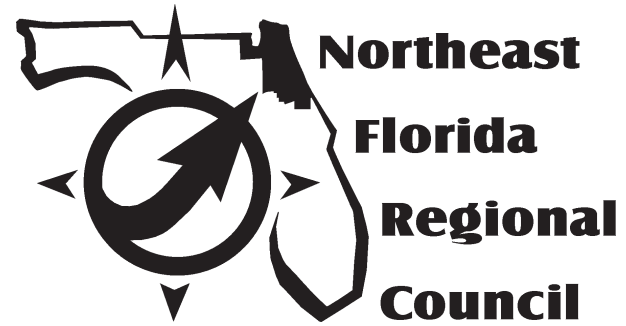


# 2005 Annual Report Northeast Florida Regional Council



6850 Belfort Oaks Place • Jacksonville, Florida 32216  
(904) 279-0880 • Fax (904) 279-0881 • [www.nefrc.org](http://www.nefrc.org)  
Baker • Clay • Duval • Flagler • Nassau • Putnam • St. Johns



*"Bringing communities together to advance the regional agenda."*



# Agency Profile and Mission

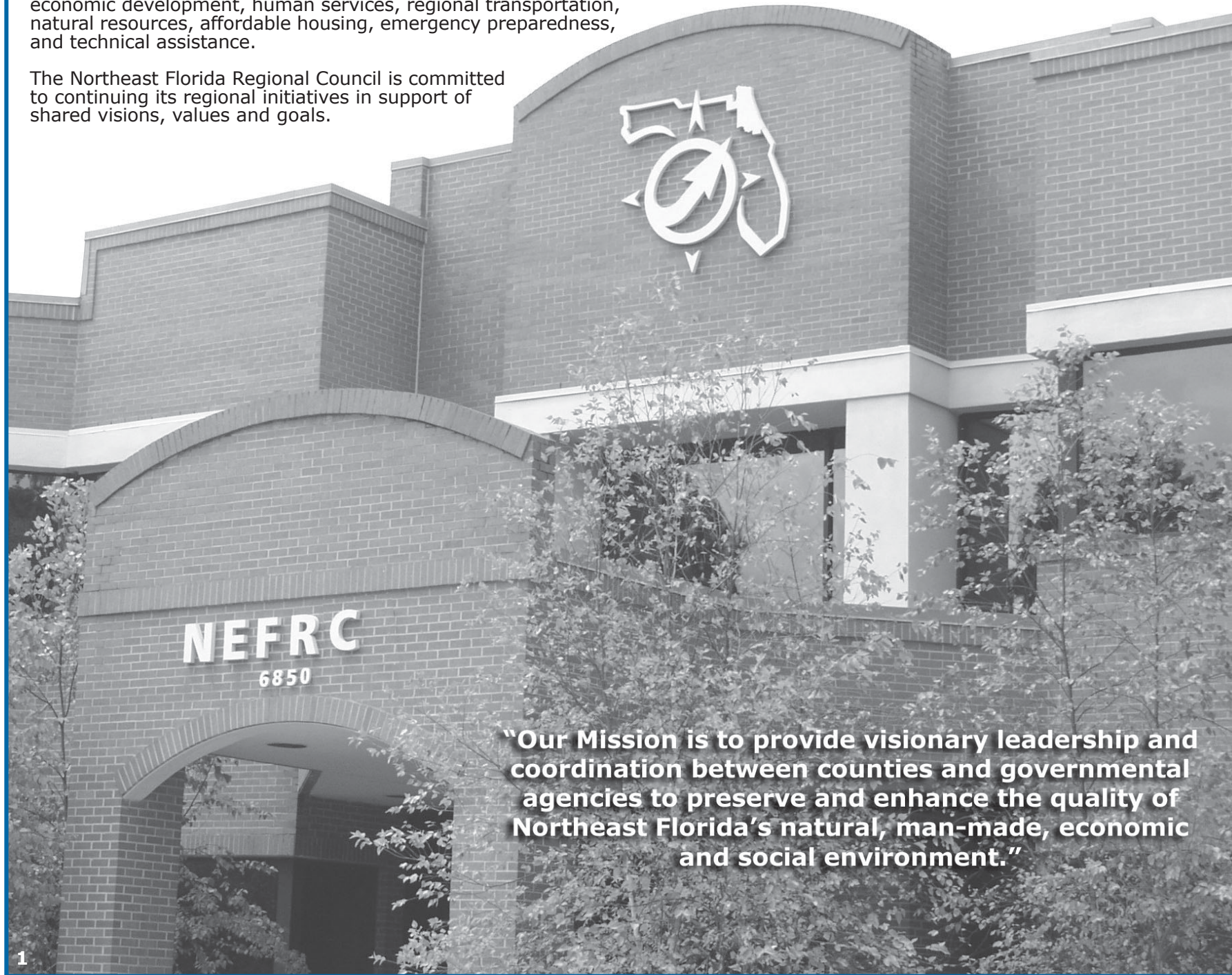
**Who we are. What we do. Why we do it.**

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.”**

# Council Staff

**Brian D. Teeple, AICP**, Chief Executive Officer  
**Mario L. Taylor**, Deputy Chief Executive Officer  
**Barbara Rovedo**, Chief Operating Officer

**Jeffrey Alexander**, Director, Emergency Preparedness  
**Carol Brady**, Director, Human Services; Executive Director, Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition, Inc.  
**Michael Hadden**, Director, Office of Communication and Intergovernmental Relations  
**Ed Lehman**, Director, Planning and Development  
**Steven Mahaven**, Director, Business Development Services; Executive Director, Business Development Corporation of Northeast Florida, Inc.

## Administrative Team

**Peggy Conrad**, Executive Assistant (CEO/DCEO/BDC)  
**Jeanie Palmer**, Administrative Assistant (OCIR/P&D/EP)  
**Shirley Orberg**, Administrative Assistant (ATFS)  
**Mavis Youngblood**, Administrative Assistant (Human Services)

## Administrative, Technical, & Financial Services (ATFS)

**Donna Starling**, Manager, Fiscal Services & Records Management  
**Rachel Carter**, Accountant  
**Barbara Craven**, Agency Clerk

**Walter Bowman**, Manager, Information Services and Data Analysis

**Chris Bono**, Information Systems Specialist  
**Danielle Deverson**, Data Entry Specialist  
**Keith Joiner**, GIS Manager

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

**Brent Marley**, Supervisor, Building Maintenance

## Business Development Services (BDC)

**Steve Hale**, Commercial Credit Underwriter  
**Dana Hammontree**, Portfolio Servicing Specialist

## Emergency Preparedness (EP)

**Edgar Preston**, Administrator, Emergency Preparedness  
**Kathryn Boer**, Regional Planner  
**Heather Golightly**, Coordinator, Local Emergency Planning Committee  
**Tobin Lilly**, Assistant Planner  
**Amanda Loach**, Regional Planner  
**Maurice Postal**, Regional Planner

## Human Services

**Dawn Clarke**, Administrator, Healthy Start  
**Quelonda Bruer**, Body and Soul Project Coordinator  
**Rhonda Brown**, Magnolia Project Director  
**Janet Boyer**, MomCare Advisor  
**Kimberly Campbell**, MomCare Advisor  
**Ruth Carter**, Hold Out the Lifeline/Body and Soul Administrative Assistant  
**Madeline Chaney**, MomCare Advisor

