



*2008 Annual Report
Northeast Florida Regional Council*



Northeast Florida Regional Council

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BAKER CLAY
DUVAL FLAGLER
NASSAU PUTNAM
ST. JOHNS

"Bringing Communities Together to Advance the Regional Agenda."

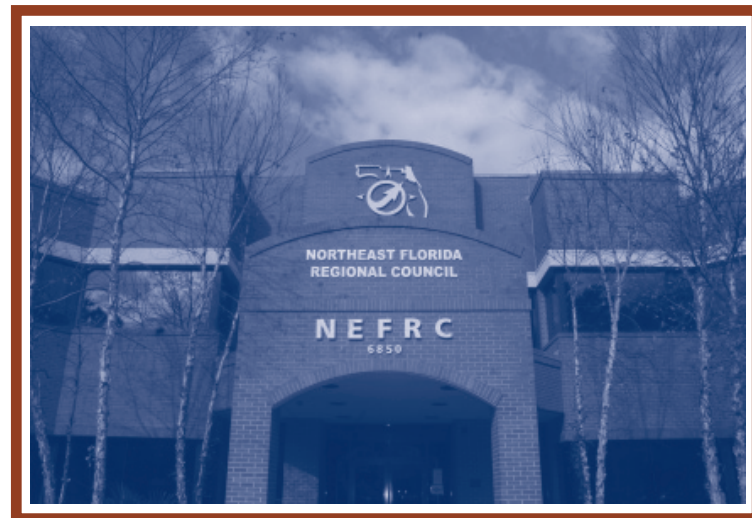
AGENCY PROFILE AND MISSION

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 186, it is one of 11 regional planning councils statewide.

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

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



We selected the cover graphic for the 2008 Northeast Florida Regional Council Annual Report very deliberately, because it showcases seven gears, or cogs, which represent the seven counties within Northeast Florida; and their 27 municipalities. Gears within a machine work in unison with each other to accomplish a greater goal. Likewise, each member county within the Northeast Florida Region works collectively to achieve a great goal: Regional Cooperation. Each gear is essential to the working of the machine. Each county is essential to the working of the Region. As you see the use of these graphics throughout the 2008 Annual Report, may it remind you of the critical role each member plays within the structure of our Region, as we as a Regional Council work tirelessly towards our goal of “Bringing Communities Together to Advance the Regional Agenda.”

REGIONAL COUNCIL STAFF



Brian D. Teeple
Chief Executive Officer



Mario L. Taylor
Deputy CEO/
Chief Operations Officer

- Jeffrey Alexander**, Director, Emergency Preparedness
- Walter Bowman**, Director, Information Services/Data Analysis
- Michael Hadden**, Director, Communication & Intergovernmental Relations
- Ed Lehman**, Director, Planning & Development
- Steven Mahaven**, Director, Business Development Services
- Margo Moehring**, Director, Strategic Initiatives
- Donna Starling**, Chief Financial Officer



Alexander Bowman Hadden Lehman Mahaven Moehring Starling

Executive Support:

- Angela Giles**, Executive Assistant
- Shirley Orberg**, Executive Assistant

Planning & Development:

- Guy Parola**, Program Administrator
- Ameera Sayeed**, Senior Regional Planner
- Debbie Balevre**, SHIP Program, Putnam
- Jeanie Palmer**, Transportation Disadvantaged (TD)
- Valerie Evans**, Principal Regional Planner
- Sheron Forde**, Administrative Assistant

Emergency Preparedness:

- Albert Chester**, Program Administrator
- Jon Holland**, Senior Regional Planner
- Steve McMikle**, Senior Regional Planner
- Jason Taylor**, Regional Planner
- Elizabeth Payne**, Regional Planner
- Debbie Dale**, Administrative Assistant

Operations:

- Angela Session**, Accountant
- Joyce Rhodes**, Procurement & Fiscal Assistant
- Brent Marley**, Building Maintenance

Information Services:

- Jonathan Goyings**, GIS Specialist I

BDC:

- Dana Hammontree**, Portfolio Servicing Specialist

Communication & Intergovernmental Relations (OCIR):

- Michael Calhoun**, Graphic Designer
- Mavis Youngblood**, Receptionist / Administrative Assistant

OUR REGION

The Northeast Florida Regional Council, formed in 1977, serves Regional District 4, and is comprised of seven counties (Baker, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Nassau, Putnam, and St. Johns) and 27 municipalities.

The Region's land area covers 4,428 square miles and the population surpasses 1.2 million. Forty-three percent of the region is dedicated to agriculture, two percent to industry and commercial use, and 13 percent is otherwise urbanized.

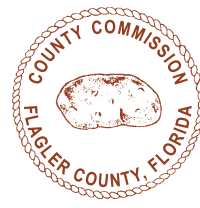
The Region is characterized by an abundance of natural resources and a diversity of habitats. Its central feature is the lower St. Johns River. With 140 miles of coastline and five barrier islands boasting some of the state's most magnificent, pristine beaches, the region is truly "Florida's First Coast."

Jacksonville is the major urban center, with a good mix of industrial manufacturing, transportation, financial services, health care, and military employment. Landwise, it is the largest city in the U.S.

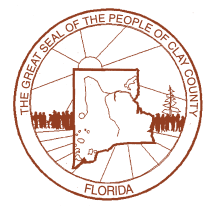
Surrounding counties are more rural in nature, relying on agriculture and service sectors, and a limited industrial base often focused on a single sector. They are, however, increasing in their rate of urbanization and beginning to develop more economic diversity.



BAKER COUNTY
 County Seat: Macclenny
 Population: 23,052*
 Area (sq. miles): 585
 Other Incorporated Communities: Glen St. Mary
 Established: 1861
 Named for: James McNair Baker, Confederate States senator and Florida judge



FLAGLER COUNTY
 County Seat: Bunnell
 Population: 89,075*
 Area (sq. miles): 485
 Other Incorporated Communities: Beverly Beach, Flagler Beach, Marineland, Palm Coast
 Established: 1917
 Named for: Henry Flagler, developer of the Florida East Coast Railroad



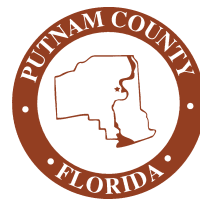
CLAY COUNTY
 County Seat: Green Cove Springs
 Population: 176,901*
 Area (sq. miles): 601
 Other Incorporated Communities: Keystone Heights, Orange Park, Penney Farms
 Established: 1858
 Named for: Kentuckian Henry Clay, Secretary of State under John Quincy Adams



NASSAU COUNTY
 County Seat: Fernandina Beach
 Population: 68,085*
 Area (sq. miles): 652
 Other Incorporated Communities: Callahan, Hilliard
 Established: 1824
 Named for: Nassau Sound



DUVAL COUNTY
 County Seat: Jacksonville
 Population: 878,640*
 Area (sq. miles): 774
 Other Incorporated Communities: Atlantic Beach, Baldwin, Jacksonville Beach, Neptune Beach
 Established: 1822
 Named for: William Pope DuVal, first territorial governor of Florida



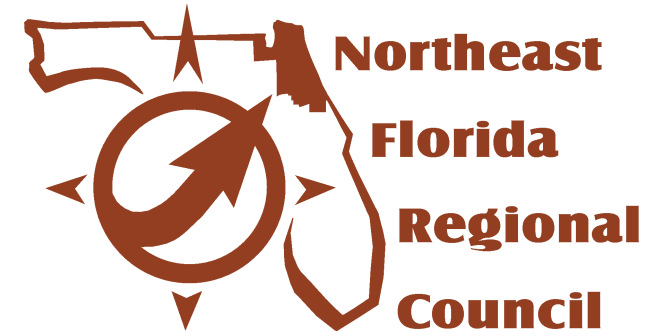
PUTNAM COUNTY
 County Seat: Palatka
 Population: 73,958*
 Area: 722
 Other Incorporated Communities: Crescent City, Interlachen, Pomona Park, Welaka
 Established: 1849
 Named for: Benjamin Alexander Putnam (1801-69), lawyer, soldier, judge, state legislator, first president of the Florida Historical Society



ST. JOHNS COUNTY
 County Seat: St. Augustine, oldest permanent settlement in U.S.
 Population: 161,966*
 Area (sq. miles): 609
 Other Incorporated Communities: Hastings, St. Augustine Beach
 Established: 1821
 Named for: St. Johns River

*Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census
 Estimates by Bureau of Economic and Business Research, University of Florida

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



"Bringing Communities Together to Advance the Regional Agenda." That's our mission at the Northeast Florida Regional Council (NEFRC), because we believe that individually we may be strong, but when we join the forces of all seven counties and 27 municipalities in our Region to act collectively, we're even stronger.

This year has been an exceptional year for Regional cooperation, as we have worked together to address and accomplish many things.

One topic of critical concern that has come to the forefront of the Regional Council's attention over the past year is the proposal to withdraw up to 261 million gallons per day from the St. Johns and Ocklawaha Rivers to help satisfy the potable water needs of Central Florida in the year 2013 and beyond. It's a topic that has spawned serious debate and brings forth numerous opinions. People are passionate about the St. Johns River and preserving and protecting its place in the environment and in the landscape of Northeast Florida and other far-reaching areas. We, at the NEFRC have taken this issue seriously and taken steps towards addressing it.

We hosted the Northeast Florida Regional Water Supply Summit: The Future of the St. Johns River, in order to educate on the issue, to determine a common position for our Region and to plan the next steps. The NEFRC also participated in television broadcasts, joint meetings with other Regional Councils and launched a Web site exclusively to address the topic. Working with other Regional partners we commit to illuminate the importance of this topic well into the future as it is one that affects us all.

The Board and staff of the NEFRC were active in a number of prominent activities in 2008. We sent a delegation to Tallahassee to promote our 2008 Legislative Priorities on behalf of our member counties. We hosted international visitors in conjunction with the efforts of the International Visitors Corps of Jacksonville.

Regional Leadership efforts continued to thrive as the third class of the Northeast Florida Regional Leadership Academy was graduated; marking over 100 Regional Leaders who have completed the program. We added a Strategic Initiatives component to the programmatic areas of the Council which focuses intensely on the Regional Visioning efforts of the Council.

The past year has been one of great momentum and great accomplishment. Sadly, the NEFRC said good bye to long-time Board Member, Mary Louise Dungey who lost her battle with cancer. However, Ms. Dungey left an indelible mark not only on the Council, but on the Region as a whole through her contributions and strong leadership.

There's an old Chinese proverb which says, "One person is no match for two in wisdom." Given that thinking, how much more influential and productive are we as we come together - seven counties strong - to address the burning issues and concerns which affect the very communities in which we live and work.

It's been my privilege to serve as the President of the Northeast Florida Regional Council, and I am proud to pass the baton of meaningful work to the able hands of my successor, Nassau County Commissioner, Michael Boyle.

