprise the Region. It is composed of at least one delegate from each county (Baker, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Nassau, Putnam and St. Johns), which includes the current President of the NEFRC.

This Committee is guided by the *Home Rule Philosophy* to develop and implement community-based solutions.

The legislative priorities of each county within the Northeast Florida Regional Council's membership and other regional stakeholders were collected. Each entity was requested to determine at least three priorities which most significantly represented the critical needs and concerns of their communities and constituents. The cumulative list totaled **31** priorities.

Through the gathering and analysis of all priorities submitted by each county individually, the Legislative Policy Committee collectively determined the top **5** "Regional priorities" which represented the most critical concerns of the Northeast Florida Region.

All priorities were reviewed to include background, requested action and effect.

Additional information regarding all legislative priorities for the counties is available upon request.



Honorable Kenny Eubanks
Putnam County Commissioner
Legislative Policy Committee Chair

"I believe in the power of cooperation and that we are never stronger than when we pool our resources for the betterment of our Regional community.

Serving as Chairman for this committee has allowed me to see first hand, that although we come from different counties with unique perspectives, we embrace many of the same critical issues that affect the quality of life in our communities and our Region.

The resources and expertise of the Northeast Florida Regional Council affords us a greater opportunity to work collectively and promote Regionally."



About the Northeast Florida Regional Council

The Northeast Florida Regional Council (NEFRC) is a regional government agency serving seven counties—Baker, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Nassau, Putnam, and St. Johns—and their 27 municipalities. Formed in 1977 by an interlocal agreement pursuant to Florida Statutes, Chapter 163, it is one of 11 regional planning councils statewide.

The NEFRC is governed by a 35-member Board, two-thirds of whom are elected officials and one-third who are gubernatorial appointees.

The NEFRC provides a wide scope of services and programs including strategic planning, Development of Regional Impact reviews, economic development, regional transportation, natural resources, affordable housing, emergency preparedness and technical assistance.

The Northeast Florida Regional Council is committed to continuing its regional initiatives in support of shared visions, values and goals.

Our Mission

Our Mission is to provide visionary leadership and coordination between counties and governmental agencies to preserve and enhance the quality of Northeast Florida's natural, man-made, economic and social environment.

For additional information:

Brian D. Teeple
Chief Executive Officer

Mario L. Taylor
*Deputy Chief Executive Officer /
Chief Operating Officer*

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