## Human Services (continued)

**Marsha Davis**, Community Development Coordinator  
**Jenetha Denmark**, Magnolia Project Outreach Specialist  
**Gwen Houldsworth**, KidCare Coordinator  
**Terri Gibson**, MomCare Advisor  
**Faye Johnson**, Azalea Project Coordinator  
**Laurie Lee**, R.N., Healthy Start FIMR Abstractor  
**Thelisa Miller**, MomCare Advisor  
**Chelsea Reeves**, Magnolia Project Outreach Specialist  
**Karen Smithson**, Hold Out the Lifeline Coordinator  
**Millie Torres-King**, Azalea Project Adult Case Manager  
**Sabrina Willis**, Azalea Project Youth Intervention Specialist

## Office of Communication and Intergovernmental Relations (OCIR)

**Michael Calhoun**, Graphic Artist  
**Gwenda Crier**, Receptionist  
**Paula McCaffrey**, Receptionist

## Planning & Development (P&D)

**Mike Brown**, Administrator, Planning and Development  
**Debbie Balevre**, Coordinator, Putnam/Nassau County Housing Programs  
**Stephen Jones**, AICP; Manager, Special Projects/Transportation Disadvantaged  
**Sheri Kelsey**, Assistant, Nassau County Housing Programs  
**Audrey Smith**, Regional Planner  
**Amanda Smith**, Senior Regional Planner





# Board of Directors

Leaders in the regional community; making decisions and affecting change



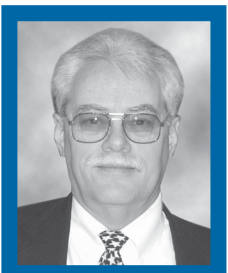
The Honorable Blair Kanbar  
Flagler County  
President



The Honorable Karen Stern  
St. Johns County  
First Vice President



The Honorable Anslee Acree  
Nassau County  
Second Vice President



Mr. Hugh D. Fish, Jr.  
Baker County  
Secretary/Treasurer

All members who served during any portion of the fiscal year (October 1, 2004, through September 30, 2005) and who were appointed by the end of 2005 are listed. Board members as of December 31, 2005, are listed with an asterisk.

## BAKER COUNTY

**Ms. Ginger Barber\***  
County Commission Representative

**Hon. Julie Combs**  
Baker County Commissioner

**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

**Mr. Keith Jones**  
City of Keystone Heights Councilman

**Hon. Glenn Lassiter**  
Clay County Commissioner

**Hon. Harold Rutledge\***  
Clay County Commissioner

**Hon. Carol Vallencourt\***  
Gubernatorial Appointee

## DUVAL COUNTY

**Hon. Elaine Brown\***  
City of Jacksonville Councilwoman

**Ms. Mary Louise Dungey\***  
Gubernatorial Appointee

**Ms. Rea Fleckenstein\***  
Gubernatorial Appointee

**Hon. Jerry Holland\***  
Jacksonville City Councilman

**Hon. Mia Jones**  
Jacksonville City Councilwoman

**Hon. Mitch Kinsey**  
Jacksonville Beach Councilman

**Hon. Paul Parsons**  
City of Atlantic Beach Commissioner

## FLAGLER COUNTY

**Hon. Ralph Carter\*\***  
City of Palm Coast Councilman

**Hon. Blair R. Kanbar\***  
Flagler County Commissioner

**Hon. Joann B. King\***  
City of Bunnell Mayor

**Mr. Robert "Bob" Sgroi\***  
Gubernatorial Appointee

## NASSAU COUNTY

**Hon. Ansley Acree\***  
Nassau County Commissioner

**Hon. Tom Branan\***  
Nassau County Commissioner

**Hon. David Howard**  
Nassau County Commissioner

**Hon. Marianne Marshall**  
Nassau County Commissioner

**Hon. Vickie Samus**  
Nassau County Commissioner

**Mr. Robert "Bob" Spaeth\***  
Gubernatorial Appointee

**Hon. Ken Walker**  
City of Fernandina Beach Commissioner

## PUTNAM COUNTY

**Mr. 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. Albert Holmberg**  
City of St. Augustine Beach Commissioner

**Hon. Bruce Maguire\***  
St. Johns County Commissioner

**Mr. Harry Maxwell\***  
Gubernatorial Appointee

**Hon. Karen Stern\***  
St. Johns County Commissioner

## EX-OFFICIO NON-VOTING MEMBERS

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

**Mr. David Byrd**  
Florida Department of Transportation

**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

**Mr. Mario Taylor**  
Florida Department of Environmental Protection

\* Board Member as of December 31, 2005  
\*\*Deceased

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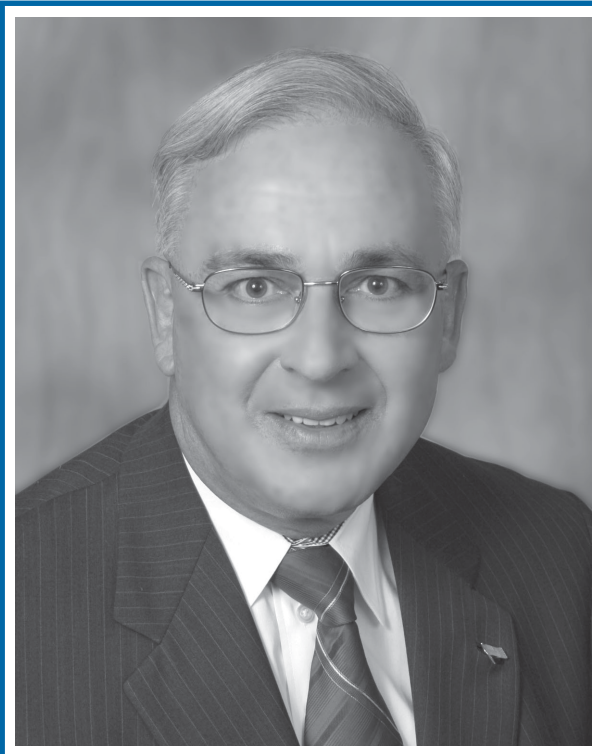
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# Message from our President

The Honorable Blair Kanbar, Flagler County Commissioner



The past year marked an exciting time for Northeast Florida as the concept of "regionalism" hit an all-time high. The Northeast Florida Regional Council was on the cutting edge of the process.

We experienced extraordinary growth within our region. In fact, two of our very own counties received national recognition by the U.S. Census Bureau for unprecedented growth. Flagler County was identified as the number one fastest growing county in the nation, and St. Johns County followed at a close ninth ranking in the nation. The Council enjoyed a partnership with the Census Bureau getting the message out about the development and expansion that is happening within our corner of the world. This recognition clearly showed that our region is ever-expanding in resources, development and progress.

We saw the excitement that hosting Super Bowl XXXIX brought the Northeast Florida region. As we were thrust into the national limelight, which placed us in the company of much larger segments of the nation who had previously hosted the event, we were able to shine with pride.

