

2006 ANNUAL REPORT



NORTHEAST FLORIDA REGIONAL COUNCIL

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Agency Profile & 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, human services, 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 to preserve and enhance the quality of Northeast Florida’s natural, man-made, economic and social environment.”



President's Message



The Honorable Karen Stern
St. Johns County Commissioner

What an exciting time to be a part of the regional community. In my role as President of the Northeast Florida Regional Council, this year remains one of the most fulfilling and productive of my career in public service.

In the past 12 months we have accomplished so much; and yet we are just embarking on the “real work.” Throughout the country, we have recognized that many of the challenges we face as a society may be best addressed through regional cooperation and this realization is currently in the forefront of public policy development faced by regional leaders and our Council.

We must continually challenge ourselves to put aside our parochial interests, extend a hand to our neighbors and work together for our mutual benefit. In doing so, our strength, and allied cooperation will lead us to solutions.

In order to be competitive *globally*, we must cooperate *regionally*. The challenges and opportunities that face Northeast Florida do not respect jurisdictional boundaries and therefore our thinking and our actions must transcend those very boundaries.

Among the highlights of this past year, we have seen the establishment of a Legislative Priority Committee that has touched the pulse of the greatest concerns of all our member counties. The development and distribution of a publication that clearly addresses these concerns was brought before the legislature over the past year and steps toward affecting change were taken. Among the consistent concerns of the entire region

– which was clearly evident through the Legislative Priorities research – was the topic of affordable workforce housing.

This year we made the affordable workforce-housing crisis in Northeast Florida a critical cause; and it is a cause that I will continue to champion indefinitely. As a Council, we established the Northeast Florida Regional Council Affordable Workforce Housing Task Force. We developed an affordable housing Web site that has become a valuable resource throughout the region. Our sponsorship of the Regional Cooperation Summit on Affordable Housing attended by Lt. Gov. Toni Jennings and featuring outstanding statewide speakers was a proud accomplishment.

Representing you, I have been asked to address these very same issues and topics at various local and state conferences. Our own summit and those we attended have been broadcast throughout the State on Public Television and on various educational systems. In other words, we the Northeast Florida Regional Council have increased the understanding of the issues, and reiterated the leadership this region exemplifies. We are making a difference in the quality of life in the counties in which we live and work, and acknowledging the fact the people of this great region are certainly our richest resource.

I have no doubt that the Northeast Florida Regional Council will continue to achieve excellence, which has become its trademark in all its endeavors. I salute the capable leadership of incoming Board President, Commissioner Chip Laibl, and pledge as you do to remain resolute to our own mandates.

It has been an honor to serve the people of Northeast Florida as your President and as part of this Board.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Karen Stern".

Karen Stern
President, Northeast Florida Regional Council
2005-2006

Board of Directors and

PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD



The Honorable Karen Stern
St. Johns County

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT



The Honorable Ansley Acree
Nassau County

BAKER COUNTY

Ms. Ginger Barber*
County Commission Representative

Hon. Gordon Crews*
Baker County Commissioner

Mr. Hugh D. Fish, Jr.*
Municipal Representative

Mr. Charles "Chuck" Prachar*
Gubernatorial Appointee

CLAY COUNTY

Mr. Bill Basford*
County Commission Representative

Ms. Deidra O. Franklin*
Gubernatorial Appointee

Hon. Glenn Lassiter
Clay County Commissioner

Hon. Harold Rutledge*
Clay County Commissioner

Hon. Carol Vallencourt*
Gubernatorial Appointee

DUVAL COUNTY

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City of Jacksonville Councilwoman

Hon. Richard Clark*
City of Jacksonville Councilman

Ms. Mary Louise Dungey*
Gubernatorial Appointee

Ms. Rea Fleckenstein*
Gubernatorial Appointee

Hon. James Fletcher*
City of Atlantic Beach Commissioner

Hon. Jerry Holland
Duval County Supervisor of Elections

FLAGLER COUNTY

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Flagler County Commissioner

Hon. Blair R. Kanbar
Flagler County Commissioner

Hon. Joann B. King*
City of Bunnell Mayor

Hon. Jonathan Netts*
Palm Coast Council Member

Mr. Robert "Bob" Sgroi
Gubernatorial Appointee

NASSAU COUNTY

Hon. Ansley Acree
Nassau County Commissioner

Hon. Tom Branan*
Nassau County Commissioner

Our Regional Leaders

SECOND VICE PRESIDENT



The Honorable Chip Laibl
Putnam County

SECRETARY / TREASURER



Mr. Hugh Fish
Baker County

Mr. Todd Duncan*
Gubernatorial Appointee

Hon. Bill Leeper*
Fernandina Beach Mayor

Mr. Robert "Bob" Spaeth*
Gubernatorial Appointee

PUTNAM COUNTY

Hon. Chip Laibl*
Gubernatorial Appointee

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

Hon. Linda D. Myers
Putnam County Commissioner

Hon. Brad Purcell*
Putnam County Commissioner

ST. JOHNS COUNTY

Ms. Clare G. Berry
Gubernatorial Appointee

Hon. Don Crichlow*
City of St. Augustine Commissioner

Hon. Bruce Maguire
St. Johns County Commissioner

Hon. Tom Manuel*
St. Johns County Commissioner

Mr. Harry Maxwell*
Gubernatorial Appointee

Hon. Karen Stern*
St. Johns County Commissioner

Hon. Cyndi Stevenson*
St. Johns County Commissioner

EX-OFFICIO NON-VOTING MEMBERS

Ms. Linda Burnette*
St. Johns River Water Management District

Mr. Bill Green
Florida Department of Environmental Protection

Mr. C.W. Larson, II (Wes)*
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, 2005, through September 30, 2006) and who were appointed by the end of 2006 are listed. Board members as of December 31, 2006, are listed with an asterisk.

Planning & Development



Growth Management

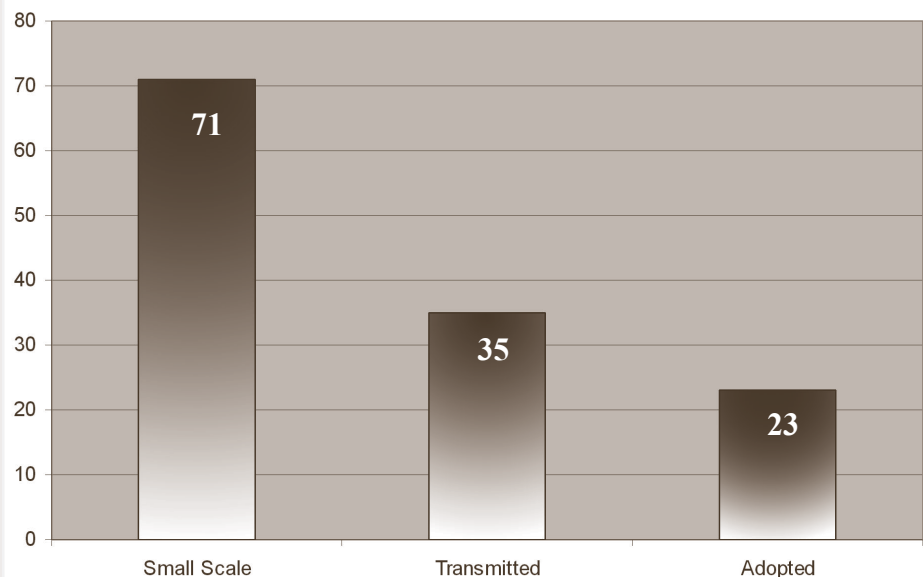
Through the planning process, the Council works with state and local governments to manage land use and development. The Council works with local governments in meeting the technical requirements of Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, reviewing Comprehensive Plans and reviewing Developments of Regional Impact (DRIs).

Local Comprehensive Plans

The Council is responsible for reviewing city and county comprehensive plans per Florida Statute, Chapter 163. Transmitted amendments are reviewed to determine if there are adverse impacts to regional resources or extra-jurisdictional impacts with a recommendation submitted to the Department of Community Affairs. Adopted amendments are also reviewed for a determination of consistency with the Strategic Regional Policy Plan and the State Comprehensive Plan.

A total of 133 comprehensive plan amendments were reviewed during the 2005-2006 fiscal year. The Council reviewed 71 small scale amendments, 35 transmitted amendments, and 23 adopted amendments. These included transmitted and adopted semi-annual amendments as well as amendments based on Developments of Regional Impact (DRIs), which are not subject to the semi-annual amendment time frames.

Comprehensive Plan Amendment Reviews for 2005-06



Technical Assistance

In its role as a Planning Agency, the Council offers technical assistance to its member governments. Some examples of the assistance provided during the last year include:

- n **Town of Beverly Beach** – assisted the Town with planning staff functions, including the review of comprehensive plan amendments. Staff commenced updating the entire Comprehensive Plan for the Town.
- n **Baker County** – offered planning staff support to the County for review of plan amendments. Additionally, staff has worked with Baker County staff in beginning to develop an Urban Service Boundary that will guide development based upon the provision of urban infrastructure.
- n **Town of Welaka** – Council staff assisted the Town in developing a new residential land use category in their comprehensive plan. In addition, the Council staff assisted the Town of Welaka in adopting a Capital Improvements Element update to meet SB 360 requirements.
- n **Putnam County** – assisted Putnam County in the updating of the Intergovernmental Coordination, Capital Improvements and Economic Development Elements of the County's Comprehensive Plan.
- n **Town of Interlachen** – initiated a contract with the Town for the re-write to the Town's Comprehensive Plan. Staff assisted the Town in the establishment of a new commercial corridor growth pattern. Staff also assisted with the development of a SB 360 Urban Service Boundary.
- n **Town of Hilliard** – offered planning support to the Town for the review of comprehensive plan amendments. In addition, staff developed an Urban Service Boundary for the Town.
- n **St. Johns County** - worked with St. Johns County to develop new Land Development Codes (LDC) for the Vilano Beach Town Center area. The Vilano Beach Town Center is identified in the County's comprehensive plan as a New Town Center. In addition, the Vilano Beach area has undergone a significant visioning program over the past few years to identify specific redevelopment and design goals. The implementation of this vision will require a new LDC specifically for this area.
- n **Town of Pomona Park** – assisted Pomona Park with an adoption of a Capital Improvements Element to meet the statutory requirements of SB 360.

Developments of Regional Impact



The Towns of Welaka (left) and Interlachen are examples of the rural landscape within the Council's member counties that utilize staff's technical expertise.