Very Sincerely,

The Honorable Harold Rutledge
Clay County Commissioner
Northeast Florida Regional Council President
2007-2008



1) **Regional Award for Excellence in Economic Development/Tourism**
Gil Langley
CEO, Amelia Island Tourist Development Council



2) **Regional Award for Excellence in Education**
Jacksonville Mayor John Peyton's Book Club
Linda Lanier, Executive Director, Jacksonville Children's Commission, accepting the award



3) **Regional Award for Excellence in Transportation**
The Sunshine Bus Company
Cathy Brown, Executive Director of the St. Johns County Council on Aging, accepting the award



4) **Regional Award for Excellence in Planning and Growth Management**
First Coast Chapter of the Florida Planning and Zoning Association (FPZA)
(l) Lara Diettrich, FPZA Conference Chair and (r) Lindsay Haga, Chapter President, accepting the award

Regional Award for Excellence in Public Safety
TIE:
5) **Chief Quin Romay**
Putnam County Emergency Management and

6) **The Clay County Sheriff's Office Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS) Program**
Bill Doolittle, Civilian Coordinator for the VIPS Program, accepting the award



7) **Regional Award for Excellence in Affordable Housing**
Habijax
Mary Kay O'Rourke, President & CEO, accepting the award



8) **Regional Quality of Life Award**
City of Palm Coast / Management Plan for the Masonic Cemetery
City of Palm Coast Mayor Jon Netts accepting the award



9) **Regional Award for Excellence in Environmental Stewardship**
St. Johns County Utility Department
Bill Young, Director, accepting the award



REGIONAL LEADERSHIP

Northeast Florida Regional Leadership Academy

The Northeast Florida Regional Leadership Academy continues to examine relevant issues affecting all of the communities within the Northeast Florida Region. The Academy graduated its third class of Regional Leaders in 2008, marking over 100 members having gone through the educational program.

It continues to focus on preparing a diverse group of leaders to work collaboratively and develop partnerships to build a strong Regional community. Through the process of identifying, studying, and acting as a forum for dialogue on Regional issues that are significant to Northeast Florida, the Academy promotes and encourages initiation of innovative approaches to Regional issues.

Topics covered during the past Program Year of the Academy included such issues as: emergency preparedness, housing, education, environment, economic development and others. Guest speakers, best practices groups and field work for class members were all a part of the exciting program content that continues to gain momentum with each graduating class.

The Class of 2008 commenced in September 2007 and graduated in May 2008.



Northeast Florida Regional Council Regional Leadership Awards

Since the year 2000, the Northeast Florida Regional Council has taken great pleasure in hosting a reception for elected officials and friends to enjoy an evening of good food, fellowship and conversation which fosters the growing sense of Regionalism and Regional cooperation that exists in Northeast Florida. In 2003, in response to the high level of Regional Excellence in a variety of critical arenas, the Council launched the Regional Leadership Awards Program. This marks the sixth year the Awards Ceremony has been incorporated into the festivities. The outstanding nominations submitted again in 2008, reflected the diversity of programs and projects, the quality of these efforts, the leadership demonstrated by the nominees and the truly meaningful work that is being accomplished in the Region.

Newly seated Regional Council President, Nassau County Commissioner Mike Boyle served as the emcee for the Award Ceremony portion of the evening. University of North Florida President, John Delaney (pictured right), was honored as the 2008 recipient of the Harry Waldron Regional Leadership Award.

All other award winners are named and pictured on the facing page.



2007-2008 BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**The Honorable
Harold Rutledge
President
Clay County**



**The Honorable
Mike Boyle
1st Vice President
Nassau County**



**The Honorable
Mike Griffis
2nd Vice President
Baker County**



**Mr. Hugh Fish
Secretary /
Treasurer
Baker County**

The Board of Directors of the Northeast Florida Regional Council is comprised of 35 members; two-thirds elected officials and one-third gubernatorial appointees. These individuals are recognized in the public and private sectors for their influence and leadership. They provide the Council with the insight and the tools to make critical decisions which affect the quality of life within our Region. The members named below are listed by their affiliation and title reflective of their status at the time of their service.

BAKER COUNTY

- Ms. Ginger Barber
Gubernatorial Representative
- Mr. Hugh D. Fish, Jr.*
City of Macclenny Representative
- Hon. Mike Griffis*
Chair, Baker County Commission
- Mr. Darryl Register*
Baker County Representative

CLAY COUNTY

- Hon. Paul Bue
Mayor, Town of Penney Farms
- Ms. Deidra O. Franklin
Gubernatorial Appointee
- Hon. Bob Page*
Councilmember
City of Green Cove Springs
- Hon. Harold Rutledge
Clay County Commissioner
- Hon. Chereese Stewart*
Clay County Commissioner
- Hon. Carol A. Vallencourt*
Clay County School Board
Gubernatorial Appointee

DUVAL COUNTY

- Hon. Bill Bishop*
Jacksonville City Councilman
- Hon. Richard Clark
Jacksonville City Councilman

Ms. Mary Louise Dungey Gubernatorial Appointee

- Hon. James Fletcher
Commissioner
City of Atlantic Beach
- Hon. Ronnie Fussell
Jacksonville City Councilman
- Hon. Art Graham*
Jacksonville City Councilman

Hon. Paul Parsons* Commissioner City of Atlantic Beach

FLAGLER COUNTY

- Hon. Milissa Holland*
Chair, Flagler County Commission
- Hon. Joann B. King
Mayor, City of Bunnell
- Hon. Jon Netts*
Mayor, City of Palm Coast
- Hon. Jim O'Connell
Flagler County Commissioner
- Hon. Catherine Robinson*
Mayor, City of Bunnell
- Mr. Bob Sgroi*
Gubernatorial Appointee

NASSAU COUNTY

- Hon. Michael Boyle*
Chair, Nassau County Commission
- Hon. Shirley Graham*
Mayor, Town of Callahan

Hon. Bill Leeper Mayor of Fernandina Beach

- Mr. Robert "Bob" Spaeth*
Nassau County Representative
- Mr. Larry Williams*
Gubernatorial Appointee

PUTNAM COUNTY

- Hon. Nancy Harris*
Chair, Putnam County Commission
- Mr. Chip Laibl*
Putnam County Commissioner

Hon. Mary Lawson-Brown* Vice-Mayor City of Palatka

Mr. Tom Williams Gubernatorial Appointee

ST. JOHNS COUNTY

- Hon. Don Crichlow*
Commissioner
City of St. Augustine
- Hon. Tom Manuel
St. Johns County Commissioner
- Mr. Harry Maxwell*
Gubernatorial Appointee
- Hon. Ben Rich
St. Johns County Commissioner

Ms. Karen Stern* Gubernatorial Appointee

- Hon. Cyndi Stevenson*
Chair, St. Johns County Commission

EX-OFFICIO NON-VOTING MEMBERS

- Ms. Linda Burnette,
St. Johns River Water
Management District
- Mr. Jeff Cole*
St. Johns River Water
Management District
- Mr. C.W. (Wes) Larson, II*
Putnam County Chamber of
Commerce
Enterprise Florida, Inc.
- Mr. Larry Parks*
Florida Department of
Transportation
- Mr. Gregory Strong*
Florida Department of
Environmental Protection

All members who served during any portion of the fiscal year (October 1, 2007 - September 30, 2008) and who were appointed by the end of 2008 are listed.

Board Members as of December 31, 2008 are noted with an asterisk.

Deceased

PLANNING AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT

The Northeast Florida Regional Council (NEFRC) has an important role in the planning and growth management functions in this region. The role of the Council can be broadly divided into our role in reviewing all local government comprehensive plans and plan amendments, as well as Evaluation and Appraisal Reports, for consistency with the Strategic Regional Policy Plan (SRPP), providing quality planning and growth management technical assistance to communities through contract, coordinating the review of Developments of Regional Impact, and facilitating intergovernmental cooperation and coordination through such venues as planning directors meetings.

Technical Assistance

City of Palatka Comprehensive Plan

In mid 2007, the Northeast Florida Regional Council and the City of Palatka began the process of updating the City's Comprehensive Plan. The City realized that their Comprehensive Plan was dated and no longer served the long-range planning needs of the City. Consequently, the City contracted with NEFRC to completely update their Comprehensive Plan, which included:

- Digitizing of the Comprehensive Plan map series, and converting them into industry standard GIS files
- Generating a complete land use amendment and annexation history for the City and the Department of Community Affairs by chronologically assembling all land use amendment and annexation ordinances since 1991, and creating individual GIS location maps for each ordinance
- By comparing the land use and annexation ordinances to the Comprehensive Plan, a true and accurate parcelized Future Land Use Map was created
- Updating of the data and analysis for each element of the Comprehensive Plan, creating both short-term and long-range planning horizons
- Comparing each element, goal, objective, and policy, to state laws regarding Comprehensive Planning to ensure consistency with state statute and rule
- Holding a series of public visioning exercises and workshops to garner public input on the Comprehensive Plan, the results of which were used to create, delete or amend certain goals, objectives and policies.

NEFRC shepherded the Comprehensive Plan through the amendment process, meeting on several occasions with the Department of Community Affairs (DCA), the Putnam County School Board, the Florida Department of Transportation, the St. Johns River Water Management District, Putnam County, and other regional and state agencies to address their concerns and recommendations.

After close to 16 months of hard work, DCA found the updated Comprehensive Plan to be in compliance.

City of Palatka Transportation Proportionate Fair Share Ordinance

At the request of the City of Palatka, NEFRC created a Transportation Proportionate Fair Share Ordinance for adoption into their Land Development Regulations. Transportation Proportionate Fair Share ordinances augments transportation concurrency by establishing a system and methodology for ensuring that growth contributes its *fair share* of the costs associated with mitigating its transportation impacts.

Review of Local Government Comprehensive Plans and Plan Amendments

The Council reviews all local government comprehensive plans and plan amendments pursuant to the requirements of Chapter 163, Florida Statutes. The Council reviews all transmitted amendments to determine if there are adverse impacts to regional resources or extra-jurisdictional impacts. In addition, the Council provides local governments with guiding comments to assist them in better addressing planning issues upon plan adoption. These review recommendations are transmitted to the Department of Community Affairs (DCA), which uses them in developing their Objections, Recommendations & Comments (ORC) report. This past year continued the pilot project with the City of Jacksonville, whereby the Council's comments are directly forwarded to the City of Jacksonville for their due consideration in the plan adoption stage. All adopted amendments are reviewed and a determination of consistency with the SRPP is rendered. That review is then transmitted to DCA to assist in its determination of compliance.

During Fiscal Year 2007-08 (FY 07-08), a total of 51 transmitted amendments were reviewed by the Council with review recommendations sent to DCA. Of those, 33 were amendments that were transmitted in order to meet the Public School Facilities planning requirements of Section 163.3177(12), F.S. In addition, there were two transmitted amendments that were subject to the pilot alternative review process for Jacksonville, as established in Section 163.32465, F.S. These review recommendations were transmitted to the City, with copies sent to DCA.

Also during FY 07/08, a total of 46 adopted amendments were reviewed by the Council. By addressing the comments and recommendations included in the transmitted review, 45 of these were determined by the Council to be consistent with the (SRPP).