We also saw the establishment of new affiliates of the Council. The Regional Leadership Academy embraced a mission to build a strong, diverse, regional network of leaders with a shared commitment to collaboration and to connecting our communities to make Northeast Florida a better place to live and work. And the North Florida procure-

ment Association tackled the job of ensuring the public trust by promoting professionalism and ethical practices within the public procurement community through education, certification and networking. Each of these new initiatives reflect favorably on the Northeast Florida region and confirm the importance of the work we are doing and the change we are affecting in our communities.

We were able to reach out beyond our own region to provide assistance to those who were devastated by the effects of hurricanes and natural disasters this season. Another record number of storms in 2005 provided Council staff with the opportunity to meet needs and positively impact lives of victims living far beyond the confines of Northeast Florida. Our efforts on behalf of hurricane victims reached as far as Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana and truly reflected our motto of "bringing communities together."

As I hand off the President's gavel to the very capable Commissioner Karen Stern of St. Johns County, I am confident that the future of the Council continues to look bright under her leadership. I retain a great deal of pride in my association with this organization and look forward to the years of work ahead as we "bring communities together to advance the regional agenda."

Very Sincerely,

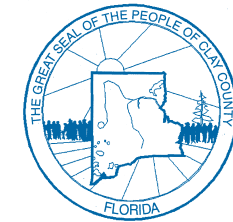
Blair Kanbar  
President, Northeast Florida Regional Council  
2004 - 05

# Our Region

Baker, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Nassau, Putnam and St. Johns Counties



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



**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



**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

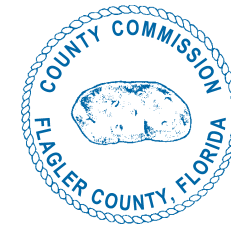
The Northeast Florida Regional [Planning] Council, formed in 1977, serves Regional District 4, and is comprised of seven counties (Baker, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Nassau, Putnam, and St. Johns) and 27 municipalities.

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.

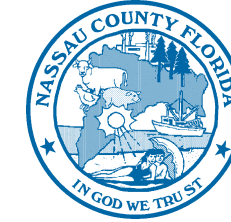
The region is characterized by an abundance of natural resources and a diversity of habitats. Its central feature is the lower St. Johns River. With 140 miles of coastline and five barrier islands boasting some of the state's most magnificent, pristine beaches, the region is truly "Florida's First Coast."

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.

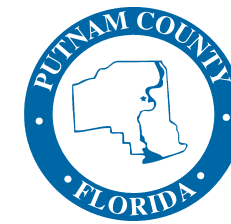
Surrounding counties are more rural in nature, relying on agriculture and service sectors, and a limited industrial base often focused on a single sector. They are, however, increasing in their rate of urbanization and beginning to develop more economic diversity.



**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



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



**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

\*2004 Population figures obtained from the Bureau of Economic and Research (BEER)



# Regional Leadership

## 2005 Elected Officials Reception and Regional Leadership Awards Ceremony



1

For the past five 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. 2005 marked the third 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 this year truly reflected the diversity of programs and projects, the quality of these efforts and the leadership demonstrated by the nominees.



2

Television personality Angela Spears of First Coast News served as the emcee for the event which was also a time to honor and reflect on our country's veterans, as the event was held on Veterans' Day.



3

The awards were presented by the newly elected 2006 Council President Karen Stern. The awards and their recipients were as follows:  
 1) **Regional Award for Excellence in Public Safety**, presented to *Linda Stoughton*.  
 2) **Regional Award for Excellence in Economic Development/Tourism**, presented to *Ginger Barber*. 3) **Regional Award for Excellence in Transportation**, presented to *Boyd Thompson and Ride Solutions, Inc.* 4) **Regional Award for Excellence in Education**, presented to *Florida Community College at Jacksonville*; accepted by Emily Smith. 5) **Regional Award for Excellence in Environmental Stewardship**, presented post humously to *MaVynne Betsch*, accepted by Carlton Jones. 6) **Regional Award for Excellence in Affordable Housing**, presented to *Tom Crawford*.  
 7) **Regional Quality of Life Award**, presented to *Dr. Milton Russos and the FCCJ Artist Series*. 8) **Regional Award for Excellence in Planning and Growth Management**, presented to the *Branan Field Master Plan*; accepted by Thad Crowe (left) and Clay County Commissioner, Harold Rutledge.  
**The Harry Waldron Regional Leadership Award**, which remains the anchor of the awards program, was presented to Representative Richard Kravitz, who accepted the award via a pre-recorded video.



4



5



6



7



8



Representative Richard Kravitz (pictured above) accepted his award via a pre-recorded video speech.

# Land Use and Development

## Growth management, community development, quality of life issues

### 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 technological 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 2004-2005 fiscal year. The Council reviewed 84 small scale amendments, 28 transmitted amendments, and 21 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.

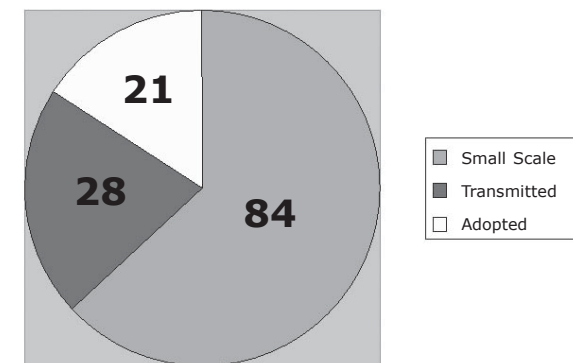


This paved, tree-line road in Baker County shows the rural character the majority of the county currently exhibits.

### Comprehensive plan activities included:

- **Town of Beverly Beach** – assisted the Town with planning staff functions, including the review of comprehensive plan amendments.
- **Baker County** – offered planning staff support to the County for review of plan amendments. Additionally, Staff developed two new future land use categories to the Comprehensive Plan to allow for mixed use developments – Mixed Use District Residential and Mixed Use District Non-Residential.
- **Town of Welaka** – assisted the Town in preparing amendments to its Comprehensive Plan.
- **Putnam County** – assisted the County in preparing an update to the Capital Improvements Element of the Putnam County Comprehensive Plan.
- **Town of Interlachen** – initiated a contract with the Town for the re-write to the Town's Comprehensive Plan.
- **Town of Hilliard** – offered planning support to the Town for the review of comprehensive plan amendments.

### Comprehensive Plan Amendment Reviews 2004 - 2005





## 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:

- Conducted the Baker County Rural Initiatives Study, which will assist the County in development of an alternate future plan.
- Conducted an inventory of Northeast Florida municipality and county public beach access points.
- Conducted an inventory of the public boat ramps in the Northeast Florida region.
- Town of Beverly Beach – Staff was appointed as the Zoning Official for the Town.
- Baker County – assisted County staff with the creation of a development review committee (DRC), a staff level technical review committee for planning and engineering projects; assisted the County in developing a local planning agency (LPA); provided technical assistance to the County staff on matters related to rezoning and the Land Development Regulations; developed a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation regarding impact fees for a joint workshop to the Baker County Board of Commissioners and Baker County School Board; and met with developers on matters pertaining to the creation of DRIs within the County.
- Town of Welaka – provided the Town technical assistance on matters pertaining to the rezoning of land within the jurisdictional boundaries of the Town.