Northeast Florida Regional Council 2006 Annual Report

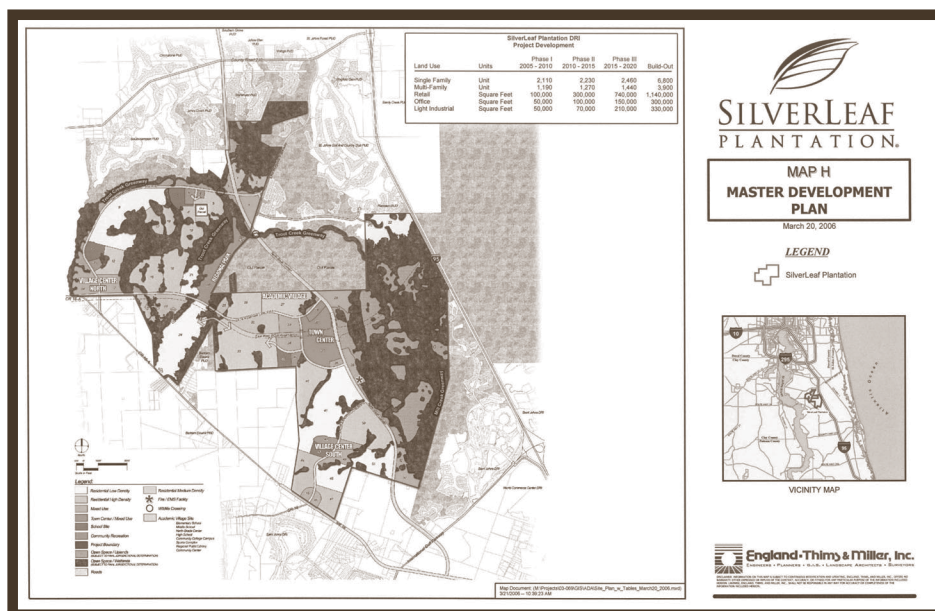
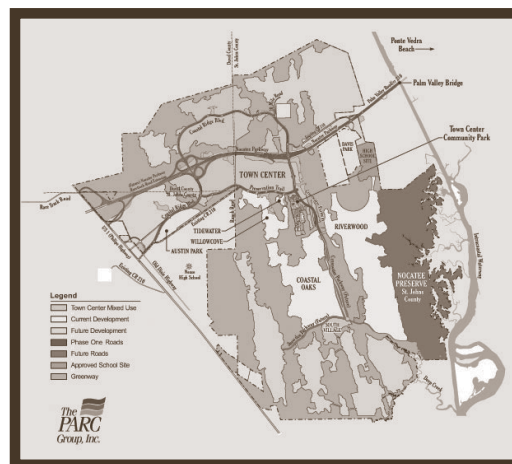
The Council is charged by the state with coordinating the review of developments that could impact the health, safety, or welfare of citizens in more than one county to ensure growth is consistent with the region's strategic plan.

During 2005-2006, the Council issued recommendation reports on the Ashford Mills DRI, the S.R. 100 Project DRI, the SilverLeaf Plantation DRI, and the Three Rivers DRI. The Ashford Mills DRI is a proposed multi-use development on 1,520 acres in northwestern St. Johns County. The plan approved by the Council consists of 2,633 dwelling units, 30,000 square feet of office development, and 250,000 square feet of retail development. The S.R. 100 Project DRI is a proposed multi-use development on 506 acres in the City of Palm Coast just east of I-95 north of S.R. 100. The plan approved by the Council consists of 2,411 dwelling units, 30,000 square feet of office development, and 50,000 square feet of retail development. The SilverLeaf Plantation DRI is a proposed multi-use development on 7,285 acres in north-central St. Johns County. The plan approved by the Council consists of 10,700 dwelling units, 300,000 square feet of office development, 1,140,000 square feet of retail development, and 330,000 square feet of light industrial development. The Three Rivers DRI is a proposed multi-use development on 1,629 acres in Central Nassau County west of I-95. The plan approved by the Council consists of 3,200 dwelling units, 50,000 square feet of office development, 500,000 square feet of retail development, and 250,000 square feet of light industrial development.

In addition to issuing a recommendation report on the four DRIs, the Council commenced review on a number of new DRIs in the region. These DRIs include the Elkton, Cordova Palms, and Durbin DRIs in St. Johns County, the Timucuan DRI in the City of Jacksonville, the Cedar Creek DRI in Baker County, the Black Creek DRI in Clay County, and the Mari-rosa DRI in Putnam County.

In addition to the review of new DRIs, staff reviewed changes to a number of existing DRIs, including the Dupont Fleming Island (Clay County), Twin Creeks (St. Johns County) Nocatee and Bartram Park (Jacksonville/St. Johns County), Julington Creek (St. Johns County), and the Summer Beach DRI (Nassau County).

Site plans for Nocatee (right) and SilverLeaf Plantation (below) reflect the multi-use developments within the Council's strategic planning efforts.



Human Services



Healthy Start Serves 10,000 Families

Nearly 6,500 pregnant women and 3,600 infants received care coordination and related services in Northeast Florida during 2005-06.

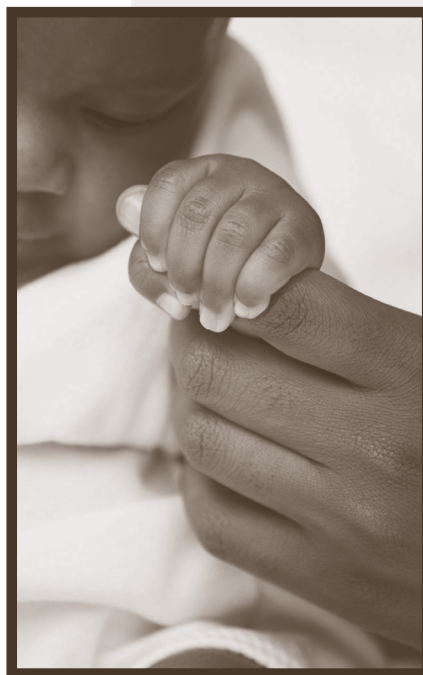
The Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition allocated \$3.8 million in state funds to health departments in Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau and St. Johns counties, and other agencies—including Shands Jacksonville, Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies of North Florida, First Coast Family Center and the Bridge—to provide

Healthy Start services. Funding was also used by the Coalition to promote Healthy Start screening, training for Healthy Start staff, Fetal & Infant Mortality Review (FIMR) and quality assurance activities.

Healthy Start Receives a Funding Increase

The 2006 Florida Legislature boosted Healthy Start funding by \$11 million—giving the program its first general revenue increase in more than 10 years. Additional funding will be used to expand case management and related risk reduction services for pregnant women and newborns. About 18,000 additional participants will be served statewide with the new funding.

The Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition received \$428,000 in new general revenue funding which will also generate additional support through the state Healthy Start Medicaid waiver.



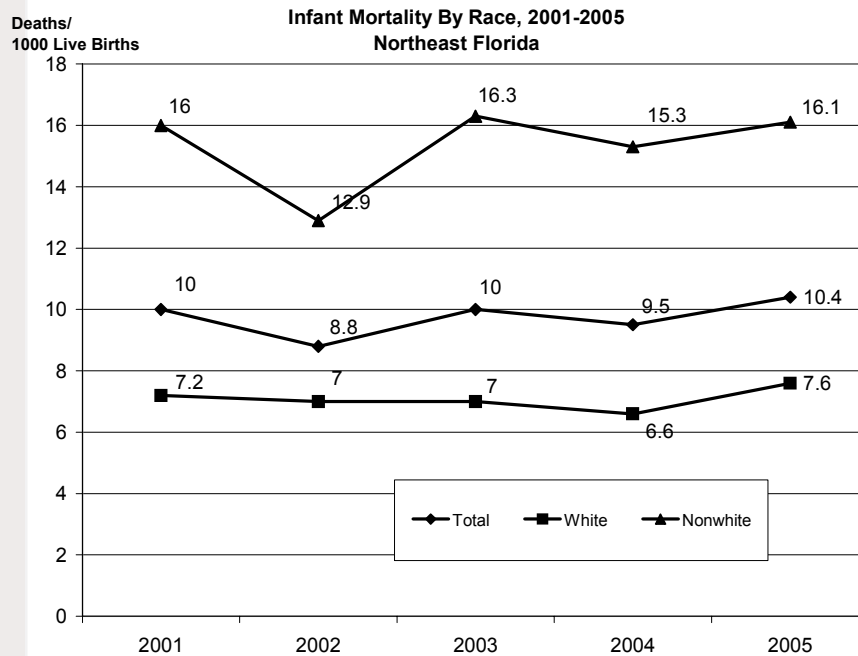
Coalition Hosts First Advocacy Summit

The Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition hosted its first regional Advocacy Summit on maternal and child health in September. Sam Bell, Esq., a Pennington Law lobbyist for the Children's Services Councils of Florida, spoke on the political climate in Florida regarding children's health. Melanie Hall, Child Advocacy Manager with St. Joseph's Hospital in Tampa, spoke on effective advocacy strategies. More than 50 key community stakeholders attended. Community participants included leaders from Children's Medical Services, the Duval County Health Department, the Jacksonville Children's Commission, the Early Learning Coalition, St. Vincent's Medical Center, ICARE, and the Nonprofit Center. These stakeholders developed position papers on issues and strategies to use as a community portfolio and strategic plan on maternal child health for the 2007 Legislative Session.

Infant Mortality Rates Increase in 2005

After dropping slightly in 2004, infant mortality rates increased in 2005 overall and by race. Northeast Florida's total infant death rate was 10.4 deaths per 1000 live births. White infant mortality in the region was 7.6 deaths per 1000, while the nonwhite rate was 16.1 deaths per 1000.

A rise in postneonatal deaths—between 26 and 364 days—accounts for most of the increase. SIDS and other sleep-related deaths were a leading cause of postneonatal mortality during 2005.



George S. Lewis Receives Inaugural Award for Volunteer Service

Long-time Coalition volunteer George S. Lewis was honored as the first recipient of the

Philip H. Gilbert award for his outstanding contributions to Healthy Start and families in Northeast Florida.



George Lewis receives the Inaugural Edition of the Philip H. Gilbert Award, presented by Coalition Chair, Joy Burgess.

The award was established in memory of Philip H. Gilbert, founding chairman of the Coalition and long-time executive vice president of the Duval County Medical Society. Mr. Gilbert was a tireless advocate on behalf of women, children and families. He contributed countless volunteer hours to Healthy Start and many other groups in the community.

Mr. Lewis, a retired executive with Blue Cross, Blue Shield of Florida, has served as a Coalition volunteer for nearly 10 years. He is the long-time chair of the Contracts & QI Committee

which is responsible for the funding and oversight of local Healthy Start programs in the five-county area. He is an eager participant in Coalition activities and remains committed to the mission of the organization and its role in proactively identifying and addressing maternal and child health issues.

Prevalence of Risk Factors Associated with Sleep-Related Deaths in NE Florida 2000-2005

Not in an infant bed
69%

Inappropriate bedding
87%

Not on back to sleep
72%

Second-hand smoke
57%

Never breastfed
69%

Bedsharing
59%

Source: Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition, FIMR Project, 2000-2005.

New Campaign Targets SIDS, Sleep-Related Deaths

A new awareness and education campaign was launched in 2006 to address the increasing number of sleep-related deaths in Northeast Florida. SIDS and other sleep-related deaths are a leading cause of infant death in the region after the first month of life. In 2003-2005, there were 134 sleep-related deaths in the five-county area. These deaths accounted for 14% of all infant deaths and nearly 40% of all deaths between 28 and 364 days.