Review of small-scale amendments is done at the staff level, with only those amendments determined by staff to be inconsistent with the SRPP brought before the Council. There were 80 small-scale amendments reviewed by Council staff during FY 07/08.

ENVIRONMENT STEWARDSHIP The Future of the St. Johns River

The St. Johns River is undoubtedly one of Northeast Florida's greatest natural resources. In fact, it was designated as one of the American Heritage Rivers in 1997. It is home to numerous species of plants and animals. It is not uncommon to see dolphins in the river east of Jacksonville and manatees in the springtime when the water warms up. Alligators, bald eagles, ospreys, stingrays, and many species of fish—both salt and fresh water—are found living in the river and on its banks.

The proposal to withdraw up to 261 million gallons per day from the St. Johns and Ocklawaha Rivers to help satisfy the potable water needs of Central Florida in the year 2013 and beyond is one that has spawned serious debate and brings forth numerous opinions. People are passionate about the St. Johns River and preserving and protecting its place in the environment and in the landscape of Northeast Florida and other far-reaching areas. Because of the vital importance of this resource, we must understand how various activities impact it.

The Northeast Florida Regional Council utilized its voice as a Regional megaphone to address this topic, to educate, and to attempt to come to a consensus about the natural resource that affects everyone within the Northeast Florida Region. As a kick off to the dialogue on the topic, the Regional Council hosted The Northeast Florida Regional Water Supply Summit: The Future of the St. Johns River was held on Friday, January 25, 2008, at the St. Johns County Convention Center at the World Golf Village, St. Augustine.

Chief elected officials, other stakeholders, members of the media as well as the public convened together in a crowd of

nearly 300 to address this critical issue that is of vital importance to the Northeast Florida region.

As a result of continued interest, on Thursday, April 10, Northeast Florida Regional Council President Harold Rutledge sat on a diverse panel selected to address and debate the water withdrawal issue on WJCT's telecast of "First Coast Forum." This hour-long episode entitled "Tapping the St. Johns" examined this proposal and how it could affect growth, economics and the environment of our community.

To further address the concerns over the Future of the St. Johns River, and in response to one of the "next step" action items that was proposed after the Water Supply Summit, the Council members participated in a joint meeting with its counterpart, the East Central Florida Regional Planning Council (ECFRPC). Both Councils have been individually dealing with the water supply issue as it relates to the St. Johns River and brought together members from each body to convene in St. Augustine and discuss the matter face-to-face in the hopes of continued progress in a resolution. The roundtable discussion was headed by The Honorable Harold Rutledge, President of the NEFRC and The Honorable Teresa Jacobs, Chair of the ECFRPC Board.

A Web site entirely dedicated to the topic – www.RegionalH2O.com – was also developed by the Council and continues to be a repository of information related to the future of the River.



Geographic Information Systems

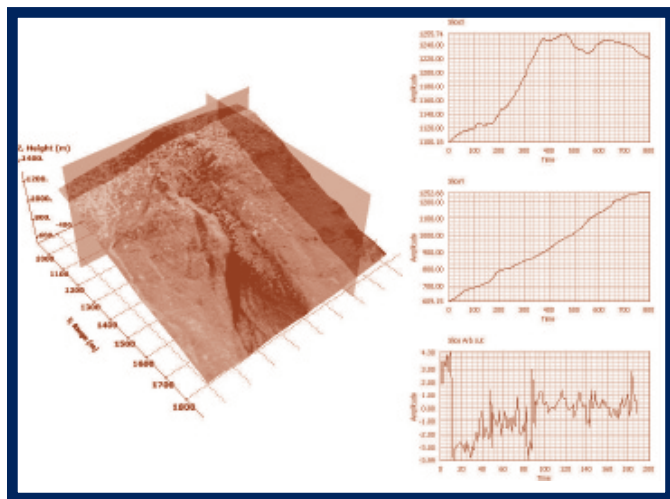
Council Geographic Information Systems (GIS) staff continues to provide technical assistance to its local governments. GIS staff has assisted many of our local governments with the mapping and analysis related to issues of Comprehensive Planning, Large and Small Scale Amendments, Local Update of Census Addresses, Environmental Analysis, Evacuation Planning, Hazard Analysis, Traffic Studies, Demographic Analysis, and Water Resource Planning. Local governments continue to use the Council's GIS staff as an expert resource. Maps and analysis have been utilized for a variety of programs and projects including the Palatka Comprehensive Growth Plan, the Statewide Regional Evacuation Studies Program (SRESP) for the State of Florida, the St. Johns EAR, the Putnam Green Print project, and the update of the Strategic Regional Policy Plan (SRPP), among others. The Council continues to be active in the Northeast Florida GIS User's Group (NEFGIS) and continues to host its Web site.

- Current work related to the update of the SRPP involves inventorying data and acquiring data for the Reality Check event coordinated by the Urban Land Institute. It also involves mapping Northeast Florida's "existing conditions" for use at the Reality Check event.
- Maps and analysis for the Palatka Comprehensive Growth Plan is a project that required substantial iteration and the collection of best available data.
- The City of St. Augustine contracted with the Council to prepare and transmit an Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR), which is due in October 2008. This project required new data and analysis.
- Recently GIS staff has worked with Planning staff to create maps and data for the Cecil Field Space Port effort. This effort is directed at getting Cecil Field designated as a Spaceport. Work included demographic analysis of the proposed flight path.
- GIS staff has also done significant work in updating the Clay County LMS Map Series with current MEMPHIS data garnered from the FDEM. This new data will be incorporated into Clay County's Local Mitigation Strategy.
- GIS staff has finalized its work on updating the DRI data and shapefile with the latest revisions. This data will now be distributed with a table describing the various DRI characteristics.
- GIS staff attended Local Update Census Addresses (LUCA) training for the possibility that some jurisdictions may want to engage the Council for a local update to its Census Addresses. As a result, GIS staff was able to assist Nassau County in providing this update. This work included the analysis of 911 Database and populating this database with over 3000 additional records.
- GIS staff has completed work on a mapping project for The Bridge, a non-profit that helps at-risk mothers. This entails geo-coding an excel table with Duval County addresses and the production of a series of maps showing demographic characteristics for the geo-coded addresses.

GIS staff continues to add to the existing Regional Map Series. This series of maps looks at significant land features on a region-wide basis. New additions include Prioritized Functional Wetlands, Forests that maintain natural groundwater recharge functions, Ecological Greenways Acquisition Priorities, Under-Protected Natural Communities, Rare Species Habitats, Landscape Integrity, Critical Lands Identification, and Ecological Hotspots/Biodiversity.

The Council GIS staff continues to add to the already voluminous store of GIS data. Data acquired includes: ACS demographic data for 2006 (where available), TAZ estimates and projections for 2005, 2010, 2015, 2025, and 2030 for single family, multi-family,

mobile home residential units, Council/Commission Districts, Revised Evacuation Routes, Mitigation Banks, Primary Lakes for North and Central Florida, Transportation Road Segments with ITS capability, Bathymetry of NE Florida, detailed Florida Aquatic Preserves, Florida Beach Names, Florida Sea Grass, Florida State Parks, Fish and Wildlife Regions, Manatee Mortality, Florida Marine Facilities, Offshore Sea Floor, Red Tide Points, Turtle Nesting Points, National Hydrological Dataset (NHD), parcel level data with all CAMA tables, revisions to evacuation routes, Critical Facilities, Mobile Homes, Shelters, TeleAtlas road network, Color Infrared Aerial Imagery 2004 for the entire region, hurricane history, frequency of hurricane return patterns, aquifer recharge areas, coastal LIDAR for the Region's coast, regionally significant habitats, FEMA Q3 data, demographic data for 2000 and 2005 (where available), motels/hotel data, bridge data, dam data, USGS national elevation data, updates to the Regional Future Land Use Layer, updated "Managed Lands" data, new satellite imagery (LandSat 7), shelter data and updated Evacuation Routes, among others.



City of Palatka Public School Facilities Element

In 2005, the Florida Legislature amended section 163.3180 of the Florida Statutes to require local jurisdictions to include a Public School Facilities Element (PSFE) in the Comprehensive Plan. The Public School Facilities Element establishes requirements for coordinated planning between the School District and local jurisdiction. The Element includes data and analysis and goals, objectives, and policies.

On behalf of the City of Palatka, NEFRC created a Public School Facilities Element that was adopted into their Comprehensive Plan. The new element was a multi-year endeavor that included several joint workshops between the Putnam County School Board, Putnam County, the City of Palatka, the towns of Pomona Park, Interlachen and Welaka, and the City of Crescent City. NEFRC created the element and shepherded it through the adoption process through the Department of Community Affairs.

Crescent City Transportation Proportionate Fair Share and School Concurrency Ordinances

At the request of the City of Palatka, the Northeast Florida Regional Council (NEFRC) created a Transportation Proportionate Fair Share Ordinance and School Concurrency Ordinance for adoption into its Land Development Regulations. Both ordinances augment their existing concurrency management system by ensuring that there are mechanisms with the land development regulations to ensure that there are transportation and school facilities available to accommodate current and projected growth.

Town of Interlachen Public Workshops

In early 2008, the Town of Interlachen requested that the Regional Council be presenters at a series of public workshops. Throughout the year, NEFRC made the following presentations to the Town of Interlachen's general public, Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Adjustment and Town Council:

- Voluntary Annexations and Annexation by Referendum

In order to make educated, well-planned decisions regarding the annexation of lands into the town, the Town Council requested that NEFRC make a presentation on annexations and the rules in Florida that govern them.

- Roberts Rules of Order and Parliamentary Procedure

At the request of the Town Council, NEFRC made a presentation to the Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Adjustments, and the Town Council on Roberts Rules of Order and Parliamentary Procedures. NEFRC created a customized presentation and exercise for the Town, that were designed to enable the Town to run effectively and efficiently, while preserving the "small town" character of its hearings.

- Government in the Sunshine

In the spirit of providing the public a transparent local government, the Town Council requested that NEFRC make a presentation to the appointed and elected officials, as well as to the general public, on operating within the Sunshine laws, including requests for public information. In addition to the presentation, which included a question and answer session, NEFRC provided the Town with a Government in the Sunshine manual identifying its responsibilities to ensure lawful and ready access to public information, while maintaining its custodial responsibility to the documents.

Crescent City Capital Improvements Element

At the request of Crescent City, NEFRC created a "financially feasible" Capital Improvements Program and Capital Improvements Element for adoption into its Comprehensive Plan. Essentially, "financial feasibility" translates into having capital revenues that are equal to or exceed the capital expenses necessary to ensure that infrastructure can accommodate current and projected growth.

Fernandina Beach Evaluation and Appraisal Report Scoping Meeting

At the request of the City of Fernandina Beach, the Regional Council organized and hosted an inter-agency Scoping meeting in preparation for its Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR). The Scoping Meeting enabled Fernandina Beach to engage regional and state agencies at the beginning of this planning process, and allow the city to incorporate its interests into the evaluation of its Comprehensive Plan.