## Developments of Regional Impact

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 2004-2005, the Council issued a recommendation report on the Twin Creeks DRI, which is a proposed multi-use development on 3,050 acres in north-central St. Johns County. The plan approved by the Council consists of 5,000 dwelling units, as well as 2,000,000 square feet of industrial development, 900,000 square feet of retail and office development, and 175 hotel rooms.

In addition to issuing a recommendation report on the Twin Creeks DRI, the Council commenced review on a number of new DRIs in the region. These DRIs include the Ashford Mills DRI in St. Johns County, the SilverLeaf Plantation DRI in St. Johns County, the S.R. 100 Project DRI in the City of Palm Coast, the Ormond Crossings DRI, which is partially located in Flagler County and partially located outside of the region in the City of Ormond Beach, the Saratoga Springs DRI in Clay County, and the Three Rivers DRI in Nassau County.

In addition to review of new DRIs, staff reviewed changes to a number of existing DRIs, including the Fleming Island (Clay County), Summer Beach (Nassau County) (Jacksonville/St. Johns County), Marshall Creek (St. Johns County), and the Consolidated Downtown DRI (Jacksonville).



Above is pictured the "new urbanism concept" which was a component of existing DRI's reviewed by the Council.

## Regional Leadership Academy has building regional network of leaders as primary goal

With a mission to build a strong, diverse, regional network of leaders with a shared commitment to collaboration and to connecting our communities to make Northeast Florida a better place to live and work, the Northeast Florida Regional Leadership Academy (NEFRLA) was established in 2005.

The inaugural class was composed of a mix of leaders representing business (large and small), education, nonprofits, agriculture, government, healthcare, elected officials, and media. All participants are established leaders in their communities. The class included a minimum of three participants from each of the seven Northeast Florida counties: Baker, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Nassau, Putnam and St. Johns.

Program content included 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 also contributed to the focus of the organization.

Curriculum goals included 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 will serve as a network of program alumni for future regional development efforts.

The membership of the inaugural class was by invitation only. A Selection Committee made up of representatives from all seven counties comprised the committee and recruited the applicants.

The Northeast Florida Regional Leadership Academy was developed and piloted by a Task Force composed of representatives from the seven-county Northeast Florida region including: Baker, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Nassau, Putnam, and St. Johns. Council Chief Executive Officer, Brian Teeple, served as Task Force Co-Chair with Leadership Jacksonville's Executive Director Isabelle Owen Spence. Jacksonville Mayor John Peyton served as the inaugural class resource person.

## North Florida Procurement Association is launched



(Left) NFPA Chair, Michael Clapsaddle, presents Council President, Commissioner Blair Kanbar, with a resolution acknowledging the NEFRLA's involvement in the Chartering of the new procurement association.

The North Florida Procurement Association, Chapter of NIGP, Inc. (NFPA) is 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 association is able to provide educational events for members to gain advanced knowledge in public purchasing, including certification seminars. These events will be 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 Chartering Ceremony for the NFPA was held on March 17, 2005. Ronald Watkins, President of NIGP, was on hand to offer congratulatory remarks, to present the Charter and to swear in the officers of the NFPA.



Inaugural class member, Jacksonville City Council President and Regional Council board member, Elaine Brown, leads a discussion about strengths and opportunities in Duval County.



# Regional Happenings

Highlights of regional events of significance within our counties



## City of Jacksonville hosted Super Bowl XXXIX with great success

City leaders and other officials touted Jacksonville's first Super Bowl as a rousing success. Any issues that arose were minor, officials say, relative to the undertaking of bringing the Super Bowl to the smallest metro area ever to host it.

Organizing the nearly endless components to an event of this size requires a lot of work. And yet some – like National Football League Commissioner, Paul Tagliabue – said he could see the event coming back to the First Coast some day. Jacksonville Jaguar owner Wayne Weaver said the city may start the bidding as early as 2009 to have the Super Bowl back in Jacksonville within seven or eight years.

By that time, city leaders hope there will be more hotels to accommodate the guests, though there likely won't be enough to pull it off without the continued help of cruise ships. The novelty of the ships also sets Jacksonville apart from other potential hosts.

According to Jacksonville Mayor John Peyton, the Super Bowl activities seem to have heightened the action of the downtown area. He wants to keep up that momentum through festivals, sports or other special events.

A special part of the Super Bowl festivities included a massive fireworks display. The excitement surrounding the event brought excessive traffic to Jacksonville, which was another matter to be considered when hosting an event of this magnitude. Transportation officials urged people to park in six designated suburban lots and take shuttles to the parties and special events. However, if the Super Bowl ever returns to the River City additional traffic issues will undoubtedly be addressed.

Regional Council staff was involved in the emergency preparedness efforts surrounding the Super Bowl. In the days of planning leading up to the Super Bowl, five staff members from the NEFRC were involved in the evaluation of a table-top exercise which addressed response to potential terrorist-related events.

Super Bowl XXXIX undoubtedly brought significant recognition not only to the City of Jacksonville, but also to the Northeast Florida region as a whole.

## Population explosion in Flagler and St. Johns highlight our region for growth

Flagler County experienced a 10.1 percent population increase among the nation's 3,141 counties last year and was named fastest growing in the nation by the U.S. Census Bureau. Not far behind was St. Johns County in ninth place after growing 6.7 percent. From 2003 to 2004, St. Johns added 9,524 residents, according to census estimates released in 2005.

The information was released at a press conference held on the lawn of the Castillo de San Marcos in St. Augustine on April 14, 2005. Bureau Director, Charles Louis Kincannon, made the ranking announcements while also launching "The American Community Survey" which is a nationwide survey designed to provide communities a fresh look at how they are changing. It will replace the long form in future censuses.

St. Johns Board of County Commissioners Chair and Regional Council board member, the Honorable Bruce Maguire, was on hand to welcome the crowd and deliver remarks about the Bureau's findings. He said it was appropriate for Kincannon to make his announcement in St. Augustine. "This is where it all began," Maguire said. "St. Augustine evolved from the first agricultural community to a rapidly urbanizing community."

Council Executive Director, Brian Teeple, also delivered remarks relating to the current and future growth of the region and indicated that the new America Survey could be used to help fine-tune public policy decisions. Kari Hall Keating, vice president for economic development for the St. Augustine & St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce, said the county's ranking confirmed what everyone knew already: that a "tidal wave of growth is heading our way."

US Census Bureau Director, Charles Louis Kincannon (at podium), addresses a crowd of media and other onlookers at a press conference to announce "The American Community Survey" and highlight the growth of two Northeast Florida counties. He was joined by (background, left to right:) Kari Hall Keating, Brian Teeple and Commissioner Bruce Maguire.



# Human Services

Making a difference in maternal and child healthcare

The Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition, Inc., an affiliate of the Council, is a community-based organization of individuals and agencies committed to improving the health of mothers and babies in Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau and St. Johns Counties. The coalition was created in 1992 as part of the statewide Healthy Start initiative. It is responsible for the planning, funding and oversight of maternal and child health services.

## Healthy Start serves 8,000 families in 2005

Nearly 5,600 pregnant women and 2,700 infants received care coordination and related services in Northeast Florida during 2004-05.

The Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition allocated nearly \$4 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 Northeast Florida and the Bridge—to provide Healthy Start services. Funding was used by the Coalition to promote Healthy Start screening, training for Healthy Start staff, FIMR and quality assurance activities.