The goal of the safe sleep campaign is to increase awareness about proper sleep positioning, dangers of bed sharing, impact of second-hand smoke, importance of breastfeeding and appropriate use of infant beds. Strategies will be directed at key audiences including expectant and new parents, health care providers, child care centers, community agencies serving families, and the general public. The campaign will be implemented through a multi-organizational partnership including the Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition, the Department of Health (health departments), the Department of Children and Families, Jacksonville Children's Commission, Early Learning Coalitions (Duval and surrounding counties), the Florida SIDS Alliance, Flagler Hospital, UF Department of Pediatrics and other groups. Initial funding for the campaign will be provided by the Healthy Start Coalition (\$50,000) with a goal of raising \$50,000 in additional cash and in-kind support.



Magnolia Project Highlighted as Promising Practice

The Magnolia Project, a special Coalition initiative providing care to at-risk women before and between pregnancies, received national attention in 2006 as part of a new effort by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to promote preconception health.

The project was highlighted in a May article published in *USA Today* and in a special supplement to the *Maternal & Child Health Journal* issued this fall. Funded by the federal Healthy Start program at HRSA, the Magnolia Project provides well-woman care, outreach, case management, community development and health education in a predominantly African American community of Jacksonville that experiences high infant mortality. Analysis of infant deaths using the Perinatal Periods of Risk (PPOR) model lead the Coalition to propose an intervention that focused on the preconceptional health of high risk women who were likely to become pregnant in the future.

The project, which began in 1999, garnered attention after the release of new CDC recommendations urging health care providers and consumers to pay more attention to preconception health as a strategy to improve birth outcomes. The CDC is also funding a longitudinal study of Magnolia Project participants to determine the project's impact on future pregnancies.

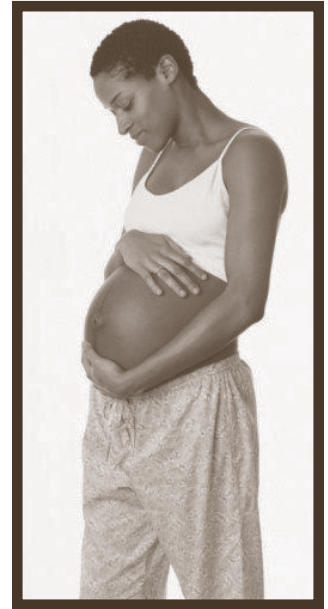
Pilot Projects Will Test New Approaches for Improving Women's Health

New pilot projects in Northeast Florida will test different approaches for improving preconception health during the coming year. The Florida Department of Health is providing one-time funding to Healthy Start Coalitions statewide to implement key CDC recommendations for addressing women's health needs prior to pregnancy.

In Northeast Florida, funding will be used to pilot and evaluate two adaptations of Magnolia Project models in St. Johns and Clay counties, as well as enhance interconception services provided by the Healthy Start programs in Baker, Duval and Nassau counties. Programs will target high-risk women, particularly those who have experienced previous poor outcomes.

In St. Johns County, Good Samaritan Health Center and the health department will develop and implement an *enhanced preconception care community outreach and education model* focusing on at-risk women of childbearing age, particularly in the West Augustine area. The need for preconception services aimed at Black women was identified by the St. Johns Infant Mortality Task Force in its recent study.

In Clay County, the health department will pilot *preconception care case management services* at a family planning clinic. Duval, Nassau and Baker counties will also receive funding to enhance interconception education and related services offered through the Healthy Start program. The UNF Center for Community Initiatives will assist the pilot projects in examining their impact on the participants and their risk factors.



MomCare Links Pregnant Women with Care

More than 13,100 pregnant women received health insurance and assistance in obtaining prenatal care in 2006 through MomCare, a special Healthy Start counseling and education program funded by Medicaid.



Women enroll in MomCare by completing and mailing a simple, one-page application. Eligible women usually receive health insurance coverage in less than two weeks. MomCare advisors at the Coalition

provide assistance in finding a prenatal care provider and other services they may need.

City of Jacksonville Funds the Azalea Project

The Azalea Project, a substance abuse and HIV prevention initiative for at-risk women of childbearing age, received first-time funding in 2006 from the City of Jacksonville. This support will allow the project to extend case management and related services to substance involved women who are not pregnant. The project received \$64,125 in city funding through its Community Services Grant program. It was one of three new programs funded in 2006.

Affordable Housing

In the past, affordable housing was just considered a housing **inconvenience**. It has now escalated to a housing **crisis**. It was viewed previously as just a local issue requiring local resolution. However, because of its elevation to crisis status, it has now become a regional issue that can best be resolved at the regional level. In response to the growing magnitude of the issue, the Northeast Florida Regional Council (NEFRC) decided to tackle the topic full throttle. A number of tactics and activities have been accomplished throughout the past year in response to the subject and it looks as though the work has just begun.



The panel for the Forum was made up of authorities from throughout Northeast Florida ranging from developers to housing experts.

First Coast Forum

The Council participated in the January 19, 2006, WJCT telecast entitled “First Coast Forum: Home Sweet Home.” The forum was designed to examine how affordable workforce housing issues affect our communities.

The program focused on communities within Northeast Florida and emphasized that the region has a large and growing middle and lower middle class that is rapidly being priced out of the “American Dream.” This was the focus of the 90-minute live telecast which featured Council

President, Commissioner Karen Stern and other noted authorities, who had a vested interest in the topic of affordable/workforce housing. The broad scope of the program was to define affordable housing for the working middle class, and open a dialog that could lead to some possible solutions to a growing problem.

Affordable Workforce Housing Task Force

In further response to the growing importance of the affordable housing issue within the region, the Council developed a Task Force comprised of key players from the housing arena. The Task Force held its Kick Off on Monday, May 8, 2006, in the Board Room of the Northeast Florida Regional Council. The informal meeting was an opportunity to gather together Task Force members and others who are vitally concerned with this issue that affects all of the communities throughout the region.



Task Force members Jeannie Fewell of TerraPointe and Jacksonville Councilwoman Elaine Brown share their perspectives on the housing issue at the Kick Off.

Affordable Housing Web site

As a communication tool and, in large part, to promote the Regional Cooperation Summit on Affordable Housing, the Council developed a Web site targeted at addressing affordable housing. It serves as a resource on affordable workforce housing topics and trends and is a dynamic tool full of information. The Web site can be accessed at www.neflaffordablehousing.com.

Affordable Workforce Housing...and the Roads that Lead Us Home

The 9th Annual Regional Cooperation Summit entitled “Affordable Workforce Housing...and the Roads that Lead Us Home” was held in the St. Augustine Ballroom in the St. Johns County Convention Center at the World Golf Village, St. Augustine, on August 9, 2006, from 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. It was the ninth collaborative effort of the Northeast Florida Regional Council and St. Johns County; but the first time an event of this magnitude was attempted and the first time affordable housing was the targeted topic.

The Summit gathered together a multitude of leading authorities in the field of affordable housing. Over 400 people were in attendance and were privy to presentations and commentaries from more than 25 speakers on the issue that included defining the problem in the Northeast Florida region, sharing success stories, and providing best practices.

The Summit, which was televised on numerous public broadcasting and other entities throughout the state, established among its objectives: to define the problem for the Northeast Florida region and to raise awareness of the issue of affordable workforce housing; to share success stories, which encouraged participants to engage in dialogue and set the stage for continued involvement and action; to provide best practices that serve as a springboard for the Northeast Florida Regional Council Affordable Workforce Housing Task Force; and ultimately implement regional approaches and regional responses to solve the issue.



Lieutenant Governor, the Honorable Toni Jennings, was the Keynote Speaker.

Florida's Lieutenant Governor, the Honorable Toni Jennings, was the Keynote Speaker. Other speakers included representatives from across the region and state ranging from such organizations and agencies as the City of Jacksonville Housing and Neighborhoods Department, Florida Housing Coalition, St. Johns County Housing and Community Services Department, Housing Partnership of Northeast Florida, as well as various Chambers of Commerce, and educational and business entities.

The topic of transportation as a vital component to the issue was also woven into the discussion. Experts ranging from economists to economic development professionals to leaders in the state and local housing authorities brought unique and diverse pieces of the puzzle to solve the problem that is affecting all of the communities throughout Northeast Florida.

The Council's Affordable Workforce Housing Task Force played an integral part of the Summit. Meeting frequently throughout the day to serve as a caucus, the Task Force analyzed data provided through the latest polling technologies which engaged the audience in real-time, hands-on participation during the summit. At the conclusion of the event, the Task Force discussed its next steps. The Summit was not the culmination of months of preparation but rather the springboard for the Council's Affordable Workforce Housing Task Force, which will ultimately implement regional approaches — and regional responses to solve the issue.

State Housing Summit

On Friday, September 15, 2006, the Florida Chamber Foundation held a state-wide discussion with top policy and agency leaders, economic experts, and housing professionals to help our regions and business leaders engage in tackling Florida's attainable housing crisis. The event was entitled “The Florida Summit of Affordable Living: Attainable Housing.” Council President, Commissioner Karen Stern, presented a “Regional Report” detailing some of the measures the Council has taken towards addressing the affordable housing crisis in Northeast Florida. The purpose of the Summit was to convene to address the question: “What Must Happen Next for an Affordable Florida?”



NEFRC President, Commissioner Karen Stern, gave a “Regional Report” sighting some of the Council's activities and efforts as best practices within the State. Moderator Don Upton is at right.

Economic & Community Development

State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP)

The Council is involved in meeting affordable housing needs through its administration of the State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) programs for Nassau and Putnam counties, as well as a weatherization program for Nassau County. The programs assist very low-, low-, and moderate-income households.

Through these programs, the Council has helped bring affordable housing funds of more than \$6 million to Putnam and nearly \$4 million to Nassau at no direct cost to the counties. These funds, in turn, have leveraged over \$18 million for Putnam and nearly \$14 million for Nassau from other private/public sources.



The Council administers three housing programs for Putnam County: State Housing Initiatives Program (SHIP) and Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP), as well as the Hurricane Housing Recovery Program.

Putnam County SHIP received \$798,398 during the state SHIP fiscal year 2005-2006 (July-June). The total includes \$547,976.00 from the Florida Housing Finance Corporation, \$54,388.29 in program income from the county's Loan Trust Fund, and \$196,033.24 in recaptured funds.

Projects completed or obligated during this period total 25 units, including 7 home purchases, 5 emergency repairs, and 13 rehabilitations. Since its inception in 1992 through June 2006, Putnam SHIP has assisted 711 households.



The Council administers two housing programs for Nassau County: State Housing Initiatives Program (SHIP) and Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP).

Nassau County SHIP received \$831,655 during the SHIP fiscal year 2005-2006 (July-June). The total includes \$486,518 from the Florida Housing Finance Corporation; \$319,310 in recaptured funds; \$25,827 in program income.

The combined housing programs assisted 40 households – 8 with down payment assistance and 6 with emergency repairs, and 26 rehabilitation projects. Since its inception in 1992 through June 2006, Nassau SHIP has assisted 679 households.

Through the Council's Business Development Corporation (BDC), Nassau County provides a mortgage instrument by which low-interest SHIP loans are collected (approximately \$1,033,000 to date) and recycled into the county's SHIP program, ensuring ongoing funding for home purchases and dwelling unit improvements. BDC closed 8 SHIP loans during its fiscal year (ending June 30, 2006) for a total of \$319,310 bringing its portfolio to 160 loans.