St. Johns County EAR

The Northeast Florida Regional Council assisted St. Johns County in preparing the Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) of its Comprehensive Plan. Section 163.3191, Florida Statutes, requires that “each local government shall adopt an Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) once every seven years assessing the progress in implementing the local government’s Comprehensive Plan.” The EAR assesses the adopted Comprehensive Plan’s strengths and weaknesses, and provides recommendations for changes that will reflect the current conditions and trends.

A key part of the EAR process is the identification of the major issues facing the County. As required by Florida Statutes, a list of major issues was devised using input from the general public, County planning staff and departments, regional, state and federal agencies. A scoping meeting was held July 18, 2007. The Department of Community Affairs facilitated the meeting with approximately 51 people in attendance.

Four separate community evening workshops were held to garner public input on the EAR, with specific focus on the local major issues. The Regional Council facilitated the community workshops with assistance from County staff.

At each of the public workshops the Regional Council presented an overview of the EAR process; County staff provided a synopsis of major issues to those in attendance. Based on public input from the meetings, a detailed summary of the issues was created and used as the basis for a comment sheet which was provided at each of the workshops.

In the final stages of adoption, the EAR can be viewed or downloaded from the St. Johns County Web site.

Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA)

The Local Update of Census Addresses program, also known as LUCA, is a decennial census geographic partnership program. This program will allow the Census Bureau to benefit from local knowledge in developing its Master Address File (MAF) for the 2010 Census.

In December 2007 and January 2008 the Regional Council took several initiatives to remind local governments to send their response to the LUCA program. The Council’s encouragement, support and assistance enabled several counties to develop a MAF for the 2010 Census.

Council Staff in particular assisted Nassau County in reforming the following GIS tasks using the 911 address database:

- Join the 911 data base to the census blocks;
- Join the 911 and census blocks table to the census tracts;
- Check data base for outliers and erroneous records;
- Ensure that the file is geo-coded;
- Delineate records that are outliers but do not remove from table; and
- Convert GIS data base to pipe-delimited ASCII text.

Town of Pomona Park Public School Facilities Element

On behalf of the Town of Pomona Park, NEFRC staff prepared the Public School Facilities Element, which the Town Council adopted into the Comprehensive Plan. The new element was a multi-year endeavor that included several joint workshops between the Putnam County School Board, Putnam County, the Town of Welaka, and the towns of Pomona Park, Interlachen, and the City of Crescent City. NEFRC staff managed its adoption through the public hearing process and review from the Department of Community Affairs.

Town of Pomona Park Capital Improvements Element

In 2005, the Florida Legislature enacted Senate Bill 360 (SB360). The legislation amended Chapter 163, F.S. to strengthen the relationship between the CIE and the statutory requirements to maintain LOS standards for public infrastructure. The adoption of SB 360 required municipalities to annually adopt a financially feasible CIE schedule beginning on December 1, 2007. (House Bill 7203, passed in May 2007, postponed the submittal to December 1, 2008).

At the request of the Town of Pomona Park, the NEFRC created a “financially feasible” Capital Improvements Program and Capital Improvements Element for adoption into their Comprehensive Plan. Essentially, “financial feasibility” translates into having capital revenues that are equal to or exceed the capital expenses necessary to ensure that infrastructure can accommodate current and projected growth.

Traffic Studies and Transportation Modeling

The Council produced several traffic concurrency studies, traffic analyses and model output data. The Council has full capabilities in transportation modeling using the Northeast Florida Regional Planning Model (NERPM). The Council has used GIS and Cube/Voyager software toward developing and analyzing traffic patterns for various land use analyses and transportation related issues. Some documents produced using the various tools and technologies are listed below:

- Pomona Park Land use analysis
- Selva Preserve
- Putnam County EAR
- Trip distribution percent and model output datasets for traffic studies and concurrency purposes

Putnam County EAR

The Council facilitated several public workshops to develop Putnam County’s major issues. The Council hosted a scoping meeting and also a joint session workshop which included members of the Board of County Commissioners and the Planning and Zoning Board workshop. The Council also completed updates to two of the elements of the County’s Comprehensive Plan and continues to provide technical assistance and support to the County in developing the Final EAR document which is due November 1, 2009.



INFORMATION SERVICES

Information Services and Data Analysis provides a variety of quantitative services to both internal and external programs. Services include information technology, geographic information systems, data analysis, and economic impact analysis.

Information Technology

The Information Technology (IT) function provides local network services for the Council staff. Services include network administration, server administration, desktop support, data storage and security, web site hosting, e-mail services, site security systems, and voice communications.

In the past year, the Council continued to rebuild and enhance its computer network. This project has produced new and upgraded security technologies, i.e., a new firewall, upgraded antivirus software, and a new spam filtering system. The project has also produced servers and ancillary equipment that have been upgraded and consolidated into a totally Windows-based platform. Other substantial enhancements have occurred with regard to the telephone system, telephone service, Board Room audio/video capability, vendor management and process documentation.

There were a number of significant accomplishments in the past year. The Council continued to replace personal computers so that all are now replaced or refurbished. All computers are now equipped with dual monitors. Additionally, all personal computers are now running MS Windows xp Professional and MS Office Professional 2003. Servers have been consolidated to six, and a storage area network has been added for vastly increased storage capacity and better data management. Financial Services hardware and software were upgraded with all new personal computers, a new server and new accounting software. All Council printers, copiers, fax machines and scanners were upgraded, including six new multi-function machines and a more cost-effective and reliable service contract for all Council machines. A new mail server and a new web server were brought online. All servers were moved and re-racked in a single IT Server Supply Room. An IT Emergency Response Plan was also developed. Finally, IT continued a project to cleanup Active Directory and phone lists.

Data Analysis

The Council continues to be Northeast Florida’s official Census Data Center and is an invaluable resource for economic, demographic, social, and development data in both statistical and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) form. The Council has access to data from the University of Florida and various state agencies. Staff responds to numerous information requests from local citizens, member governments, media, and other organizations.

The Council is developing *Plan Scans*, a document management system for Planning and Development. It includes scanning and paperless filing that will serve as a data and information warehouse for the Planning and Development program area.

Economic Impact Analysis

The Council continues to provide economic impact assessments utilizing the Regional Economic Modeling, Inc. (REMI) Policy Insight® model designed specifically for Northeast Florida. This service provides economic development practitioners and local governments a method to assess the economic and demographic impacts of proposed projects and policy initiatives.

The information provided in these assessments is utilized by local governments to make decisions on possible incentive packages for new and/or existing projects as well and provides background data to support various state and federal economic development grants for local economic development initiatives.

In the past year, the Council completed an update of its major study to estimate the economic impact of the Wal-Mart Distribution Center in Baker County.



FINANCE / VALUE ADDED SERVICES



The Council maintained a stable financial position during the year ending September 30, 2008. The firm of Magers and Associates conducted the annual audit and issued an unqualified opinion.

The Council refinanced the building note in June 2008 at a fixed interest rate of 3.75 percent with a 10 year maturity, amortized over 20 years. The Council received proceeds from the refinance of \$474,102 that will be used for roof replacement and general building repairs.

The Council is in the third year of modernizing our Records Management process. The Council is currently in compliance with the State's records management requirement under Section 257.36(5) of the Florida Statutes and Rule 1B-24.003 of the Florida Administrative Code for public records retention. The Council appropriately disposed of 47 cubic feet of records in 2008. The Council currently has 416 cubic feet of stored records. The Records Management Liaison Officer for the Council is a Florida Certified Records Manager.

As of the end of this fiscal year, the Council's leasable space is fully occupied with a total of two tenants: Project SOS and the Early Learning Coalition of Duval.

Operating Revenue Sources 2007-2008 \$5,094,658

Community Services	\$495,697
Emergency Preparedness	\$2,618,565
Planning	\$826,718
County Investment	\$606,025
Economic Development	\$439,610
Transportation	\$108,043

Return on Investment

Among the tangible benefits reaped by member governments was a \$11/1 return on their county contributions. Following is a breakdown of selected services for the Council's seven-county region:

- Yielded a \$6,604,908 direct/indirect return on investment for contributions of \$606,025 by member counties, a \$11/1 ratio.
- Supported economic development with small business loans totaling \$1,321,312 through the Business Development Corporation, adding new jobs and more than \$34,096 in new ad valorem taxes.
- Provided \$1,061,515 in contract monies to Regional Councils across the State to assist in the development of a Statewide Regional Evacuation Study and various other Statewide Emergency Management projects.
- Approved for funding consideration \$48,455,121 in federal/state/local government and private monies for 562 regional programs and projects.

COUNTIES' RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Baker	\$70/1
Clay	\$12/1
Duval	\$2/1
Flagler	\$13/1
Nassau	\$31/1
Putnam	\$79/1
St. Johns	\$9/1

The Region \$11/1

Town of Welaka Public Education Facilities Element

On behalf of the Town of Welaka, NEFRC staff prepared a Public School Facilities Element, which the Town Council adopted into the Comprehensive Plan. NEFRC staffed and managed its adoption through the public hearing process and review from the Department of Community Affairs to completion.

City of St. Augustine EAR

The Council was engaged by the City of St. Augustine Planning and Development to produce its Evaluation and Appraisal (EAR) report. The EAR is not a new vision or plan for the County; however, it sets the stage for amending and updating the Comprehensive Plan's data and analysis, goals, objectives, and policies, updating the plans maps and considering changes to the future land use map.

The Council worked closely with staff and the community to prepare the report. DCA requires that during the EAR process, communities undergo a visioning or community outreach effort. As part of the process, Council facilitated a number of public workshops to solicit public input and develop a list of major issues or concerns that were unique to the community. The identification of issues serves to guide the direction of the comprehensive plan.

The EAR process took approximately eight months to produce and vet through the City and community. The final report was approved for adoption to DCA in October 2008.

The City of Atlantic Beach EAR

The Council provided technical assistance to the City of Atlantic Beach in the preparation of its EAR. Staff facilitated the initial scoping meeting with the agencies involved in the reviewing process. In addition, we provided data and analysis as requested for a number of the elements.

Town of Interlachen Public School Facilities Element

On behalf of the Town of Interlachen, NEFRC staff prepared a Public School Facilities Element, which the Town Council adopted into the Comprehensive Plan. The new element was a multi-year endeavor that included several joint workshops between the Putnam County School Board, Putnam County, the Town of Welaka, and the towns of Pomona Park, Interlachen, and the City of Crescent City. NEFRC staff managed its adoption through the public hearing process and review from the Department of Community Affairs to completion.

Augusta Savage Project

Staff assisted the City of Green Cove Springs with facilitation of a one-day public visioning workshop to evaluate the potential use of an historic structure. Based on the input received during the workshop, the Council produced a summary report for the City to help solicit support and funding for rehabilitation and operation of the facility.

Ten Year Site Plans

Each year every electric utility in the State of Florida produces a ten year site plan that includes an estimate of future electric power generating needs. The purpose of the ten year site plan is to disclose the general location of proposed power plant sites and facilitate coordinated planning efforts.