### 2004-05 Healthy Start Agencies, Funding & Participants

County/Agency	2004-05 Budget	Participants	
		Pregnant Women	Infants
Baker County Health Department	\$151,152	183	47
Clay County Health Department	\$310,933	379	239
Duval County Health Department	\$2,387,233	4,346*	2,117*
The Bridge of NE FL	\$49,826		
Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies	\$96,260		
Azalea Project (River Region, Gateway)	\$80,000		
Shands Jacksonville	\$166,262		
Nassau County Health Department	\$202,536	354	119
St. Johns County Health Department	\$275,252	317	183
Coalition	\$238,140		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$3.96 million</b>	<b>5,579</b>	<b>2,705</b>

\*Includes all pregnant women and infants served by all Healthy Start agencies in the county.





## Magnolia Project receives additional federal funding to continue improving Jacksonville birth outcomes

The Magnolia Project, a special Healthy Start initiative that addresses the health of women before pregnancy, has been awarded an additional four years of funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) in 2005.

The funding, which totals \$925,000 annually, will enable the Magnolia Project to continue its efforts to improve birth outcomes among African-Americans in Jacksonville. The Project addresses specific risk factors associated with poor pregnancy outcomes, including infections, pregnancy intervals, obesity and nutritional issues, and maternal health (diabetes and hypertension). It is unique in its approach because it begins the intervention *prior to pregnancy*.

The Project provides targeted outreach, screening, case management and risk reduction, health education and well-woman care to about 700 women a year who reside in Northwest Jacksonville. The Magnolia Project is being implemented in an area that accounts for about 40% of the Black infant mortality in the city.

The Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition, Inc. is the project grantee. Project partners include the Duval County Health Department, Shands Hospital Jacksonville and other community agencies. The evaluator for the project is the University of North Florida.

## Service Delivery Plan approved

The 2005-08 Healthy Start Service Delivery Plan was approved this year by the Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition. The three-year plan examines maternal and child health care needs in a five-county area and proposes strategies to address them. It establishes goals and priorities for action. The plan will be used by the Coalition to develop and fund services in the region with a goal of reducing infant mortality and promoting healthy child development. The planning committee included maternal and child health care providers, agency representatives and consumers that met over a nine month period. Development of the plan is a primary responsibility given to Healthy Start Coalitions in state statute.

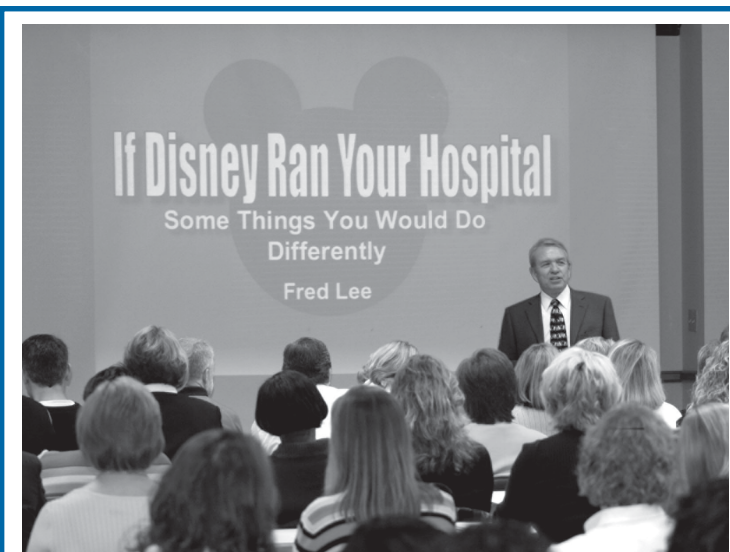
## Health Care Conference focuses on "Disney Approach" to service

A one-day customer service conference featuring Fred Lee, author of *If Disney Ran Your Hospital: 9 1/2 Things You Would Do Differently*, was hosted by the Coalition and its community partners in 2005. The event was part of the three-year Jacksonville Friendly Access<sup>SM</sup> Initiative that worked to improve the delivery of maternal and child health services.

The Conference focused on defining patient satisfaction, customer service, and patient loyalty. In addition, it introduced participants to practical techniques for providing the highest level of customer service to patients and educated participants about patient-centered approaches to providing care as well as numerous other topics relating to improving the quality of health care.

Conference speaker, Fred Lee, has the unusual distinction of having been both a senior vice president of a major medical center and a cast member at Disney University. Disney recruited him because of his expertise in helping hospitals achieve a culture that inspires patient and employee loyalty. At Disney, he helped develop and facilitate Disney's health care version of its 4-day seminar, *Disney's Approach to Quality Service*.

Jacksonville was one of four sites selected nationally to participate in the National Friendly Access<sup>SM</sup> Project. Community partners included the Duval County Health Department, Healthy Start Coalition of Northeast Florida, Shands Jacksonville, and the University of Florida Departments of Obstetrics and Gynecology and Pediatrics.



Author Fred Lee speaks at a conference hosted in part by Council affiliate, Healthy Start, about improving customer service in health care.



# Finance / Value-Added Services

*Ensuring the fiscal responsibility of the Council*

## Operating Revenue Sources 2004-2005 \$6,694,758

(Excludes Direct Client Services of \$2,856,337)

<b>Community Services</b>	\$2,732,794
<b>Emergency Preparedness</b>	\$1,800,092
<b>Planning</b>	\$1,093,571
<b>County Investment</b>	\$509,998
<b>Economic Development</b>	\$463,006
<b>Transportation</b>	\$95,297

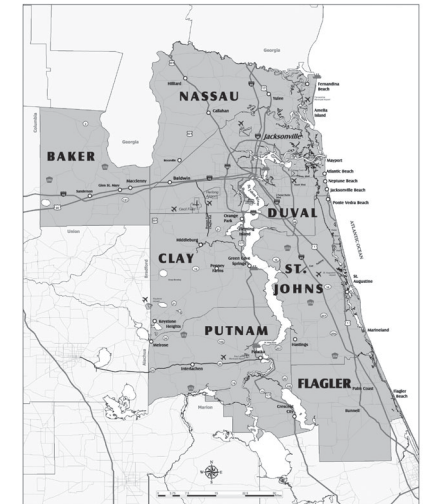
The Council maintained a stable financial position during the year ending September 30, 2005. The firm of Magers and Warner P.A. conducted the annual audit and issued an unqualified opinion.

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

## Return on Investment

Among the tangible benefits reaped by member governments was a \$46/1 return on their county contributions. Following is a breakdown of selected services for the Council's seven-county region:

- Yielded a \$23,650,934 direct/indirect return on investment for contributions of \$509,998 by member counties, a 46/1 ratio.
- Supported economic development with small business loans totaling \$12,427,000 through the Business Development Corporation, adding new jobs and more than \$1,037,048 in new ad valorem taxes.
- Provided \$2,856,337 in contract monies to member county agencies and organizations for maternal/infant health care.
- Approved for funding consideration \$2,965,719,304 in federal/state/local government and private monies for 75 regional programs and projects.