SHIP 1992 - 2006

PUTNAM COUNTY

Total Households assisted: 711

Total Funding: \$7,350,871

Leveraged Funds: \$17,432,501

NASSAU COUNTY

Total Households assisted: 679

Total Funding: \$2,856,209

Hurricane Housing Assistance Plan

In 2005 the Florida Housing Finance Corporation approved the Hurricane Housing Assistance Plan (HHAP) as submitted for the Putnam County Hurricane Housing Recovery (HHR) Program, which is administered by Council staff. No changes or corrections to the HHAP were required upon submittal of the Plan and therefore processing was able to begin immediately.

The total funding for the residents of Putnam County was \$1,052,106 and the available assistance may be used for repairs and rehabilitation, as well as home purchase. Putnam County was the only county in Northeast Florida to receive funding for the HHR Program.

Business Development Services

The Business Development Corporation (BDC) of Northeast Florida, Inc. provides for the Council's main economic initiative. As a Certified Development Company (CDC) for the U.S. Small Business Administration's (SBA) 504 Loan Program, BDC continues to impact the region's economic development and growth through financing participations utilizing the Small Business Administrations 504 loan program.



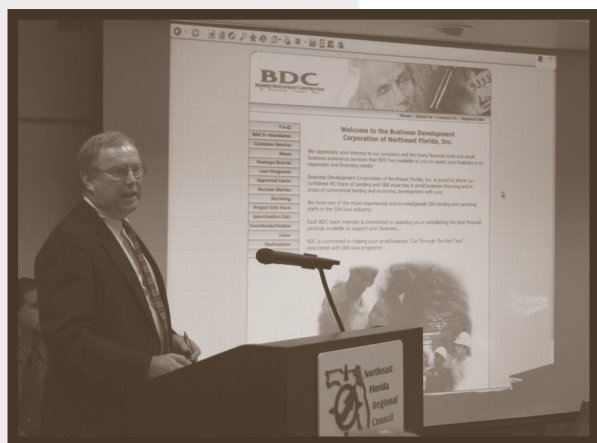
BDC is required by the Small Business Administration as a Certified Development Company to provide 504 loan services to businesses located in or locating into the State of Florida.

BDC, though a statewide CDC, continues its concentration of 504 lending efforts to those businesses located throughout the Council's seven counties.

The 504 program remains as the SBA's only national economic development program. Through the 504 program, BDC offers the business owner who will occupy commercial and industrial property financing for the purchase of land and building, machinery and equipment (with a 10 year useful life) and for the acquisition of land and new construction. 504 loan proceeds can also be utilized for expansion purposes for property renovation and site improvements.

The Council, with economic development interests throughout the region, completed a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for Northeast Florida. The CEDS was submitted as the preliminary step in seeking the designation for the region as an Economic Development District (EDD) from the U.S. Department of Commerce - Economic Development Administration (EDA). If this designation is granted, an increase in job creation will occur in addition to economic development initiatives throughout local and regional levels. With an EDD classification BDC will be able to provide technical assistance to the region's local governments fostering additional cooperation among communities located throughout the NE Florida region. The Council

will also provide for its member local governments the ability to obtain Economic Development Administration originated grants.



Steve Mahaven, Executive Director of the BDC, makes a presentation to the Board of Directors in which he debuts a new Web site.

Since its inception in August 1994, BDC has provided value-added services to the businesses located within the counties of NE Florida served by the Council. Services are provided through the job creation and job retention provisions of the US Small Business Administration's 504 loan program. BDC through its development efforts has provided for a positive return on the Council's initial investment providing a positive impact on the region's economic prosperity through the support of the SBA 504 loan program. Since inception BDC has received SBA approval for 181 loans with project costs in excess of \$259 million. In addition, more than 3,700 jobs have been either created and/or retained in the financing of these projects.

Northeast Florida Regional Council 2006 Annual Report

At the end of the 2006 fiscal year, BDC services for a total of 74 active loans for the SBA. This portfolio totals in excess of \$31 million. This amount includes only those loans which have been closed, funded, and are currently paying under the terms of the SBA's approval.

The corporation has an additional 20 SBA 504 loan approvals totaling in excess of \$15 million either under construction or on an interim loan basis awaiting 504 loan closing. Job retention/creation for the 22 loans totaled 362 positions.

Highlights 2005-2006

The Business Development Corporation provided 504 loan approvals totaling in excess of \$5 million to 9 companies. BDC had 20 504 loans in construction, bridge or interim loan status. Project amounts totaled in excess of \$55 million.

BDC presently services a portfolio of 74 active 504 loans totaling in excess of \$31 million.

Loans closed and funded through September 30, 2006

County	# of Projects	Total Project	Property Taxes Estimate
Alachua	1	\$ 1,965,000	\$ 39,508
Broward	1	360,000	8,200
Clay	1	291,000	6,633
Duval	4	5,607,000	100,354
Hillsborough	1	1,177,000	14,690
Nassau	1	3,997,000	90,790
St. Johns	1	2,019,500	37,800
Total	10	\$15,416,500	\$ 297,975

Seven CDC's in the state of Florida had another banner year with 821 loan approvals under the 504 program. Approvals in the State totaled in excess of \$458 million. The 504 industry on a national basis saw 9,942 loan approvals under the 504 program totaling in excess of \$5 billion. This was a 15.5% dollar increase and a 8.1% loan number increase over the prior year. Average 504 loan size for the period for BDC totaled \$635,444 and \$580,666 for the industry.



Examples of the type of projects funded by the Business Development Corporation:

1) Comfort Inn under construction in Fernandina; 2) A medical clinic in Tampa; 3) a dentistry office in Tampa and 4) a concrete plant still under construction in St. Johns County.

Emergency Preparedness

First Responder Hazardous Materials Training Program

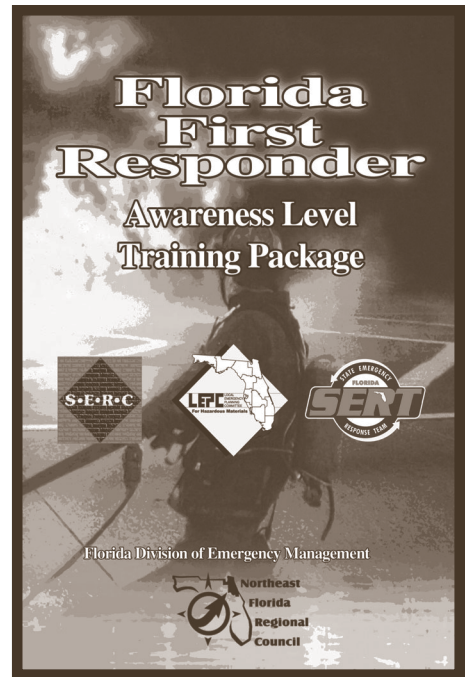
In 1994 Florida's First Responders Hazardous Materials Training Program was produced to provide awareness level training to first responders who might come into contact with hazardous materials. Since its inception, the VHS training program has become obsolete and out of date. In June 2005 the Northeast Florida Regional Council's Emergency Preparedness Program (EPP), with assistance from Florida's State Emergency Response Commission (SERC), the Florida Division of Emergency Management, the Jacksonville Fire Academy, the Apalachee Regional Planning Council, and a private consultant began designing and producing a new Florida First Responder Awareness Level Training Program that would provide current up-to-date information to Florida's First Responders.

The development of the new training program involved designing and reproducing the training documents, including the Instructor Manuals, the Student and Activities Guides, and the filming of a new training video. In September 2006 the final documents and a new training video were compiled into one complete package and made into DVD's and CD's to form the entire Awareness Level Training Program Package. It provides eight hours of training and is required for all first responders in the state and for those employed by government(s) who might encounter a hazardous material.

The new Awareness Level Training Package has been adopted and endorsed by the State Emergency Response Commission as the statewide minimum training standard for hazardous materials. A total of 500 copies was printed and produced at approximately 1/5 of the commercial rate at 100% quality and are being distributed to all local jurisdictions, fire colleges and training academies, and the State Fire College.

The EPP staff continues to assist local and state governments and remains committed to helping first responders by ensuring that emergency response professionals are prepared, equipped and trained for any situation, and by bringing together information and resources to prepare for and respond to a terrorist attack, natural disaster or other large-scale emergency.

It is anticipated that this training package will be adopted and implemented throughout the country like the older version.



The cover of the Florida First Responder Training DVD

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)

In May 2005, EPP began the HMGP application process by applying for multiple grants within the Northeast Florida region and has been working with state and local governments to execute program projects. As a result of the events surrounding Hurricane Frances, the LMS committee selected as top priority the Crescent City High School (CCHS) Wind Retrofit Project for Putnam County. This project includes mitigative measures such as reinforcement of the roof and walls and hurricane shutters to provide a secure emergency shelter to withstand hurricane force winds to protect lives and property of the residents and visitors of the county. Over the next few years and as part of the post-disaster funds within the HMGP, the county, along with assistance from state officials and EPP staff, will work toward the obligation of further grant funding for the retrofit of other projects throughout the region. Projects such as the Putnam County Emergency Operations Center, Kelley Smith Elementary, and Special Needs Shelters are of concern.

Statewide Domestic Security Exercises

Florida's Domestic Security Strategy vision is to ensure a safe and secure future, free of terror, for Florida, with an overall mission to strengthen its domestic security prevention, preparedness, protection, response and recovery capabilities through interdisciplinary and interagency consensus and commitment to build and rely on a strong Regional Mutual Aid Response Capability. The structure of the Strategy aligns policy objectives under five goals: Prevent, preempt and deter acts of terrorism; prepare for terrorism response missions; protect Florida's citizens, visitors, and critical infrastructure; respond in an immediate, effective, and coordinated manner, and; recover quickly and restore our way of life following a terrorist act.

Under the leadership of Florida's Strategy and the Regional Domestic Security Task Forces (RDSTF), the Northeast Florida Regional Council's EPP staff continues to embrace the responsibility of coordinating statewide RDSTF exercises to encourage and facilitate multijurisdictional and multidisciplinary participation at all levels of



"Taking it on the road" - the trailer pictured above enables the staff of the NEFRC Emergency Preparedness Team to mobilize.

government. In 2006 a total of 11 Tabletop exercises, two Drills, four Functional exercises, three Full-Scale exercises, two Pandemic Flu Summits, multiple Bio-terrorism drills, and numerous exercise planning conferences were conducted throughout the state. A Statewide Terrorism Exercise that involved the re-location of the State Emergency Operations Center and participation from Governor Bush was also supported by the EPP staff.



Alachua County Sheriff's Office conferring with the University Police at a Tabletop Exercise held at the University of Florida.

The 2006 RDSTF exercises culminated with Region III's Urban Area Strategic Initiative (UASI) Full Scale Exercise held October 18 at the Jacksonville International Airport. The exercise examined interdisciplinary

and interagency coordination and response and recovery capabilities. It involved over 500 participants, including radiological support, bomb squad, SWAT team, and other specialized teams. Twelve local hospitals also participated to provide assistance to 280 exercise participants who played "victims." EPP provided the logistical support to the exercise and to the participating agencies involved.

Local Mitigation Strategies (LMS)

The mission of the Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) is to reduce or eliminate the impact of hazards within a community and reduce the threat to life and property. The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 required Federal and State approval of the Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) plans. As a result of the updated plans in 2006, the LMS continued prioritizing local mitigation goals, objectives and projects.