Section 186.801, Florida Statutes, requires that all major generating electric utilities in Florida submit a *Ten-Year Site Plan* to the Florida Public Service Commission for review. The intent of the *Ten-Year Site Plans* is to give state, regional, and local agencies advance notice of proposed power plants and transmission facilities. The Northeast Florida Regional Council reviews electric utility Ten-Year Site Plans within the region and submits comments to the Commission for review. The Commission forwards the *Ten-Year Site Plan* review, upon completion, to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) for use in subsequent power plant siting proceedings.

The Council to date completed four reviews and these are listed below:

- Jacksonville Electric Authority (JEA update)
- JEA Site Certification
- Seminole Electric (update)
- Florida Power and Light (sub-station locations in St. Johns County)



Nassau County Rural Character Analysis

In January of 2008, NEFRC staff began work on a rural character analysis study for Nassau County in order to supplement the county's Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) for the Comprehensive Plan. The purpose of the analysis was to evaluate the impact of the current Comprehensive Plan policies on rural character and suburban sprawl, as defined by the State. The County Planning and Development Department was able to use this study as part of the data and analysis in its EAR. The data sources for this report provided information about the county's wetlands, agriculture, zoning, and housing needs. This report can serve as a model for other rural character analysis studies; staff will conduct similar analysis for Reality Check and the Strategic Regional Policy Plan update.

Northeast Florida Regional Housing Needs Assessment

In December of 2008, NEFRC staff completed a regional housing needs assessment for submittal to the Regional Council board. The report was a year-long effort to compile housing data for the region. As a technical reference, the report serves multiple purposes. For example, it provides a reference for preparing Comprehensive Plan amendments or elements, Evaluation and Appraisal Reports (EARs), and other policy or technical documents that rely on housing data. Users may also refer to it while reviewing Developments of Regional Impact (DRIs), Comprehensive Plan amendments, and other planning initiatives.

The main data sources for the report are from the Shimberg Center for Affordable Housing and the US Census Bureau. Council staff will prepare an annual update of this report so that local governments and organizations are able to have current housing data for the region in one location.

Development of Regional Impact (DRI) Review

The Council continued in its role in coordinating the review of Developments of Regional Impact during the last Fiscal Year. Sec. 380.06, F.S. provides Regional Planning Councils with this role. During 2007-2008, the Council issued a recommendation report for the Cedar Creek DRI in Baker County. The Cedar Creek DRI is the first DRI approved in Baker County, and signifies a shifting pattern of growth into the more rural areas of our region. In addition, staff completed review of the Highlands DRI, a multi-use project proposed for development in western Clay County along U.S. 301. The Council adopted staff's recommendations on all conditions except for transportation at the June Council meeting. However, the applicant then withdrew the project from DRI review prior to the final hearing on the transportation recommendations.

The Cedar Creek DRI is a multi-use development on 3,142 acres in central Baker County just north of the Town of Glen St. Mary. The plan approved by the Council consists of 6,000 residential dwelling units (5,500 of which are age-restricted), 300,000 square feet of office development, 500,000 square feet of retail development, and other ancillary uses to support this type of multi-use development.

The map on the corresponding page shows the DRIs that are presently under regional review in 2008. Those DRIs include:

- Elkton DRI in St. Johns County
- Old Brick Township DRI in Flagler County
- Hunters Ridge Substantial Deviation in Flagler County
- Durbin DRI in St. Johns County
- Cordova Palms DRI in St. Johns County
- Governors Park DRI in Clay County

Intergovernmental Coordination and Cooperation

Planning Directors and Agency Quarterly Directors Meetings

The Northeast Florida Regional Council organized, hosted and moderated four quarterly Planning Directors and Agency meetings. The meetings were well attended, and provided a forum for directors to meet with other executive level planning officials throughout the region. The NEFRC quarterly meetings are the only forum in Northeast Florida for our executive local government planning officials to meet. Additionally, these meetings provided an opportunity for the local government planning officials to express and discuss issues that affect them with representatives from the Florida Department of Transportation, the St. Johns River Water Management District, and other state and regional agencies.

2008 Florida Planning and Zoning Association Statewide Conference

In June 2008 the Florida Planning and Zoning Association (FPZA) held its annual state conference in St. Augustine, Florida. Titled *Planning Through History: Leaving a Legacy*, the event was organized by the First Coast chapter of FPZA with assistance from many individuals and organizations, including the Northeast Florida Regional Council. NEFRC staff was involved in the planning and execution of the event, providing both staff and equipment for the conference. In addition to providing staff and equipment, several NEFRC staff members shared their expertise by voluntarily serving as guest speakers and moderators.



State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP)

The Northeast Florida Regional Council administers two housing programs for Putnam County: the Putnam County State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) program, and a Hurricane Housing Recovery Program. These programs assist very low-, low-, and moderate-income households.

Through these programs, the Council has helped bring affordable housing funds of more than \$6,675,000 million to Putnam at no direct cost to the County. In addition to the 2007-08 state allocation of \$684,985 to the SHIP program, the Northeast Florida Regional Council recaptured an additional \$83,000 that was put back into the program. With these funds, NEFRC and Putnam County provided over \$165,000 as down payment assistance for first-time homebuyers. NEFRC and Putnam County provided, through the SHIP program, approximately \$400,000 to very low-, low- and moderate-income families for home rehabilitation.

In addition to the down payment assistance and home rehabilitation funds, NEFRC and Putnam County provided over \$67,000 to Putnam County's Habitat for Humanity. In total, these funds helped over 20 families either repair their existing home or purchase a new or existing home.

At the request of Putnam County, Council staff worked with the Escambia County Housing Finance Authority to make available to citizens private activity bond financing for first time buyers.

Over \$10,000 in donations poured in the first month. The COA was extremely touched and overjoyed with the generosity of its community.

The Clay County COA is currently involved in a regional transportation program whose goal is to get bus service that interconnects with other counties. In September 2007, Clay County was approved for \$400,000 in grants to buy six new vehicles for the Clay Transit fleet to feed into the JTA bus system allowing residents a smooth transition from most areas in the county to Jacksonville and back. The COA received these vehicles earlier this year and the project is working well.

Also, Clay County is one of the five counties in the state in Medicaid Reform, and has contracted with LogistiCare to provide Medicaid transportation. Because of this, the COA drivers went through additional stringent training classes including CPR and First Aid, and all became certified.

Flagler County – The Flagler County Commission is the newest CTC in Northeast Florida taking over the transportation disadvantaged program in 2004. Despite a difficult transition and continual funding cuts, the County has led the TD program in a positive direction. The CTC spearheaded the recent effort to have the Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR) create a three-phase Flagler County Transportation Needs Assessment Study, which is an



essential document that would enable the County to prepare for its future transportation needs as an "urban" county, which it becomes for the 2010 census. There are grants designated for "urbanized" areas, and one of the first eligibility requirements to apply for these grants is to produce a county transportation assessment plan. Without such a plan, a CTC could lose thousands of dollars of grant money. Flagler County is prepared for the future.

Also, this year, the Flagler CTC has been creatively thinking of smarter ways to redirect some of its funds. As an example, the transportation offices were recently moved from a rent-paying facility to a more spacious rent-free government services facility allowing the money saved to go directly back into the transportation program.

Flagler County has also been involved with the City of Palm Coast to create a volunteer transportation program to help promote better transportation for the City.

Flagler County's CTC contract expires in June 2009, and this year the County expressed interest in remaining the CTC for the next five years. NEFRC and the County are currently negotiating for the contract as government entities are exempt from the Request for Proposals (RFP) process.

Nassau County – Nassau County Council on Aging has been the transportation disadvantaged CTC since 1982, and has currently outgrown its current main facility. A primary focus this past year has been a quest to find funds and a new location to construct a new multi-use COA facility, complete with a transportation department and room for all vehicles, that will meet the rapidly increasing needs of the community. Senior citizens make up approximately 14.5% of Nassau's population, and are expected to make up close to 30% by 2030. This quickly rising senior population has motivated the COA to begin preparing for a capital campaign to assist in the building of this facility, as their current lease expires in 2011. For a

good start, the COA recently received \$500,000 from the state for a proposed 15,000 to 20,000 square foot center, about 10,000 square feet larger than the current building.

Putnam County – Ride Solution Inc., Putnam County's CTC since 1984, had an extremely productive year, with one of its projects being the successful partnership with the Greyhound Bus Company to provide services to Gainesville, St. Augustine, and Jacksonville. Also, Ride Solution recently moved its main office to the newly remodeled Train Station in Palatka, which is a more public, spacious location for transportation services.

Ride Solution has been involved for several years with developing a special rural bus that could meet the demands of traveling on county dirt roads. This year, with U.S. Rep. John Mica's assistance, Ride Solution was awarded a \$242,500 grant in federal funds for development of the "Brevi Bus" which will be produced in Palatka and provide about 20 new jobs in the county. Production of these buses has already begun. For this endeavor, Ride Solution earned the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged "2008 Innovation of the Year" award.

St. Johns County – St. Johns County Council on Aging, which has been the transportation disadvantaged provider for St. Johns County since it was designated CTC in 1983, has been recognized for its commitment and outstanding management by earning two prestigious transportation awards this year.

The Sunshine Bus Company, a service created by St. Johns County COA in 1999, was recognized for its tremendous growth and crucial service to the entire county population. NEFRC selected the Sunshine Bus Company as the recipient of the "2008 Regional Award for Excellence in Transportation" and it was recently honored at the Regional Leadership Awards Ceremony at the World Golf Village in St. Augustine.

The highest transportation honor of the year was earned by St. Johns County COA. The nation's foremost community transportation entity, Community Transportation Association of America, presented its top award in 2008, the "Community Transit System of the Year," to St. Johns County Council on Aging for its innovative and creative transportation service. This national honor was presented to the COA at the CTAA's annual conference in New Orleans in June 2008. No other entity in Florida has ever received this prestigious award!

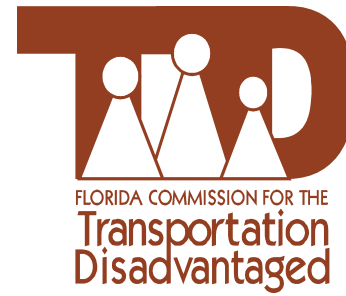


Working Together – The NEFRC organized and hosted quarterly Transportation Disadvantaged directors meetings for the seven counties in Northeast Florida. These meetings provided an opportunity for the individuals who have the greatest knowledge of the transportation system in our region to discuss current legislation, regional and state topics, and items of concern with each other and NEFRC staff. Discussions included how to manage travel in the most efficient, effective way possible with barriers and limited funding, and ways to minimize the impact to elderly and the most fragile citizens in the communities. The meetings have been very successful and well attended. NEFRC staff has arranged for the chairman of the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged, Dr. J.R. Harding, to meet with the directors at their next meeting in February.

TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED

TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED

The Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) coordinated system for the State of Florida was created in 1979, and reenacted in 1989. The 1989 act created the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged whose mission is to ensure the availability of safe, efficient, cost-effective and quality transportation services for individuals who because of physical or mental disability, income status or age, are unable to transport themselves or to purchase transportation. This statewide coordinated transportation system is used as a model throughout the nation for how transportation should work – efficiently, effectively and safely for the state's most fragile citizens, the elderly and the disabled. In 2008, the Florida Commission for the Disadvantaged was presented the State Leadership Award from the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA).



The Northeast Florida Regional Council (NEFRC) is the designated official planning agency for the transportation disadvantaged program in Baker, Clay, Flagler, Nassau, Putnam and St. Johns counties. It assists the TD Commission and Local Coordinating Boards in implementing the TD program by providing staff support and planning services.

In 2008, NEFRC staff and Community Transportation Coordinators (CTCs) jointly participated in two significant statewide projects for the TD Commission. The first project requested pictures of TD riders and short stories stating what TD service meant to them, which were used to help with the legislative struggle to keep the coordinated system intact and strong. All counties the NEFRC serves completed this project, making them six of only nine counties who participated from the 67 counties in the state. The second project instructed all counties to compose and forward to the TD Commission a resolution supporting the coordinated transportation system in its struggle to keep Medicaid within the system. Again, all six of the counties the NEFRC serves completed this project, which was approximately 1/3 of all the resolutions completed in the state. Teamwork with the county CTCs and NEFRC really paid off resulting with 100 percent participation for both projects!

Return on Investment Study - In March 2008, a study by the Marketing Institute of Florida State University College of Business concluded that investment in the TD program paid off in benefits that far surpassed the financial investment of public funds. The study showed that the State invested \$372.2 million in the TD program that provided 51.5 million trips in 2007. The funds generated benefits of nearly \$3.2 billion, which was a payback of \$8.35 for every dollar invested in the program. The five basic types of trips provided by the transportation disadvantaged program are medical, employment, education, nutrition, and life sustaining/other. During FY 2007-2008, the CTCs in our region's seven counties – Baker, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Nassau, Putnam and St. Johns – provided 911,087 of these essential trips.

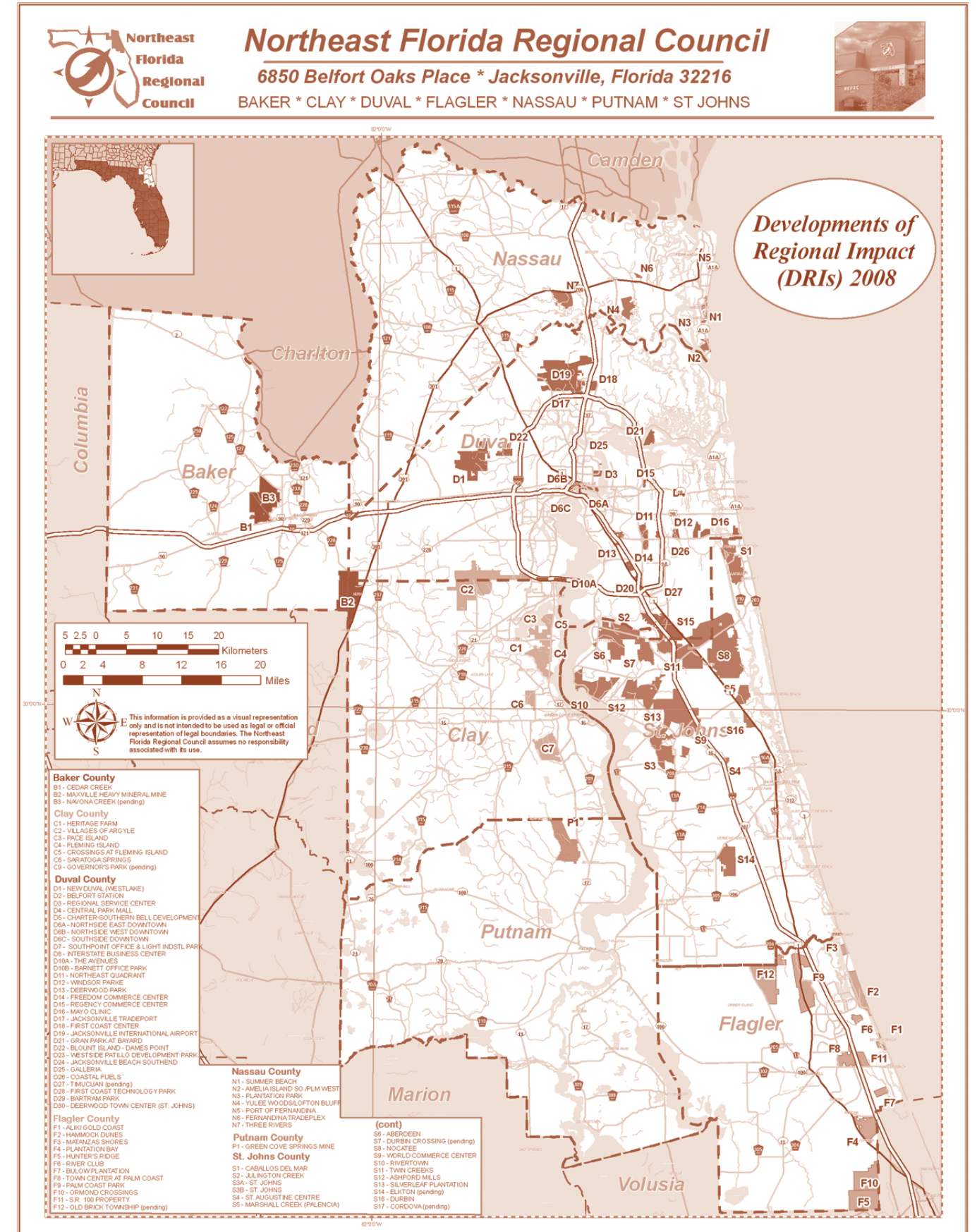
In 2008, the Community Transportation Coordinators and Local Coordinating Boards worked diligently to be creative to maintain and improve transportation for the counties' most needy citizens. Despite rapidly escalating fuel prices and funding cuts across the nation, the Transportation Disadvantaged program in Northeast Florida had an amazing year.

Baker County – Baker County Council on Aging (COA), CTC since 1982, has been busy with 1) opening a new Respite Center, and 2) moving its transportation department to a more spacious building (by the county hospital) that was formerly used for storage. The majority of the space is dedicated to the Respite Center and its offices, with the remaining space housing the dispatcher office for the transportation services including a director's office, resource room and small kitchenette.

In addition to providing crucial transportation services to its clients, the Baker County COA spent much of the year in planning and negotiating for building a new multi-purpose senior center. The COA recently received a \$50,000 transportation grant from the Department of Agriculture, which paid for a consultant from Washington to teach them how to construct a spatial transportation facility, senior center, disaster shelter and adult daycare altogether. This will greatly aid the COA as it applies for additional funding for construction of the new building. Also, from sale of some property, the Board of County Commissioners unanimously approved \$750,000 towards construction of the much-needed center.



Clay County – Clay County Council on Aging, as CTC, has been providing transportation for Medicaid and the Florida Commission for Transportation Disadvantaged since 1984. It currently has a database of approximately 1,100 regular riders who have no license, no vehicle and no family or friends living with them who could drive them places. And, as part of a federal contract, the COA also delivers about 3,500 daily hot meals per month to homebound residents. This year, escalating fuel costs and reduced funding have taken a toll on the COA who had to make some difficult decisions prioritizing rides. Fortunately, Clay County residents realized the importance of the TD services to their community, and recently came to the aid of the COA when an article appeared in a local newspaper last June asking citizens to adopt a client, or donate to the rapidly increasing fuel fund.



STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Strategic Initiatives is a new program area of the Council with the goal of thinking strategically and developing a Regional vision. Three parts of the visioning process have been the major tasks of the Strategic Initiatives program in 2008.

Reality Check First Coast

Reality Check First Coast is an exciting initiative spearheaded by the Urban Land Institute (ULI) of North Florida and the Northeast Florida Regional Council, along with other partners. Reality Check is a participatory regional visioning exercise where 300 leaders from throughout the region play a game with LEGOs®. The lego game pieces represent the job and population growth we can expect in the next 50 years in our seven County region. The legos are distributed on a regional map as decided by participants in the game. This is an opportunity to think now about where we want to grow and how we want our region to look. The exercise itself is fun, exciting, and demanding. The analysis of the decisions the participants have made sets the stage for a regional vision and implementation steps to achieve it. The strategy of engaging leaders throughout the region is a necessary first step to begin the process of preparing the region for the dialogue and interaction that is necessary to come together around a regional vision.

Reality Check First Coast will be Northeast Florida's version of an exercise previously done in several other parts of the county. Once the leaders have kicked off the visioning process by participating in Reality Check First Coast, Strategic Initiatives will lead Council efforts to take the results of Reality Check First Coast and the issues they raise out to all seven counties in an effort to engage the public at large in a visioning dialogue. This will be done by playing the LEGO® game in each of the counties as well as getting public input into scenarios created from the guiding principles that came out of Reality Check First Coast. Once the public is engaged, the stage will be set for a regional consensus on guiding principles to address growth, and an update to the Strategic Regional Policy Plan (SRPP).

Reality Check First Coast is a very staff-intensive effort, involving much of the planning and administrative staff. The staff commitment will increase as the date of the Reality Check First Coast event, May 21, 2009, approaches. Over 60 volunteers are also engaged in the effort, and it is having the added benefit of creating regional leaders through the professional challenges posed by this huge planning effort. Despite the formidable contributions of the volunteers, Reality Check First Coast is requiring a substantial investment by the Council above and beyond the resources available through fundraising. However, the benefits of a visioning process that

will engage citizens in a way not achieved during the formulation of the current Strategic Regional Policy Plan outweigh the financial responsibility placed upon the Council by Reality Check First Coast.

Regional Community Institute of Northeast Florida, Inc.

The not-for-profit Regional Community Institute of Northeast Florida, Inc. (RCI) was created in anticipation of the need for an entity that could accept donations in support of regional visioning, and that could act as a forum for regional leaders to guide visioning efforts and make policy recommendations. During 2008, the interim Board passed the baton to a working board. While the work plan for the RCI must acknowledge the short term focus on Reality Check First Coast, larger visioning efforts and a focus of performance measures is a longer term goal. The Regional Vision developed by the RCI will form the basis for a NEFRC rewrite of the SRPP.



Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

During 2008, the Council was funded through a matching grant from the Economic Development Administration to do a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). A CEDS is a plan that brings together the public and private sectors in the creation of an economic development roadmap to

diversify and strengthen regional economies. EDA funds the creation of such plans through a matching grant program. The planning timeframe is five years and there are requirements for updates every five years and annual monitoring.