## COUNTIES' RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Baker \$80/1  
Clay \$55/1  
Duval \$30/1  
Flagler \$55/1  
Nassau \$183/1  
Putnam \$40/1  
St. Johns \$65/1

**The Region \$46/1**

## Staff to Local and Regional Governing Boards

*In addition to its own Board, the Council lends its expertise to the following 10 boards or committees by providing staffing and other services.*

- Business Development Corporation of Northeast Florida, Inc.
- 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.
- Wildlife Rescue Coalition of Northeast Florida, Inc.
- Northeast Florida Regional Leadership Academy



# Information Services and Data Analysis

## Data analysis, impact, information

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

### Data Management and Statistical Analysis

In 2005, the Division continued to provide full-service data management for Jacksonville Children's Commission's Healthy Families Jacksonville (HFJ) program. Services include data entry, data administration, document management and statistical reporting. HFJ's customized document management system, along with its associated workflow process, provides computerized scanning of data-entry forms as well as paperless filing.

Document management systems can be customized for anyone needing to reduce, or eliminate, large volumes of paper movement and storage. Human service providers, nonprofits, counties, and municipalities may be especially interested in a new service: "PaperFree - Customized Document Management Systems" from the Northeast Florida Regional Council.

The Council also hosted and supported Web sites that contain databases for the Department of Children and Families Neighborhood Partnership for the Protection of Children and for the Jacksonville Children's Commission's Healthy Families Jacksonville.

In 2005, the Division completed a major statistical study for the Northeast Florida Healthy Start Coalition. Using logistic regression analysis, the study identified statistically significant risk factors that are associated with low birth weights in Northeast Florida. Reducing low birth weights and infant mortality are principal goals of the Healthy Start Coalition. The Coalition used the results to update its five-year service delivery plan.

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. The Council maintains a planning library open to the public.

### 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 were 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 2005, the Council completed two indepth studies using the REMI Model: "The Economic Impact of High Gasoline Prices in Northeast Florida" and "The Economic Impact of the Duval County Health Department."

### Geographic Information Systems

In an effort to utilize all the technology at its disposal, the Council has taken greater steps towards its use of Geographic Information System (GIS). Using this computer software, spatial information (e.g., maps) can be captured, stored, analyzed, displayed and retrieved.

In 2005, the Council became host to the Northeast Florida GIS User Group which serves more than 180 members of industry professionals that gather quarterly to share best practices and discuss matters of interest to the community as they relate to geographic information reporting. The Division also began work on a data collection project for the Florida Department of Transportation, District 2 (DOT). The data will be used by DOT for future transportation planning.

The Division participated in updating the emergency management plans for Baker and St. Johns counties. Maps were created depicting the location of hazardous materials facilities and buffer zones.

The Division also participated with the Department of Emergency Management in the Hurricane Evacuation Study update with the Department of Emergency Management by creating maps depicting critical infrastructure, evacuation routes, storm surge zones and evacuation zones.

## Azalea Project celebrates success of graduates

The Azalea Project, a special Healthy Start initiative to address the needs of substance-affected families, celebrated the success of 54 women and 48 youth who completed the program over the last three years.

The innovative project focused on reducing risk-taking behavior in substance abusing pregnant and parenting women, and increasing protective factors in their children. The project worked to break the cycle of substance use and other at-risk behavior.

Participants successfully addressed more than 90 percent of their identified risk factors during the 18-month intervention which included intensive case management, outreach, education and support. Twenty-eight healthy babies were born to project participants; all but three were born drug-free.

The Coalition, River Region Human Services, Gateway Community Services, the Minority AIDS Coalition, the Bridge and the University of North Florida collaborated in the implementation of the project.

The Azalea Project completed its three-year grant from the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) in 2005. The project will continue its efforts to address substance abuse and other risk taking behavior among women of childbearing age next year with funding from the state Healthy Start program.

### MomCare links pregnant women with care



More than 7,000 pregnant women received health insurance and assistance in obtaining prenatal care in 2005 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 needed services.

### Analysis points to low birthweight risks in Northeast Florida

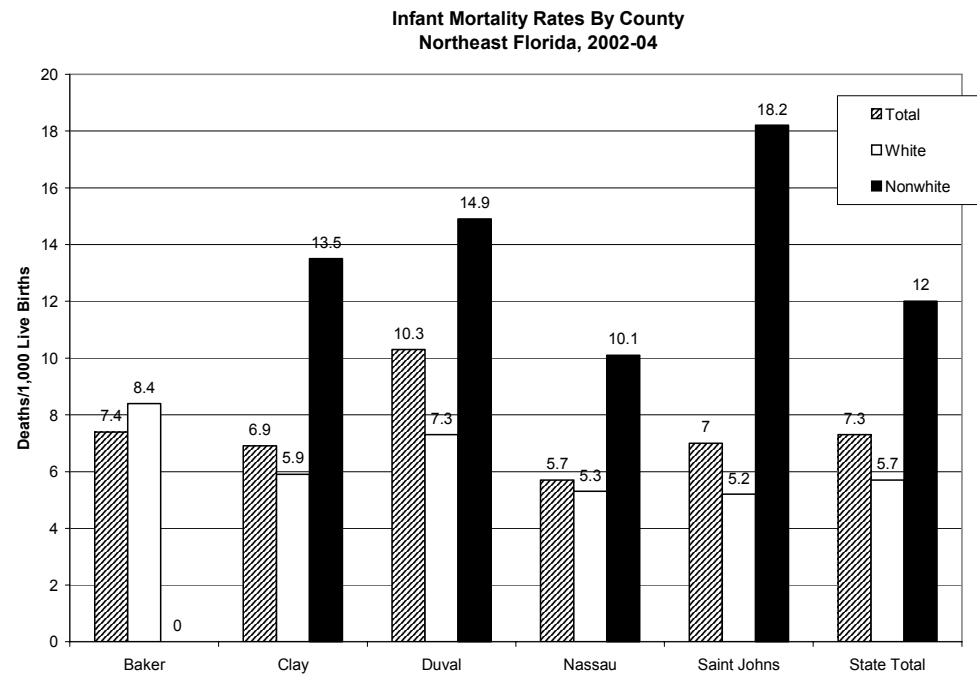
Services for pregnant women were re-focused in Duval County following a special study of factors associated with low birth weight in the region. Conducted by the Northeast Florida Regional Council, the analysis identified hypertension, smoking, previous low birth weight or premature baby, previous infant death, first born, pregnancy interval (too short or long), and mother's age (>35) years as key risk factors. These factors were associated with low birth weight regardless of race. African-American low-weight births were also associated with teen pregnancies; low birth weight among other races was linked to father's involvement and low educational attainment.

Information from the study, conducted as part of the three-year update of the Healthy Start Service Delivery Plan, was used to develop targeted case management services in Duval County. The Duval County Health Department and Shands Jacksonville will focus intensive Healthy Start services on pregnant women with key risk factors identified in the study. At-risk women who do not need intensive services will receive education and support from First Coast Family Center, a new Healthy Start provider.



The Azalea Project's graduating class of 2005.





Source: Florida Department of Health, Florida Vital Statistics, 2002-04

### Health Disparities impact birth outcomes in Northeast Florida

Duval County had an infant mortality rate of 10.3 deaths per 1,000 live births during 2002-04, the highest among Northeast Florida counties. Nassau County had the lowest rate (5.7 deaths per 1,000 live births) during the same period. In the remaining counties, rates were about 7.0 deaths per 1,000 live births, comparable to state rates.