Members of the LMS Task Forces in Baker, Clay, Nassau, Putnam and St. Johns counties serve as advisors for each respective county and conduct regular quarterly meetings to discuss effective mitigation efforts and adopt updates to the strategy and local mitigation project lists. The final quarterly meetings for 2006 were held in December. At those meetings members of the Task Forces planned for 2007 and formulated a final annual report for submission to the State in January 2007. LMS Task Force members include government and business leaders as well as local community members.

State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSGP)

The State Homeland Security Grant Program was established to enhance the ability of the State of Florida to prevent, deter, respond to and recover from threats and incidents of terrorism involving the use of chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosive (CBRNE) weapons and cyber attacks. The grant builds on the progress made over the past four years, enhancing the capabilities of state and local emergency responders. Currently in the Northeast Florida region, SHSGP contracts for 2005 through 2006 have been completed for Baker, Flagler, Nassau, Putnam and St. Johns counties. In general, the contracts provide for National Incident Management System (NIMS) compliance reviews of emergency documents and procedures, development and updating of Continuity of Operations Plans (COOP) and other Operational Plans, Transportation Plans and Tabletop, Functional, and Full Scale Exercises and Drills.

The 2006 Full Scale Exercise - an Urban Area Strategic Initiative (UASI) Exercise, was held October 18 at Jacksonville International Airport. EPP staff provided logistical support to the exercise. The exercise involved over 500 participants, including radiological support, bomb squad, SWAT team and other specialized staff and teams, including numerous "victims." Area hospitals also participated. These activities are ongoing at this time and other numerous exercises have been held or are scheduled to be held at a later date. NEFRC staff will continue to partner with county staff in the coordination of SHSGP activities.

Hurricane Evacuation Study

Emphasizing the importance of Florida's hurricane preparedness, the Northeast Florida Regional Council, in partnership with emergency management agencies from Baker, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Nassau, Putnam and St. Johns counties; the Florida Division of Emergency Management; Post, Buckley, Schuh & Jernigan, Inc. (PBS&J) and the National Weather Service Office - Jacksonville, recently released the 2005 Hurricane Evacuation Study for the seven-county service area. The Study analyzes hurricane risks, vulnerable areas and populations, transportation, evacuation behavior and shelter resources, and calculates the number of hours required to clear the roads prior to the onset of tropical storm force winds and storm surge from hurricanes. The document is comprised of data utilized by county emergency management agencies in Northeast Florida and the State government to develop critical evacuation plans used when the area is under threat from a hurricane.



Originally released in 1985, and after being updated in 1988 and completely transformed in 1998, the Study is the latest in the series. Data in the newly released study shows that growth progression for the Northeast Florida area is due to increased population in hurricane-vulnerable areas. Study results also indicate a significant increase in projected evacuation clearance times. The times now reach into the 48-hour range and some extend to the 60-hour range under the worst case scenarios.

The Study contains information in developing the multiple hurricane evacuation and response plans needed to ensure public safety. Response plans include: Shelter Analysis, which predicates the estimated number of shelter spaces that will be needed to accommodate county residents; Transportation Analysis, which establishes clearance times – a critical piece of information used to determine when a population is vulnerable to an approaching storm and evacuation orders must be given to ensure that the public has time to evacuate. The transportation analysis is also used to institute traffic management plans to determine which roads need to be closed, made one-way, receive additional traffic management personnel, or when the *bottleneck* will likely form; and also included in the study is the Hazards and Vulnerability Analysis used to identify where the assistance may need to be focused and where the damage is most likely to occur.

EPP Staff continues to provide emergency management officials with state-of-the-art information on the major factors affecting hurricane evacuation planning and decision-making, and the skills and training aids necessary to educate the public.

Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC)

The District IV LEPC held its annual exercise on August 17, 2006, at the St. Johns County Water Treatment Plant. The exercise was designed to examine the proper use of personal protection equipment, coordination between the site, utilities and emergency operations, use of the Incident Command System in site mitigation, and practice response to a hazardous materials incident and site mitigation. The exercise involved approximately 70 participants from St. Johns County Emergency Management, Fire/Rescue, the Sheriff's Office, and the Utilities Department. EPP staff and the LEPC provided the overall exercise design and coordination.

The Committee also held several training classes during 2006 and participated in the 2006 Annual Hazardous Materials Conference in Baltimore, Maryland. The Committee also sponsored two Advanced Hazardous Materials Leak, Spill & Fire Control training classes, a Clandestine Laboratory Safety training class, and an Incident Command System (ICS) 300 & 400 (one of each) training class.

The District IV LEPC is a state-appointed committee staffed by the Regional Council that holds quarterly meetings and is charged with facilitating regional emergency response and compliance with hazardous materials reporting laws under the Emergency Planning Community Right-To-Know Act (EPCRA).

The committee also serves as a public repository for annual inventory reports submitted by facilities throughout the region that store hazardous materials and chemicals on site and assists companies in complying with the law. EPP staff continues to provide assistance to the committee through facilitation and coordination and is dedicated to helping provide programs for first responders who might come into contact with hazardous materials.



Statewide Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) Exercise

The State of Florida conducts an annual Hurricane Exercise in May of every year. Added to this year's Exercise were simulated terrorist attacks as well as the first-ever State Emergency Response Team (SERT) full scale Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) relocation exercise. Hundreds of local, state and federal emergency responders relocated to the Alternate State Emergency Operations Center, where the majority of the exercise activities took place.

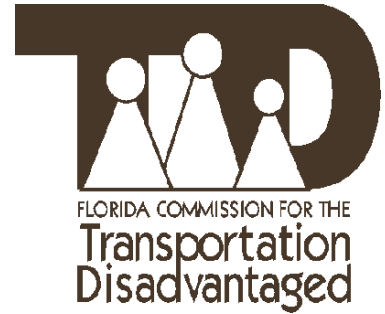
The NEFRC was contracted by the State Division of Emergency Management to provide the Lead Evaluator and a team of evaluators comprised of Emergency Preparedness Program (EPP) staff as well as from other Regional (Planning) Councils. The NEFRC lead team observed the exercise activities and recorded its observations, which were later developed into a critical analysis with recommendations for improvement. This report is known as an "After Action Report" (AAR). The AAR is used by the SERT to improve its overall performance and to plan for the next exercise. This NEFRC produced evaluation is a key element of the State's overall emergency management planning and improvement process.

Black Creek and Flood Mitigation Assistance Program

The Emergency Preparedness Programs (EPP) submitted the final report for the Clay County Black Creek Mitigation project which included flood mitigation of four private residences along Black Creek in which these properties were identified by the Black Creek Floodplain Management Plan in 2004. This project represented the first round of implementation for recommended mitigation measures for multiple repetitive flood loss properties in the Clay County area. In September 2006, the final stages of the project were completed. The final project included elevating three repetitive flood loss homes along Black Creek. EPP will continue to work with grant recipients, coordinate current and potential projects, and provide assistance and work with Clay County to implement recommended measures from the study.

Transportation Disadvantaged Services

2006 was a year of change and transition for the Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) program – at both the state and local levels. The most notable change occurred in August when Governor Bush appointed a seven-member board to the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD), which replaced the original 27-members. Only two of the original members remain on the newly formed board, which include the new chairman, Commissioner J.R. Harding, who was appointed to serve until August 2010. The counties are anxiously waiting for direction from the new Commission and are looking forward to its leadership.



The NEFRC Transportation Disadvantaged program staffing changed this year, and Jeanie Palmer became the new Program Coordinator. Ms. Palmer brought to the program a genuine interest and knowledge as she had assisted with the program for the previous 3½ years.

The TD Commission's five-year contracts for four of the counties for Community Transportation Coordinators (CTC) expired this year. In January, the Council began a competitive procurement process for Baker, Clay, Putnam and St. Johns counties advertising for entities interested in bidding for the CTC contracts for the following five years. After completion of the process, the Council received a sole bid from every county – each being from the current CTC – whereas each of the four original CTCs was awarded a new contract through June 2011. The Council is excited and looking forward to working with these CTCs again for the next five years!

County Community Transportation Coordinator Highlights:

Baker County

Baker County Council on Aging (BCCOA) completed an amazing year achieving considerable progress and accomplishments. Through determination and a strong focus on addressing opportunities for improvement within the Program, a dedicated group of members persevered and made necessary changes to ensure the success of the BCCOA. The hard work has paid off with glowing success.

Upon hiring a new executive director, Mary Baxla, and carefully choosing staff, the agency has been revamped. Under Ms. Baxla's leadership, the agency has been restructured; policies and procedures were developed and implemented, and; training, quality assurance and technical assistance became vital to the program. At the agency's recent Safety Review, FDOT's evaluator, Ms. Gwen Pra, noted, "For the first time since 1999, this agency is clear with everything; that has not happened in 10 years." The COA now consists of dedicated people who want to work with and care about the people in the community. Ms. Baxla said, "This community is the best I have ever had the privilege of working with."

Clay County

Clay County Council on Aging saw the departure of Commissioner Patrick McGovern, its chairman of 11 years for the Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board. Comm. McGovern is well known in the community for his passionate and dedicated service to the TD program and has firmly supported the CTC through its struggles and successes throughout the years. Directly after his last meeting in November, Comm. McGovern was honored at a "surprise" farewell party at the Council on Aging. He was presented with a plaque from the TD Local Coordinating Board, and received well wishes from all. Executive Director of Clay County Council on Aging, Ms. Renee Knight, stated, "He will be greatly missed."

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Also, in November, Comm. McGovern was awarded the NEFRC's 2006 Regional Award of Excellence in Transportation at the World Golf Convention Center in St. Augustine for his long-term leadership of the transportation disadvantaged program.



(Left to right) Sheryl Hartzog, Transportation Director; Comm. Patrick McGovern, and Renee Knight, Executive Director of Clay County Council on Aging, pose at McGovern's farewell party on November 20, 2006.

Commissioner McGovern is leaving the COA in as good a shape as it can possibly be. On a recent very detailed safety report, the COA received a perfect score from the Department of Transportation (DOT). "This is the first time in the 10 years that I have been doing this for the Department of Transportation, we have a perfect report," stated Ms. Pra, District System Safety Manager, "I sit on 18 boards, and I've never had a perfect report."

Also, the COA attained another level of unusual status when its Executive Director, Renee Knight, and its Transportation Director, Sheryl Hartzog, were each designated as Community Transportation of America Manager (CTCM). This is a national designation through the Community Transportation of America that only 11 people in the State of Florida hold. The

fact that two of these designations come from the same agency makes it uniquely special. What an achievement for Clay County and for our region!

Flagler County

The Flagler County transportation disadvantaged services have come a long way since 2004, when the County took over the disheveled program. Under the leadership of the new director, Bill Vivian, the program has a renewed energy and a new name – Flagler County Public Transportation (FCPT). With Mr. Vivian's management skills, the FCPT has acquired six new vehicles this past year. Operating with a fleet of 25 vehicles and 30 full- and part-time drivers, clientele has nearly doubled in the past year with 3,000 active clients who traveled nearly 750,000 miles. To accommodate the expanding program in the fastest growing county in the United States, the staff has recently moved offices temporarily to a newer, better location in Bunnell.