Our region needs a CEDS because, unlike all the other regions in Florida, Northeast Florida is not yet a certified Economic Development District. This designation provides economic development practitioners with another "tool in their toolbox" as they consider projects and funding mechanisms. Specifically, the Economic Development Agency (EDA) of the federal Department of Commerce considers project funding requests only from regions that can demonstrate consistency with a regional economic development strategy. An approved CEDS allows our entire seven county region (Baker, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Nassau, Putnam, and St. Johns Counties) to be included in the Economic Development District and eligible for EDA funding.

A CEDS Committee was created in 2008 to oversee the efforts to create the plan. They will meet several times in 2009 before submitting the CEDS to EDA for approval later in 2009.

Local Emergency Planning Committee

The District IV of the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) is a state-appointed committee staffed by the Council. The committee is charged with facilitating regional hazardous materials emergency response and compliance with hazardous materials reporting laws under the Emergency Planning Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA). The District IV of the LEPC completed its Quarterly Meetings for 2008. These meetings serve as a gathering point for those involved in hazardous material response and planning and the relaying of information from the State Emergency Response Commission (SERC).

The LEPC also serves as a public repository for annual inventory reports, or Tier IIs, that are submitted by facilities that store or use hazardous materials and chemicals on-site, and assists companies in complying with State laws. Staff for the LEPC also serves as a point of contact if a hazardous material spill or leak were to occur. This information is gathered and shared with the State Warning Point, and vice versa; it is then reported to the District at its quarterly meetings.



2008 Hazardous Materials Emergency Planning Project

LEPC Staff performed a Quality Control of submitted Tier II Information for the 2007 Reporting Year of Section 302 and 311/312 facilities under the Emergency Planning Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA). Each year, facilities containing, storing, or using hazardous materials on-site must report the name of the chemical(s), the quantity, conditions of storage, and site location, along with emergency contact information for facility operations by a March 1st deadline. For this project, Staff will contact all of the facilities, especially those that submitted Tier IIs that contained four (4) or more errors, to educate facility representative on the proper completion of Tier II forms and use of the State Emergency Response Commission How-to-Comply Handbook. Staff also prepared and submitted to the Division a report of the Tier IIs Quality Control Project for review and has recommended form corrections to the facilities. The results of this planning project will be incorporated into the 2009 annual update of the LEPC's hazardous materials Emergency Response Plan. Staff will also use this information to plan a series of How-to-Comply Workshops.

2008 Hazardous Materials Emergency Planning & Training Opportunities

The LEPC receives funding from the State through the Federal Department of Transportation to provide training opportunities for Hazardous Materials emergency responders. The following is a description of some of the activities that District IV of the LEPC sponsored over the past year:

- **Norfolk Southern Advanced Rail Car Specialist Course** – Pueblo, CO: Norfolk Southern sponsored two Duval County Fire Rescue personnel to attend this training on rail car spill and leak control.
- **International HazMat Conference** – Baltimore, Maryland: The LEPC sponsored two St. Johns County personnel to attend the conference where they attended sessions of nation and world wide HazMat activities, as well as issues concerning safety, response, and clean-up.
- **AHLS Tox-Medic Class** - Seven Northeast Florida First Responders attended this training which was held by the Florida Poison Information Center – Jacksonville, the Department of Emergency Medicine – University of Florida Health Science Center, and Shands Jacksonville Medical Center. This course of instruction helped train the First Responders in providing rapid assessment of HazMat patients, hazardous materials exposure management and chemical/bio-hazard readiness and response, as well as how to administer specific anecdotes.
- **Clandestine Drug Lab Awareness/Operations Course** – Stuart, FL: This 16-hour course is suitable for public personnel who may come in contact with a clandestine narcotics laboratory. Students were informed of potential hazards associated with clandestine laboratories and actions that should be taken (or not taken) at a suspected lab site. District IV of the LEPC sponsored four members of the St. Johns County Fire Rescue to attend this training. Feedback from the course was generally positive, stating that the classes were helpful and informative, especially with real-life experienced instructors and the incorporation of various public agencies (law enforcement, fire and rescue, health, etc.). Most, in fact, look forward to attending future classes on the subject.
- **Infrared Spectroscopy** - Response Technologies of Sarasota, FL provided an 8-hour, in-service course over three days to provide hazardous technicians with the experience to classify and/or identify unknown chemical compounds or mixtures using an infrared spectroscopy technique. This method of analysis uses an electromagnetic spectrum to help identify the frequencies at which the molecules of an unknown chemical are vibrating. This process is very useful when HazMat teams responding to an incident do not know which substance it is and must plan their safety tactics around that knowledge. In addition, the course addresses both automated and manual interpretation methods of analysis.
- **2008 Fire Department Safety Officers Association Annual Safety Forum** – The Annual Safety Forum and Incident/Health Safety Officer Academies (ISO and HSO). While the HSO is a 16-hour certification course geared towards current Safety Officers, the ISO Academy is a 16-hour certification course designed to improve firefighters' effectiveness as the Incident Safety Officer, giving in-depth knowledge and experience elements as ISOs and give more situational exercises and scenario practice. The LEPC will be sponsoring four firefighters from Clay and Duval County for the conference.



2007/2008 Hazards Analysis Update

The Northeast Florida Regional Council assists five counties with their annual Hazards Analysis updates. These counties are Baker, Clay, Nassau, Putnam, and St. Johns Counties. Under EPCRA, Section 302 facilities are those facilities that contain Extremely Hazardous Substances (EHS) or house certain other chemicals that are stored above the Threshold Planning Quantity. These facilities undergo site visits once every two years so that the State's records for these Section 302 facilities are correctly updated for the whole county. This past year, forty three (43) sites were inspected and data collected. Staff then compiled the information and submitted it to the State for review, and then reported back to the Counties for their Hazards Analysis.

Mitigation

The Northeast Florida Regional Council provides the Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) Task Forces for Baker, Clay, Nassau, and Putnam Counties with assistance to help compose their agendas; encourage appropriate government agencies and departments, as well as members of the community, to participate; facilitate the Task Force meetings; maintain a record of the meeting minutes; update the project priority list and other documents; and offer technical assistance as needed. In St. Johns County, the role of Council staff consists primarily of maintaining meeting minutes and providing technical assistance. The Council also offers support and information to all counties to promulgate the successful mitigation of hazards throughout our region.

It is the intent of the Local Mitigation Strategy to help counties reduce or limit their vulnerability to natural and man-made disasters and protect and preserve both properties and lives through preventative actions and projects. These acts range from the acquisition of flood prone properties to debris removal, the hardening of structures and disaster shelters to clearing underbrush for wildfires, the creation of water drainage plans to the elevation roads and transportation networks, from domestic security issues to acquiring power generators, and many other projects. It's not just hurricanes and wildfires anymore!

The Northeast Florida Regional Council helps to serve as a link between various local government agencies, like Emergency Management, Public Works, Land Development and Planning, Forestry, School Boards, Police, Fire, Health, and Economic Development. With all of these entities working together, we can produce a community-wide strategy that will help the cities and counties to reduce the soaring costs and impacts of recovery to rebuild after a disaster strikes.

The LMS Task Force also serves as a link between the municipalities, the county, its citizens, and the federal government. In order to receive Federal disaster assistance, each County Task Force develops a list that identifies potential mitigation projects that are to be addressed, as well as their priority in the respective County. If and when a disaster does occur, this priority list becomes the community design for how Federal dollars will be spent on eligible projects in the community; and once a disaster occurs, it is the LMS Task Force for each County that helps to establish the prioritization for public investments in recovery.

There are several funding sources that Counties can utilize for assistance with their Mitigation efforts at the Federal and State levels, including: Public Assistance, Individual Assistance, Fire Assistance, Emergency Management Preparedness and Assistance Grants, Homeland Security Grants, Flood Mitigation Assistance, Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grants, Hazard Mitigation Grants and other critical matters.



Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)

The Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) is one of the mitigation funding sources previously discussed that covers a specific aspect of mitigation activities, which involves the hardening and retrofitting of structures to create disaster shelters. During an emergency, there may be citizens that are not able to evacuate outside of the county in time. These shelters serve as a secure place to temporarily house and care for those people; as such, they must be compliant with American Red Cross (ARC) shelter guidelines. Many counties across Florida do not have enough of these ARC compliant shelters and are operating in shelter-space deficits where there is not enough room to house the maximum number of potential evacuees.

Currently, the Northeast Florida Regional Council is involved with several HMGP projects across the Region. Putnam County is on the cusp of completing its Emergency Operations Center retrofit project, and with all of the construction completed this past year, the only remaining task is a final inspection by the State. Several other HMGP projects are creating shelter space utilizing Putnam County schools in locations such as: Crescent City Junior / Senior High, Middleton Burney Elementary, Kelley-Smith Elementary, and Jenkins Middle. Each of these projects has had their project kick-offs and are in the architectural and engineering planning phases. Since these are operating schools, construction must occur during the summers so as to not interfere with the day to day tasks they must perform. In Baker County, the Macclenny Elementary Project has just started. This project will

allow Baker County School District to install hurricane shutters at the school, making it more protected from high wind damage and debris that could impact the shelter. The Council has been tasked with administering these grants throughout the course of the projects' time span and providing documentation to the State of construction and installation of mitigation devices and materials so that the respective entities can be reimbursed for the cost of the shelter project.

2008 Thomas Yatabe Award

Mr. Andy Sikes, the Director of Safety and Security for the Baptist Health System located in Jacksonville, FL has been named the winner of the 2008 Thomas Yatabe Award for outstanding performance and participation within the county as well as the regional community in the tireless dedication to and education of others concerning the State of Florida's Hazardous Materials Planning Program. We thank him for his continued devotion and participation to both District IV of the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC), as well as his contributions statewide.

Certificates of Appreciation are awarded to Mr. Kenton Brown of the Department of Environmental Protection, Mr. Terry Carr of the City of Jacksonville, and Mr. Darryl Melton of the Naval Air Station, Jacksonville. Those receiving these certificates have made significant efforts in the arenas of emergency planning and response to District IV of the LEPC and we thank them for their continued efforts and future involvement in regional activities.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

The Business Development Corporation (BDC) of Northeast Florida, Inc. provides services as the Council's oldest economic development initiative. BDC provides these services to the seven counties served by the Northeast Florida Regional Council (Council) and to businesses expanding or located in or into the State of Florida. BDC services are provided as a U. S. Small Business Administration (SBA) as a Certified Development Company (CDC). BDC operates as a CDC for the SBA 504 Loan Program. BDC impacts the region and State of Florida's economic growth through their financing participation of small business expansion requests utilizing the SBA 504 loan program.



BDC is required by the U.S. Small Business Administration as a Certified Development Company to provide 504 loan services to businesses located in or locating into the State of Florida. BDC, though a statewide CDC, remains concentrated in their 504 lending efforts to those businesses located throughout the seven counties served by the Council.

The 504 program is the SBA's only recognized economic development program. Through the 504 program, BDC offers a business through "owner" occupied commercial and industrial property financing for the purchase of existing land and building, machinery and equipment (with a 10 year useful life) and provides for the acquisition of land and new building construction. 504 loan proceeds may also be utilized for business expansion purposes for leasehold improvements, property renovation and site improvements.