Overall infant death rates in Northeast Florida reflect differences in the demographics of the childbearing population in each county. Most counties in the region experienced significant disparities in birth outcomes based on race during 2002-04.

Nonwhite infant mortality was highest in St. Johns County (18.5 deaths per 1,000 live births); in most other counties nonwhite rates were twice as high as white infant mortality rates. Infant mortality for whites was highest in Baker County (8.4 deaths per 1,000 live births) in 2002-04, although the county had no nonwhite deaths during this period.

The small number of deaths in counties surrounding Duval contributes to significant fluctuations in mortality rates, particularly for racial subgroups, even when three years are combined.

### Council supports efforts of AME Ministerial Alliance

The Northeast Florida Regional Council lent its support in 2005 to the AME Ministerial Alliance, Inc. in its efforts to address health issues in the Black community. The Alliance is implementing two unique grant-funded initiatives through a coalition of churches and faith-based organizations.

*Hold-Out the Lifeline* raises awareness about infant mortality and SIDS by organizing church volunteers who construct special bassinets for needy families. *Body & Soul* organizes health improvement groups in local churches to help participants lose weight and improve their nutrition and physical activity.

The Council acts as the fiscal agent for the Alliance, providing management services, staff and related support to the community-based organization. The Alliance receives funding from the Florida Department of Health, the March of Dimes, and the Federal Office of Minority Health.

### KidCare Outreach supports efforts to insure children in the region

Coalition outreach staff led efforts to sign-up uninsured children in 2005 during open enrollment for the Florida KidCare program. Following action by the state legislature to make enrollment year-round, staff also worked with health care providers and other community partners to enroll children as they returned to school in the fall. More than 11,336 Northeast Florida children were enrolled in the low-cost health insurance program in October 2005.

KidCare Outreach activities were supported by donations made by the Blue Foundation in conjunction with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida and St. Vincent's Medical Center. These contributions allowed KidCare to print 15,000 applications that were distributed to children in the five-county area.

Since there is no longer any state funding available for the printing and distribution of KidCare applications, each region relied on benefactors to assist them in acquiring the applications.



# Environment

Protection of natural resources of regional significance

### Environmental preservation efforts of the Council

#### St. Johns American Heritage River /St. Johns River Alliance

The Council continues to support the efforts of the St. Johns River American Heritage River Initiative. The St. Johns River was officially designated an American Heritage River on July 30, 1998, in recognition of its ecological, historic, economic and cultural significance. The St. Johns River Alliance, a public/private partnership, officially obtained not-for-profit designation during 2004.

During 2005, the long awaited documentary on the St. Johns River "The River Runs North" was completed. This documentary was funded by the local communities within the River Basin and by the St. Johns River Water Management District. This documentary will be shown during numerous fund raising events held throughout the St. Johns River basin over the next six months. These events will help further river awareness, fund restoration projects and further the Alliance Mission of promoting the St. Johns River.



### Southern Passages: the Atlantic Heritage Coast

Southern Passages is a three-state partnership between the public sector and private sector, cultural and heritage advocates, and other stakeholders to stimulate economic development opportunities through increased tourism.

Over the past year this effort has enhanced the ability to communicate information between the various stakeholders. A number of marketing pieces are in the development stages including a tri-state brochure and redesign of the Southern Passages Web site. The three-state coordinating boards have been meeting to develop individual state efforts to support the entire Southern Passages effort. In October, the Southern Passages Board of Directors met for two days in Orange Park to discuss funding opportunities and future projects to further market Southern Passages to visitors and residents.





ent of the State's overall Medicaid reform initiative, the option to include transportation in the suite of services they may provide to their clients. This ability of HMOs to provide transportation services was viewed very negatively throughout the program as being a duplication of services and contrary to the program's goal of providing transportation services to the disadvantaged through a single, statewide coordinated system.

While 2005 brought unwelcome reforms with the Medicaid NET program and saw the statewide TD program struggle with soaring fuel and insurance costs, the picture was not as bleak regarding new funding authorized by the Federal government for transit programs across the nation. The "(S)afe, (A)ccountable, (F)lexible, (E)fficient (T)ransportation (E)quity (A)ct - A (L)egacy for (U)sers" (SAFETEA-LU) was approved by Congress in the summer.

This five year federal omnibus transportation package included several million dollars for a new transit grant program for rural areas in the state, as well as the addition of much needed operations and seed monies for some existing grant programs.



Pictured to the left: a specially modified paratransit vehicle used in rural areas to provide quality transportation.

### Significant Local Activities:

#### Baker County

The local Baker County TD program saw a rocky end of the 2004 fiscal year give way to a much improved and more efficient delivery of services to TD clients by the middle portion of 2005. The Baker County Council on Aging (COA), which serves as the Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC), underwent a significant staff and management reorganization in early 2005 that was facilitated by an outside management review of the agency by the Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR) at the University of South Florida. The reorganization rec-

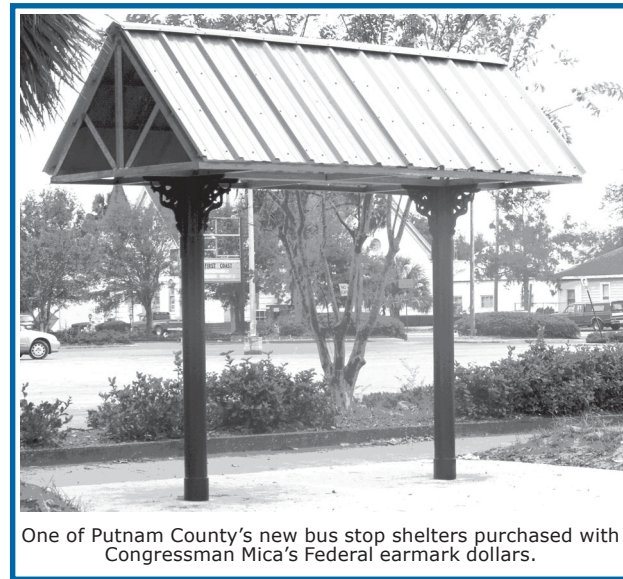
ommended by CUTR has resulted in greater fiscal accountability, improved communication between the agency and its external partners, and enhanced management of the paratransit fleet. Furthermore, the COA's Board of Directors, in coordination with the new management staff, has endeavored to instill a much more positive work environment for the entire agency staff. This new attitude has been reflected in excellent scores the agency has received in its quality assurance and safety monitoring evaluations.

#### St. Johns County

In 2005, the St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners continued the application process for additional federal transit funding for the County based upon the St. Augustine area's formal urbanized designation in the 2000 Census. The acquisition of these newly available funds will be used to augment and eventually expand the "Sunshine Bus" flex-route service that is currently provided by the St. Johns County Council on Aging.

#### Federal earmarks for service

In 2005, the TD programs in Flagler, Putnam and St. Johns Counties once again received a significant helping hand from Congress in the form of several federal "earmarks" for transit-related projects. Congressman John Mica, whose district includes all, or portions of, these three Northeast Florida counties, was instrumental in obtaining over \$1.5 million in federal transportation funds to be utilized across these counties for the purchase of new vehicles, fleet maintenance facilities, bus stop shelters and other service upgrades. These new earmarks bring the total amount of federal earmarks for transit projects in Flagler, Putnam & St. Johns counties over the past three years to nearly \$3.5 million dollars.