Nassau County

Nassau County Council on Aging (NCCOA) has survived a rocky year with the departure of several key staff. Although in transition for much of the year, management has stabilized with the hire of the new executive director, Dr. Al Rizer, and improvements are already evident. Dr. Rizer's extensive background in social services and hands-on leadership have already mended many relationships in the community. In September, he was interviewed on a televised Comcast program discussing the NCCOA's community contributions.

Dr. Rizer and his staff have recently completed the Florida Department of Transportation Safety Review, whereas, many conflicts with funding were resolved, and because of their efforts, the NCCOA received **two** new vehicles for the first time in four years, **and will receive one** more in the near future. What an achievement! Dr. Rizer and his transportation team realize they still have much work to do, but they've come so far in such a short period of time, that next year promises to be even greater!



Pictured above, the new paratransit bus which was awarded to Nassau County

Putnam County

Ride Solution, Inc. is one of the longest-termed CTCs in Northeast Florida, with the leadership and management skills of Boyd Thompson guiding it since 1984. Although others might let a good thing ride as is, that's not so with Mr. Thompson. Anyone who knows him, knows he is always looking for the latest, newest idea/approach to improve transportation in the community. Among the regular projects he is involved with this year, e.g., moving the location of the CTC to the more spacious Train Station, marketing projects, and building 15-20 bus shelters, the most exciting venture is the Brevi Bus, which is a unique 25-foot bus that Mr. Thompson has been researching and testing on the dirt roads of Putnam County, which has a design that should make transportation much quicker and safer. The bus is approximately two-thirds the weight of a standard heavy duty bus, is more fuel efficient, and has better use of cargo space. Mr. Thompson is currently approaching FTA to recommend this bus be a research project for Putnam County, and if approved, he hopes to receive funding to build five prototypes.



Putnam County's Brevi Bus.

St. Johns County

St. Johns County transportation disadvantaged program has been thriving under the excellent guidance of the Council on Aging's long-time (May 1999) executive director, Cathy Brown. St. Johns County has been recognized numerous times for its innovative transportation endeavors and commitment to the community. Because of Ms. Brown's successful management of the program, St. Johns County Council on Aging (SJCCOA) was presented the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Administrator's Award for Outstanding Public Service in Rural Public Transportation at its 17th National Conference this past October 2006. The SJCCOA was nominated for this award by the Northeast Florida Regional Council in response to a solicitation through national organizations in the field of transit. In November, the Metropolitan Planning Organization recognized Ms. Brown with a resolution for the COA's accomplishment at its Board meeting. As always, St. Johns County continues to be a respected and well-known organization locally and nationally.



Councilman Lad Daniels (left) presents a Resolution to St. Johns County Council on Aging Director Cathy Brown at a First Coast MPO meeting.

Working Together

In May 2006, representatives from all the counties in Northeast Florida, including Duval County, the First Coast Metropolitan Planning Organization and the Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR) came together at the Council to work on a proposal for a unified transportation project for an FTA grant. The enthusiasm was contagious as members, new and old, worked together on a venture which would benefit the entire Northeast region. FTA results for this project are still pending. This transportation project truly was in sync with the NEFRC's vision of "bringing communities together to advance the regional agenda."

Transportation Disadvantaged Performance Data 2005-2006

County	Coordinator	Trips	Miles	Expenses	Revenues
Baker	Baker Co. Council on Aging	18,303	256,996	\$457,257	\$599,777
Clay	Clay Co. Council on Aging	80,801	783,330	\$1,354,799	\$1,273,395
Flagler	Flagler Co. Public Transportation	87,171	759,583	\$1,368,933	\$1,368,933
Nassau	Nassau Co. Council on Aging	45,356	336,327	\$905,586	\$981,989
Putnam	Ride Solution Inc.	146,537	823,670	\$1,964,203	\$1,842,191
St. Johns	St. Johns Co. Council on Aging	180,933	1,127,564	\$2,095,893	\$2,051,078
	TOTAL	559,101	4,087,470	\$8,146,671	\$8,117,363

Information Services and Data Analysis

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

Information Technology

Information Services and Data Analysis includes the Information Technology function for the Council. The Information Technology function provides both local and wide area 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 made substantial progress in rebuilding and enhancing its computer network. Accomplishments included new and upgraded security technologies, i.e., a new firewall, upgraded antivirus software, a new spam filtering system, and upgraded backup. Servers and ancillary equipment were upgraded and consolidated into a totally Windows-based platform. Over one-third of the personal computers were replaced, and MS Office was brought up-to-date for all personal computers. Network connectivity for remote sites was replaced and upgraded. A vendor management program was initiated, inventory management was enhanced, and a process documentation program was initiated.



Geographic Information Systems

In the past year, the Council continued to host the Northeast Florida Geographic Information Systems (GIS) User Group, which serves more than 180 industry professionals. The GIS User Group meets quarterly to share best practices and discuss matters of interest to the community as they relate to geographic information systems. Meetings involve information sharing regarding ongoing GIS projects, data collection and creation, and information technology innovations as they relate to the discipline of GIS.

The Council completed a contract with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to facilitate the collection and quality assurance of multiple new and existing GIS data layers within Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau, Putnam and St. Johns counties. The data are socio-cultural in nature and are now being used by the FDOT in its Efficient Transportation Decision Making (EDTM) model for planning purposes.

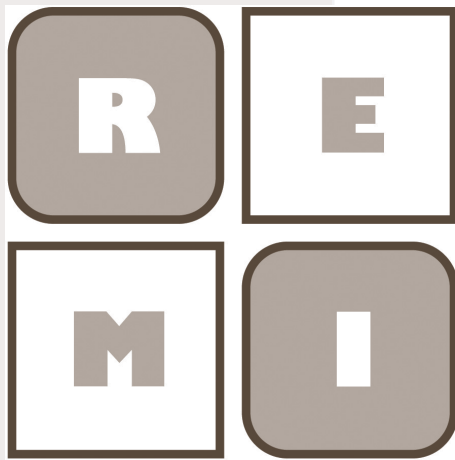
Maps and analyses were provided for a variety of projects including updating local municipal comprehensive growth plans, defining feasible urban service boundaries for local municipalities, mapping the locations of hazardous materials, analyzing the outcomes of possible hazardous material spills, mapping locations of developments of regional impact, and analyzing future growth possibilities within the region.

The Council provided technical GIS assistance to multiple government agencies within the region. This assistance included consultation on which computer software and hardware systems to use, staffing recommendations, data creation, and maintenance recommendations.

Statistical Analysis

The Council was selected to present its paper, “Risk Factors Associated with Low-Birth-Weights in Northeast Florida” to a national conference sponsored by the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention. The conference brought together public health professionals and practitioners from across the nation. The presentation summarized the Council’s statistical study, using logistic regression analysis, to identify risk factors associated with low-birth-weights and infant mortality in Northeast Florida.

The Council continued 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.



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 was utilized by local governments to make decisions on possible incentive packages for new and/or existing projects as well as providing background data to support various state and federal economic development grants for local economic development initiatives.

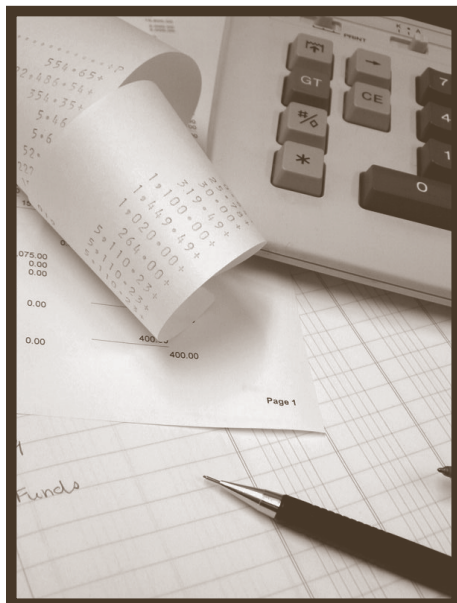
In the past year, the Council completed two major studies regarding the economic impact of real estate development projects in Northeast Florida. The Council also completed a major study regarding the economic impact of a possible new civic arena in one of Northeast Florida’s counties. The Council’s study of the economic impact of the Duval County Health Department and its Academic Practice Partnership was the foundation for an article that has been accepted for publication in a national journal, “Public Health Reports.”

Fiscal Impact Analysis

The Council is becoming the provider of technical assistance for the Fiscal Impact Analysis Model (FIAM) for counties and municipalities in Northeast Florida. The Council will also contract to calibrate models and perform analyses on behalf of local governments.

FIAM is a new analytical tool that evaluates the costs and benefits to local governments from land use development and land use planning decisions. FIAM can evaluate the financial feasibility of local government comprehensive plans. Local governments can be FIAM to estimate their ability to pay for capital and services needed to support growth and development.

Finance and Value Added Services



Operating Revenue Sources 2005-2006

\$6,219,514

(Excludes Direct Client Services of \$4,162,363)

Community Services	\$2,381,414
Emergency Preparedness	\$1,523,994
Planning	\$1,220,166
County Investment	\$526,258
Economic Development	\$449,034
Transportation	\$118,648

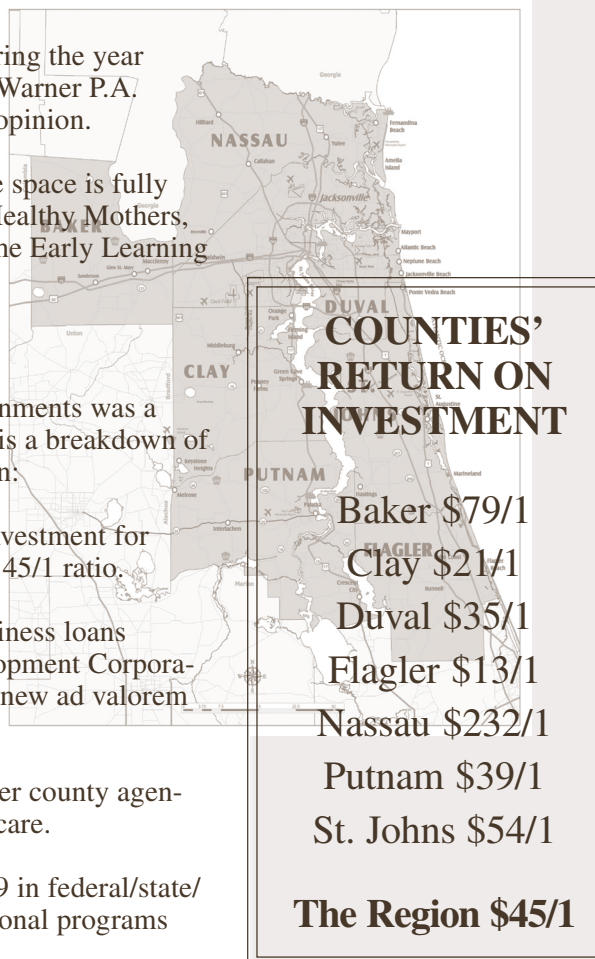
The Council maintained a stable financial position during the year ending September 30, 2006. The firm of Magers and Warner P.A. conducted the annual audit and issued an unqualified opinion.