Since its inception in August 1994, BDC has provided economic development services as a CDC to the businesses located within the seven counties served by the Council and other communities throughout Northeast Florida. Services are provided to the expanding business through a job creation and job retention mechanism and under provisions of the SBA's "Public Policy Goal" provisions utilizing the SBA 504 loan program. BDC through its development efforts has provided the Council with a positive return on the Council's initial investment to its corporation. In 2008 BDC became independent from the Council in relation to its governance as required by SBA rules and regulations. BDC 504 loan production efforts have had a historically positive impact on the region's economic prosperity through the Council support of the BDC operated SBA 504 loan program. Since inception BDC has received SBA approval for 187 loans with project costs in excess of \$272 million. In addition, more than 4,300 jobs have been either created and/or retained in the financing of these projects.

For the fiscal year ending 2007- 2008, BDC serviced for the SBA a total of 67 active 504 loans with a portfolio total of in excess of \$33 million. This amount includes loans which have been closed, funded and are currently serviced by BDC under the terms of the SBA's initial 504 loan approval.

Number of 504 loans approved (2)
Total Debenture amount \$1,821,000;
Total Projects amount \$5,000,000

Number of loans in portfolio (67)
Total Debenture Loan Amounts \$ 38,256,000;
Total Actual Loan Balances \$33,814,612

Number of loans prepaid (5)

Highlights 2007-2008

The Business Development Corporation provided for two 504 loan approvals totaling \$1,821,000 dollars. Both 504 loans are presently in construction, bridge or interim loan status. 504 project amounts for these 2 projects totaled in excess of \$5 million. One of the loans is funding a school in Clay County; the other a yacht builder in Putnam County.

BDC presently services a portfolio of 67 SBA 504 loans totaling in excess of \$33 million.

BDC is located in Region Four of 10 regions for SBA 504 loan reporting purposes. Region Four is comprised of 46 active of a total of 48 CDC(s) located across eight states. Region four contributed a total of 1,441 loans in excess of \$861,396,500 dollars in 504 loan approvals for the fiscal year ending September 2008. This compared to 1,658 approved loans totaling \$936,554,850 for fiscal year end September 2007.

There are 7 CDC(s) located in the State of Florida. For the 2008 fiscal year end there were 504 loan approvals of \$420,963,000 compared to approvals of \$499,615,350 for fiscal 2007. There were 738 loan approvals compared to 897 for fiscal 2007.

Of the 10 regions in the country, Region Four ranked 3rd in both the number of 504 loan approvals and in the overall dollar amount of 504 loans issued. Overall the loan amount for the Region was down eight percent with the total number of loans issued down 13 percent. Nationally the 504 industry for the 2008 fiscal year end had 8,872 SBA 504 loan approvals for \$5,322,565,903 (billion). This compared to 10,663 loans for \$6,363,349,728 (billion) for the 2007 fiscal year end.

The 504 program industry saw an increase to \$599,929 in the average issued 504 debenture loan amount compared to the 2007 fiscal year amount of \$596,769. Recent effective rates for the 504 program have seen an increase to over 8 percent.



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

The Emergency Preparedness Programs (EPP) area of the Northeast Florida Regional Council (NEFRC) strives to work in all areas of public safety and emergency management. The staff of EPP works with state and local emergency management and public safety officials to develop plans, programs and training opportunities to prepare communities and document their procedures in response to disasters. Developing mitigation programs and plans prepares communities ahead of disasters. Post disaster mitigation assists communities in recovering from disasters. Training and exercises train for response and evaluate procedures.

CITAMS (Critical Infrastructure Threat Assessment and Mitigation System)

The Critical Infrastructure Threat Assessment and Mitigation System (CITAMS) program represents the next generation of state-of-the-art anti-terrorism technology. Based on cutting-edge proprietary modeling software, the CITAMS system captures key data, categorizes processes, analyzes risk factors using complex mathematical algorithms, and devises specific mitigation strategies and tactics for the over 4,000 critical infrastructure assets in Northeast Florida.

The Northeast Florida region has many critical assets which pose potential targets to terrorists of all stripes. Our military presence, plus supporting industrial base locations, together constitute one of the largest concentrations of defense-related sites in the country. The Jacksonville area, in fact, has the 11th largest concentration of military personnel in the nation. Besides a robust military presence, the Northeast Florida region is a major population center, with supporting economic and logistical systems which also present a tempting potential target for those who would do us harm.

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement, NEFRC, and Baker County Sheriff's Department have partnered to produce a dual-grant funding package in the total amount of \$880,000 to fund this cutting-edge program. Since its inception, the program has grown to include a development coalition that includes Jacksonville Urban Area Security Initiative, the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office, under the auspices of Regional Domestic Security Task Force III. The coalition is focused on building a system that can be used by all 13 counties in the Northeast Florida region.

The CITAMS program has been developed with no template or example to follow. In fact, several other similar programs around the state and country (Houston, Tampa, New Jersey, and South Carolina) are closely watching the Northeast Florida Team to learn from our example how to set up programs of their own. We have had to literally invent and experiment with new logistical, administrative, and field operations systems and methodologies in order to determine what works and what doesn't. Northeast Florida is, quite literally, leading the way in the design and development of a crucial bastion in the nation's homeland security defense network.

RDSTF Regional Domestic Security Task Force (RDSTF)

The Northeast Florida Regional Council staffs an RDSTF Regional Planner for Region 3 which includes; Alachua, Baker, Bradford, Clay, Duval, Gilchrist, Flagler, Levy, Marion, Nassau, Putnam, St. Johns, and Union counties. Each of the 7 regions of the RDSTF has two planners, who attend all RDSTF meetings and functions, and facilitate the needs of the Task Force on a daily basis.

The following training opportunities have been a part of the RDSTF activities of the Council:

Federal Reserve Bank

Emergency Preparedness Programs' staff worked with the Regional Domestic Security Task Force (RDSTF) to design and conduct a Tabletop Exercise for the Jacksonville Branch of the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta, one of the twelve districts of the national Federal Reserve System on June 24, 2008.

The Jacksonville Branch processes tens of millions of dollars in cash, and many thousands of checks on a daily basis in order to serve the needs of banks and other financial institutions within its region, which encompasses an area from Orlando to the South, Pensacola to the West, and Savannah, GA to the North. The Tabletop Exercise challenged exercise participants with a scenario involving hazardous materials and a potential act of terrorism in which the Federal Reserve facility was damaged and made inaccessible for several days.

The exercise was so well received that the Miami Branch of the Federal Reserve Bank now intends to duplicate the effort in 2009.

Violent Crime Workshop

The NEFRC assisted in planning and facilitating the "Northeast 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 Naval 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 group's 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.



Statewide Regional Evacuation Study Program

The Regional Council staff continues to be heavily involved in the analysis and preparation for hurricane season each year. The 2008 hurricane season was no exception. As the 2008 Hurricane Season came to a close, it left behind a few records. The 2008 season had the 6th most named storms – with a total of 16. Additionally, this season was the first time major hurricanes have been observed in five separate months (July through September). In another unfortunate "first", Tropical Storm Fay marked the first time that a named storm made four (4) separate landfalls in the state of Florida, including one in Northeast Florida.

These notable statistics underscore the importance of the Statewide Regional Evacuation Study Program (SRESP), which is coordinated through the Northeast Florida Regional Council. The purpose of a regional evacuation study is to provide emergency management officials with realistic data by quantifying the major factors in hurricane evacuation decision making. This data is then provided as a framework of information. Counties will then have the ability to update and revise their hurricane evacuation plans and operational procedures to improve their response to future hurricane threats.

In 2008, the Program has made great progress towards the ultimate goal of a comprehensive, statewide study. Over the past twelve months, the majority of Phase I (Data Collection) has been finished. Demographics, transportation routes, shelter, land use and behavioral elements have all been collected. Phase II is underway, which involves the analysis of this huge mass of data. The analysis is being completed by the RPC's across the state, assisted by our specialized subject-area consultants. The Transportation Model will process all the demographic data, hazards and shelter data, behavioral assumptions, Sea, Lake and Overland Surges from Hurricanes (SLOSH) and Light Detection and Ranging (LIDAR) overlays, evacuation networks, and other variables to produce local clearance times by storm category and scenario for each county in the state. This product is one of the primary deliverables of our contract. The end product is expected to be a defining deliverable for transportation modeling in Florida.

The year of 2008 also saw the strong development and significant utility of the Sharepoint and FTP sites for data reporting and sharing; the popular SRESP Advisory, which grew into a regular news-and-views summary with a surprisingly wide readership; and the melding of the SRSEP Work Group into a strong, mutually supportive team bonded by a common defined set of goals and objectives. The SRESP Work Group has become a model for other inter-regional collaborative efforts. Highlighting the timeliness of Florida's effort, a recent United States Department of Transportation Report to Congress contained the following specific recommendations for all states subject to hurricane activity:

"..develop regional plans for mass evacuations in connection with catastrophic incidents...to be a collaborative effort by state and local officials within each region (and) in cooperation with appropriate federal agencies...responsible state and local



agencies should develop and deploy systems to provide critical information to emergency managers, planners, and (other parties) as well as to the general public...regarding the status of traffic, shelters, fuel, and other critical services along evacuation routes...as well as coordination of shelter requirements for all segments of the affected populations..."

Clearly, the SRESP puts Florida on the cutting edge of systems and procedures to bring our state fully into compliance with these recommendations.

Looking forward, 2009 will bring the delivery of the LIDAR data for basins across the state. LIDAR data serves to provide a variety of information to the state. Most important to the SRESP project is the creation of the bathymetric and terrestrial digital elevation models from the data. The resulting figures will be reviewed by the local emergency management officials with intimate knowledge of the area to ensure completeness and accuracy of the datasets. As of the end of 2008, LIDAR data from two of the 11 basins has been processed and delivered locally. The remaining LIDAR data will be delivered in the early months of 2009.

The next step is to then provide the data to the National Hurricane Center for use in the SLOSH model. Using the LIDAR data will provide a significant improvement in the output of the SLOSH model runs because of the quality of the data being fed into the model. Previous SLOSH model runs for Northeast Florida and most of the state in general, utilized topographic data from USGS quadrangle maps.

The SLOSH model runs in conjunction with the completion of the Transportation Model are critical path milestones for 2009. These technical models will produce invaluable resources to officials across the State. Ultimately, the statewide study will be comprised of 66 volumes of information with separate storm surge atlases. The completed Statewide Hurricane Evacuation Study will be a technologically advanced, dependable planning tool for all decision makers and citizens of Florida.

Northeast Florida leads the way in state-wide Exercise Planning

NEFRC staff conducted, participated in, or assisted in the planning of a total of 21 exercises across the State of Florida in 2008 of which 5 such exercises took place within the Northeast Florida region.

Region 3 of the Regional Domestic Security Task Force serving Alachua, Baker, Bradford, Clay, Duval, Gilchrist, Flagler, Levy, Marion, Nassau, Putnam, St. Johns and Union counties