As of the end of this fiscal year, the Council's leasable space is fully occupied with a total of three tenants: Project SOS; Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition of North Florida, Inc.; and the Early Learning Coalition of Duval.

Return on Investment

Among the tangible benefits reaped by member governments was a \$45/1 return on their county contributions. Following is a breakdown of selected services for the Council's seven-county region:

- Yielded a \$23,490,767 direct/indirect return on investment for contributions of \$526,258 by member counties, a 45/1 ratio.
- Supported economic development with small business loans totaling \$11,914,500 through the Business Development Corporation, adding new jobs and more than \$235,577 in new ad valorem taxes.
- Provided \$4,162,363 in contract monies to member county agencies and organizations for maternal/infant health care.
- Approved for funding consideration \$877,957,109 in federal/state/local government and private monies for 103 regional programs and projects.



Staff to Local and Regional Governing Boards

- Business Development Corporation of Northeast Florida, Inc.
- Local Emergency Planning Committee
- Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition
- Northeast Florida Emergency Planning Committee
- Six Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Boards (Baker, Clay, Flagler, Nassau, Putnam and St. Johns counties)
- Northeast Florida KidCare Oversight Committee
- Nassau County Housing Partnership
- Putnam County Housing Partnership
- North Florida Procurement Association, Chapter NIGP, Inc.
- Northeast Florida Regional Leadership Academy

North Florida Procurement Association

The North Florida Procurement Association, Chapter of NIGP, Inc. (NFPA) continues to gain momentum as one of the newest resources for public agencies in the Northeast Florida region. Cooperative purchasing is at the center of the mission of the NFPA. Through this new organization, which received its Charter in 2005, professionals in the area of public procurement have opportunities to improve the way they conduct business, particularly in the areas of education, training, research, enhanced communication and peer support.

The NFPA is a Chapter of the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing (NIGP), and through this connection is able to provide educational events for members to gain advanced knowledge in public purchasing, including certification seminars. These events are held throughout North Florida giving members the education and training benefits without the additional travel expense. In addition, the NFPA offers a Web site designed and maintained by Council staff which provides members with numerous resources including a Members Only Bulletin Board, Calendar of Events, and Resource Library.

The Association had a membership retention rate of 98% for the past year and boasts over 100 members.



Outgoing NFPA President Michael Clapsaddle (left) receives an Award of Appreciation from incoming President Randy Wallis on behalf of the membership of the Association.

Regional Community Institute, Inc.

Over the past fiscal year, the Council formed a Florida, non-profit corporation by the name of the Regional Community Institute of Northeast Florida, Inc. (RCINEF).

The purpose of the corporation is to advance and promote the vision of regionalism, as it relates to the quality of Northeast Florida's natural, man-made, economic and social environments. The RCINEF is organized exclusively for charitable and educational purposes. It will partner with the Council in obtaining private funding that is not available to the Council as a government entity.

The mission and purpose of the new organization mirrors that of the Council. The RCINEF provides the opportunity to broaden and strengthen the vision of regional leadership as it affects the quality of life in Northeast Florida.



Legislative Priorities

The Legislative Committee of the Northeast Florida Regional Council was created to address critical concerns within the member counties that comprise the region. It is composed of one delegate from each county (Baker, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Nassau, Putnam and St. Johns) as well as the President of the NEFRC Board of Directors who serves as an Ex-Officio member.

The legislative priorities of each county within the Northeast Florida Regional Council's membership were collected. From a cumulative list of 69 priorities submitted by the counties involved, each stakeholder was required to determine the top three priorities that most significantly represented the critical needs and concerns of their communities and constituents. Through the gathering and analysis of all priorities submitted by each county individually, the Legislative Committee collectively determined the top five "regional priorities" that represented the most critical concerns of the Northeast Florida region.

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

Committee Purpose:

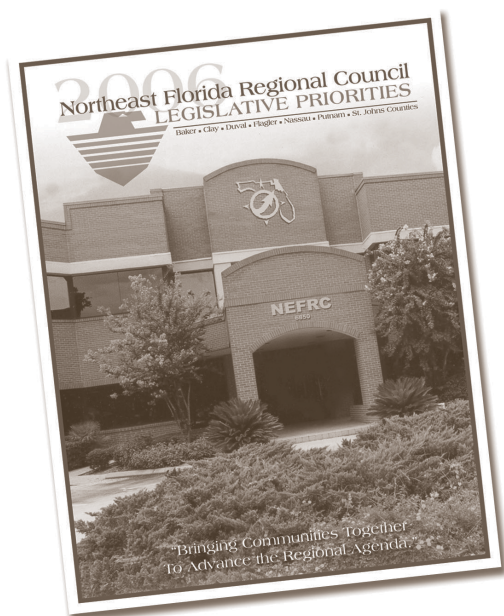
"Work collectively and promote regionally."

Committee Philosophy:

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

Committee Responsibilities:

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



THE PRIORITIES:

The following are the priorities, by topic, that were concluded to be the most critical matters to the counties that are represented by the Northeast Florida Regional Council:

Affordable/Workforce Housing

Emergency Preparedness & Recovery

Transportation Funding

Medicaid Funding

KidCare Funding

Regional Happenings

Bosnian Legislative Delegation

The Northeast Florida Regional Council (NEFRC) partnered with the International Visitor Corps of Jacksonville (IVCJ) in hosting a special legislative delegation from Bosnia.

Members of the delegation included Mr. Petar Dokic, Founder and President, Opposition Socialist Party, Republika Srpska (SPRS) Bosnia-Herzegovina; Mr. Slavko Matic, Speaker, Federation House of Peoples, Bosnia-Herzegovina; Mr. Muhamed Ibrahimovic, Speaker, Federation House of Representatives, Bosnia-Herzegovina; and Mr. Tarik Sadovic, Member, Republic of Srpska National Assembly, Banja Luka Bosnia-Herzegovina. Accompanied by two Department of State Language Officers serving as interpreters, the delegation spent the morning in the offices of the NEFRC.

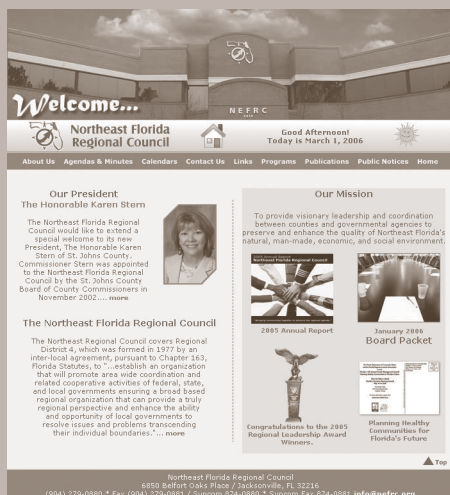


A special legislative delegation from Bosnia visited the Northeast Florida Regional Council on January 26, 2006.

In a presentation on regional perspectives given by Council CEO, Brian Teeple, the delegates were introduced to details regarding the Northeast Florida region including regional growth effects, the rate of regional growth, projected growth, population densities, and labor force issues. A time of reciprocated questions and answers followed the presentation.

Despite the language barrier and other aspects of diversity, which could have presented a barrier between the local regional entity and the delegates from Southeastern Europe, Teeple concluded that a very valuable lesson was learned through the meeting, "The things we have in common are much more significant than the things that divide us."

Among the goals of the IVCJ are facilitating relationships to aid economic development in Northeast Florida and in the visitor's home country, fostering international understanding and building a basis for world peace and sending international visitors back home with a better understanding of the history and the heritage of the United States. With this focus, combined with the NEFRC's participation in this endeavor, steps were truly taken towards achieving the Council's slogan of "bringing communities together."



A new look...a new feel...but the same Mission.

"Bringing Communities Together to Advance the Regional Agenda."

**In 2006 the Northeast Florida
Regional Council
launched its Web site:
www.nefrc.org**



Regional Leadership

Northeast Florida Regional Leadership Academy

The second class of the Northeast Florida Regional Leadership Academy held its Opening Retreat at the St. Johns County Convention Center at the Renaissance Resort, World Golf Village on September 11 and 12, 2006. The Class of 2006-2007 is comprised of 31 members representing all seven counties in Northeast Florida and encompasses individuals from numerous sectors such as: financial advising, human services, purchasing, transportation, economic development, government, public relations, law enforcement, real estate, environmental resources, law, medical and education.

Program content for the RLA includes regional history and demographics, growth management, as well as environment and water resources issues. Analysis of additional issues of interest such as transportation, education, diversity, economic development, and human services will also contribute to the focus of the organization.

Curriculum goals include acting as a forum for dialogue on regional issues that are significant to Northeast Florida as a community, promoting and encouraging initiation of innovative approaches to regional issues and bringing clarity and effectiveness to the role of regional community stewardship. Ultimately, the NEFRLA serves as a network of program alumni for future regional development efforts.

The RLA embraces a mission to build a strong, diverse, regional network of leaders with a shared commitment to collaboration and to connecting our communities. The Academy will host Program Days in each of the counties in Northeast Florida until the Closing Retreat in April 2007.

Class of 2006-07

John Birney
Carol Brady
Denise Bunnewith
Robin Burchfield
Giselle Carson
Mike Clapsaddle
Trip Clark
Skip Cramer
Travis Cummings
Wendell Davis
Gerald Gonzalez
Joe Gordy
Kirby Green
Don Hughes
Dana Jones
Wally Lee
Colleen McFarlane
Lisa Moore
Jason Mudd
Linda Myers
Alice Oswald
Dennis Pate
Sherrie Raulerson
John Reyes
Harold Rutledge
John Tabor
Carol Vallencourt
Tri Vu
Quint White
Oel Wingo
Sharyl Wood



(Upper left and then clockwise) Wally Lee of the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce participates in an exercise with Lisa Moore of IBM; Denise Bunnewith of the First Coast Metropolitan Planning Organization shares best practices; Tri Vu, architect, listens intently during a Program Day and Kirby Green of the St. Johns River Water Management District addresses his peers.

Regional Leadership

Elected Officials Reception and Regional Leadership Awards Ceremony

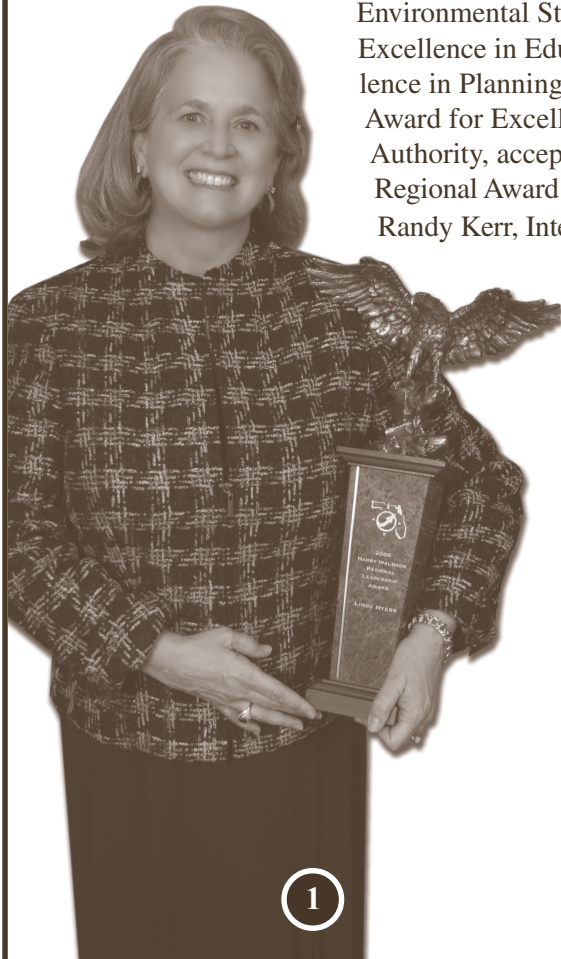
For the past six years the Northeast Florida Regional Council has taken great pleasure in hosting a reception for elected officials and friends to enjoy an evening of good food, fellowship and conversation which fosters the growing sense of regionalism and regional cooperation that exists in Northeast Florida. 2006 marked the fourth year the reception was coupled with Council's Regional Leadership Awards Ceremony.

The Awards Program was designed to recognize Regional Excellence in a variety of critical arenas essential to positioning our Regional Community as a model of cooperation and coordination. The outstanding nominations submitted again reflected the diversity of programs and projects, the quality of these efforts and the leadership demonstrated by the nominees.

Eric Smith, Director of the Florida Coastal School of Law Center for Law and Public Policy, served as the emcee for the festivities and was lauded for his exceptional timing, articulation and wit. The evening was underwritten by a plethora of generous sponsors from the public, private and educational sectors. The event was a glowing example of all that makes the Northeast Florida region shine.

The awards were presented by the Regional Council Chief Executive Officer Brian Teeple. The awards and their recipients (which are pictured on the opposing page) were as follows:

- 1) 2006 Harry Waldron Regional Leadership Award, Linda Myers; 2) 2006 Quality of Life Award, Boys and Girls Clubs of Nassau County Foundation, Inc., accepted by Foundation President Patrick Sabadie; 3) 2006 Regional Award for Excellence in Affordable Housing, Karen Stern; 4) 2006 Regional Award for Excellence in Transportation, Pat McGovern; 5) 2006 Regional Award for Excellence in Environmental Stewardship, Neil Armingeon; 6) 2006 Regional Award for Excellence in Education, Dr. Edyth Abdullah; 7) 2006 Regional Award for Excellence in Planning and Growth Management, Bob Rhodes; 8) 2006 Regional Award for Excellence in Economic Development and Tourism, Jacksonville Port Authority, accepted by Deputy Executive Director Ron Baker; and 9) 2006 Regional Award for Excellence in Public Safety, Major Larry Beaton and Captain Randy Kerr, Interoperational Communication Committee of the RDSTF.

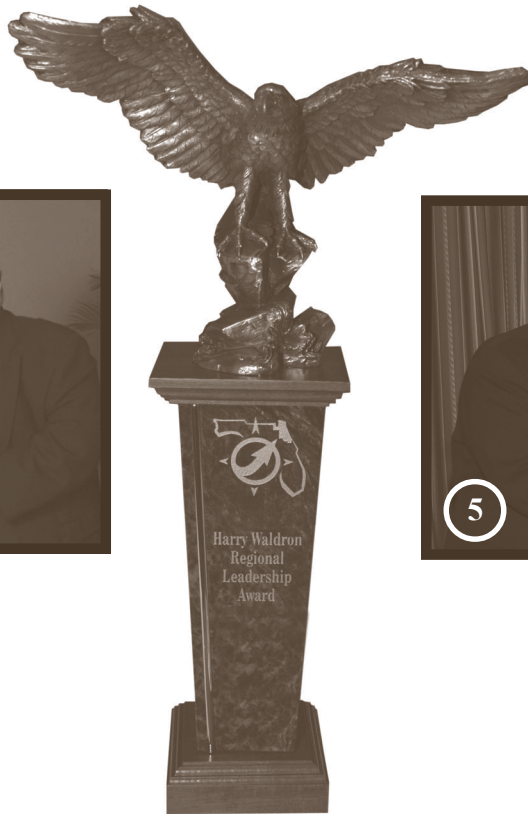
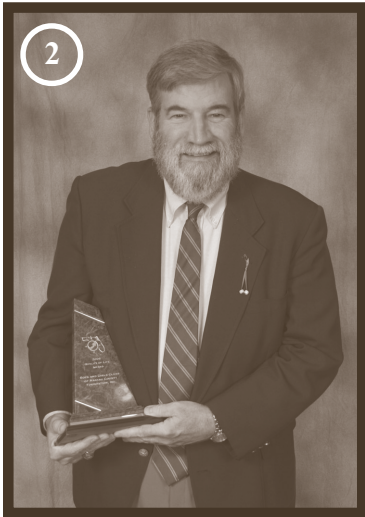


*The recognition program continues to be anchored by the **Harry Waldron Regional Leadership Award**, named after former three-time Chairman of the Regional Council, Harry Waldron. Mr. Waldron was the recipient of the inaugural edition of this award in recognition of his lifetime of service to the ideals of getting along with your neighbors.*



*Pictured above is the 2006 recipient of the **Harry Waldron Regional Leadership Award**, Linda Myers, with the Award's namesake.*

Northeast Florida Regional Council 2006 Annual Report



Northeast Florida Regional

Office of Communication and Intergovernmental Relations (OCIR)



Michael Hadden
Director

Michael Calhoun
Graphic Artist

Mavis Youngblood
*Administrative Support
Receptionist*

Paula McCaffrey*
Receptionist

Planning & Development



Ed Lehman
Director

Mike Brown*
Program Administrator

Debbie Balevre
Housing Coordinator

Rachel Booth*
Regional Planner

Sheron Forde
Administrative Assistant

Stephen Jones, AICP*
Speical Projects Manager

Sherri Kelsey*
Housing Assistant

Jeanie Palmer
TD Program Coordinator

Emergency Preparedness



Jeffrey Alexander
Director

Charles McCool
Program Administrator

Edgar Preston*
Program Administrator

Jennifer Bodine
Administrative Assistant

Ana Estrada
Regional Planner

Heather Golightly
*Coordinator, Local Emergency
Planning Committee*

Pam Kirchner
Regional Planner

Amanda Loach*
Regional Planner

Maurice Postal*
Regional Planner

Guy Parola, AICP
Regional Planner

Barry Piacenza
Senior Regional Planner

Amanda Smith*
Regional Planner

Audrey Smith*
Regional Planner



Brian D. Teeple, AICP
Chief Executive Officer

Angela Giles
Executive Assistant

Information Services & Data Analysis



Walter Bowman
Director

Chris Bono*
*Information Systems
Specialist*

Jonathan Goyings
GIS Specialist I

Mike Hill
Help Desk Technician

Keith Joiner*
GIS Manager

Tobin Lilly*
Help Desk Technician

**Staff not employed by the Council at the end of 2006 are indicated with an asterisk.*

Council Staff Organization



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

Shirley Orberg
Executive Assistant

Business Development Services



Steve Mahaven
*Executive Director
Business Development
Corporation of North
Florida Inc.*

Peggy Conrad*
Administrative Assistant

Dana Hammontree
*Portfolio Servicing
Specialist*

Steve Hale*
*Commercial Credit
Underwriter*



Council Operations



Donna Starling
*Chief Financial
Officer*

Barbara Craven
*Procurement and
Fiscal Assistant*

Rachel Carter*
Accountant

Angela Session
Accounting Intern

Lee Brown*
*Acting Manager,
Personnel Services
& Facilities
Management*

Brent Marley
*Supervisor, Building
Maintenance*

Barbara Rovedo*
*Chief Financial Officer
(Retired 1/06)*

Human Services



Carol Brady
Director

Dawn Clarke
Program Administrator

Thelisa Miller
MomCare Advisor

Lisa Pelle
QI Consultant

Nancy Perrone
QI Consultant

Chelsea Reeves
*Magnolia Project Outreach
Specialist*

Gwen Thompson
*Administrative Assistant
Body & Soul Health Initiative*

Lindsay Michaels Trouille
Administrative Assistant

Karen Smithson
*Hold Out the Lifeline
Coordinator*

Katie Wehr
AmeriCorp Member

Quelonda Bruer
*Body and Soul Project
Coordinator*

Jenetha Denmark
*Magnolia Project
Outreach Specialist*

Rhonda Brown
*Magnolia Project
Director*

Read Holman
AmeriCorp Member

Janet Boyer
MomCare Advisor

Gwen Houldsworth*
*Community Projects
Coordinator*

Kimberly Campbell
MomCare Advisor

Terri Gibson
MomCare Advisor

Ruth Carter
*Hold Out the Lifeline
and Body & Soul
Administrative
Assistant*

Faye Johnson
*Azalea Project
Coordinator*

Millie King
MomCare Advisor

Madeline Chaney
MomCare Advisor

Laurie Lee, R.N.
*Healthy Start FIMR
Coordinator*

Marsha Davis
*Community
Development
Coordinator*

Our Region

The Northeast Florida Regional [Planning] 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.

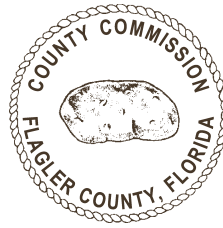
The region is characterized by an abundance of natural resources and a diversity of habitats. Its central feature is the lower St. Johns River. With 140 miles of coastline and five barrier islands boasting some of the state's most magnificent, pristine beaches, the region is truly "Florida's First Coast."

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.

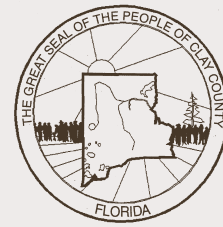
Surrounding counties are more rural in nature, relying on agriculture and service sectors, and a limited industrial base often focused on a single sector. They are, however, increasing in their rate of urbanization and beginning to develop more economic diversity.



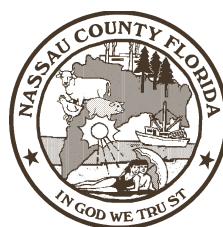
BAKER COUNTY
County Seat: Macclenny
Population: 23,963*
Area (sq. miles): 585
Other Incorporated Communities:
Glen St. Mary
Established: 1861
Named for: James McNair Baker,
Confederate States senator and Florida
judge



FLAGLER COUNTY
County Seat: Bunnell
Population: 69,683*
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



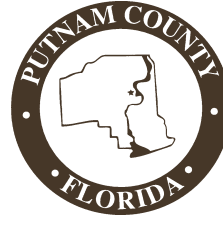
CLAY COUNTY
County Seat: Green Cove Springs
Population: 163,461*
Area (sq. miles): 601
Other Incorporated Communities:
Keystone Heights, Orange Park,
Penney Farms
Established: 1858
Named for: Kentuckian Henry Clay,
Secretary of State under John Quincy
Adams



NASSAU COUNTY
County Seat: Fernandina Beach
Population: 65,016*
Area (sq. miles): 652
Other Incorporated
Communities: Callahan, Hilliard
Established: 1824
Named for: Nassau Sound



DUVAL COUNTY
County Seat: Jacksonville
Population: 840,474*
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: 73,226*
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: 149,336*
Area (sq. miles): 609
Other Incorporated Communities: Hastings, St.
Augustine Beach
Established: 1821
Named for: St. Johns River

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