One of Putnam County's new bus stop shelters purchased with Congressman Mica's Federal earmark dollars.

# Affordable Housing

## State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) for Nassau and Putnam counties

### State Housing Initiatives Partnership

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 \$5 million to Putnam and nearly \$3 million to Nassau at no direct cost to the counties. These funds, in turn, have leveraged over \$17 million for Putnam and nearly \$13 million for Nassau from other private/public sources.



Putnam County SHIP received \$614,880 during the state SHIP fiscal year 2004-2005 (July-June). The total includes \$513,380 from the Florida Housing Finance Corporation, \$43,500 in program income from the county's Loan Trust Fund, and \$20,000 in recaptured funds.

Projects completed or obligated during this period total 60 units, including 19 home purchases and 31 emergency repairs and 10 rehabilitations. Since its inception in 1992 through June 2004, Putnam SHIP has assisted 686 households.

#### 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, rehabilitation as well as home purchase. Putnam County was the only county in Northeast Florida to receive funding for the HHR Program.



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

Nassau County SHIP received \$862,896 during the SHIP fiscal year 2004-2005 (July-June). The total includes \$503,919 from the Florida Housing Finance Corporation; \$168,264 in program income; \$186,994 in program interest and \$3,719 in carryover from the previous year.

The combined housing programs assisted 22 households - 9 with down payment assistance and 13 with emergency repairs. Since its inception in 1992 through June 2005, Nassau SHIP has assisted 639 households.

Through the Council's Business Development Corporation (BDC), Nassau County provides a mortgage instrument by which low-interest SHIP loans are collected (approximately \$713,885 to date) and recycled into the county's SHIP program, ensuring ongoing funding for home purchases and dwelling unit improvements. BDC closed 9 SHIP loans during its fiscal year (ending June 30, 2005) for a total of \$132,500 bringing its portfolio to 152 loans.

### SHIP 1992 - 2005

#### PUTNAM COUNTY

Total Households assisted: 711  
Total Funding: \$6,552,473  
Leveraged Funds: \$17,132,501

#### NASSAU COUNTY

Total Households assisted: 639  
Total Funding: \$2,727,090  
Leveraged Funds: \$13,306,504



# Economic Development

*"Financing dreams that turn into real business."*

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

As a Certified Development Company and as required by the Small Business Administration, Business Development Corporation provides 504 loan services to businesses located in or locating into the State of Florida.

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

The 504 program remains the SBA's only national economic development program. Through this program, the BDC offers commercial and industrial property financing to small businesses for building or land purchase, machinery or equipment, new construction, renovations and site improvements.

During the 2004-2005 fiscal year, the Council continued efforts to obtain a designation for the Northeast Florida region as an Economic Development District "EDD" through its Economic Development Committee.

The Council, with economic development interests throughout the region, completed the 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 the issuance of the EDD classification, the Council through the Economic Development Committee, will be providing technical assistance to the region's local governments and fostering additional cooperation among communities located throughout the region. The Council will also supply the ability for its member local governments to obtain Economic Development Administration originated grants.

Since its inception in August 1994, BDC has provided value added services to the businesses located within the member counties of the Council. This is done



through the job creation and job retention generated by the Small Business Administration's 504 loan program. BDC's efforts have resulted in 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. As of fiscal year end (September 30, 2005) BDC had received SBA approval for 175 loans with project costs in excess of \$251 million. In addition, more than 3,700 jobs were either created and/or retained in the financing of these projects.

At the end of the 2005 fiscal year, BDC serviced for the SBA a total of 81 active loans. This amount includes only those loans which have been closed, funded and are currently paying under the terms of the SBA's approval.

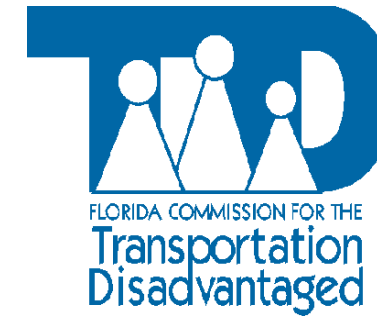
The corporation has an additional 22 SBA 504 loan approvals totaling \$24,005,062 either under construction or on an interim loan basis awaiting 504 loan closing. Job retention/creation for the 22 loans totaled 528 positions.



The BDC provides funding for a wide variety of small businesses. Pictured left: a yacht in the construction process by one of the BDC's 504 loan borrowers, Newcastle Marine in Flagler County.

# Transportation Planning

*Efficient, well-planned regional transportation*



The Council serves as the Designated Official Planning Agency for the Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) Program in six of the region's seven counties—Baker, Clay,

Flagler, Nassau, Putnam, and St. Johns—where it is estimated more than 40,000 "transportation disadvantaged" persons reside.

The statewide program provides transportation services to individuals "who because of physical or mental disability, income status, or age are unable to transport themselves or to purchase transportation and are therefore, dependent upon others to obtain access to health care, employment, education, shopping, social activities, or other life-sustaining activities." (Ch. 427, F.S.)

As the official planning agency, the Council is responsible for: 1) recommending local community transportation coordinators to the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged, which oversees the statewide program; 2) performing annual quality assurance evaluations of the local coordinators, and; 3) appointing and staffing local coordinating boards who monitor and provide advice and direction to the local coordinators on a quarterly basis.

Programmatic highlights of TD's 2004-2005 program year included:

## Awards and recognition

In late 2005, the Putnam County TD program received regional acclaim when Mr. Boyd Thompson, Director of Operations at Ride Solution Incorporated, was selected as the recipient of the Council's 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Regional Leadership Award for Excellence in Transportation. Mr. Thompson was selected for his ongoing work in expanding and coordinating transit opportunities in Putnam and neighboring counties, as well as his years of statewide leadership within the TD program. Mr. Thompson's tireless efforts have resulted in the Putnam County TD program being the first rural county in the region to utilize automated vehicle location and mobile data terminal technology, as well as integrating paratransit transportation services into a flex-route format. He was also instrumental in the completion of a one-of-a-kind service development project to convert a standard duty city bus into a

smaller, more flexible, heavy-duty paratransit vehicle capable of enduring the harsh conditions of the County's many miles of unpaved roads.

Recognition of TD program accomplishments wasn't limited to just the regional level in 2005. This year, the region's Transportation Disadvantaged programs were once again recognized at the statewide level for their outstanding service to the residents of Northeast Florida. In July of 2005, Ms. Wanda Boggs, the lead scheduler from Ride Solution Incorporated in Putnam County, received the "Dispatcher/Scheduler of the Year" award from the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged. Ms. Boggs was selected from over a half-dozen nominees from around the state for her excellent customer service skills, compassion for riders and outstanding work ethic within the organization. Also in 2005, the Northeast Florida Regional Council was selected once again as a nominee for the Commission's statewide "Designated Planning Agency of the Year" award for its technical assistance to Putnam County and its continuing efforts to improve the delivery of TD services throughout the region as a whole. The 2005 Dispatcher/Scheduler of the Year award and Council's award nomination marked the seventh straight year that the rural TD programs in the region received statewide recognition for the exceptional quality of services provided to Transportation Disadvantaged citizens in Northeast Florida.

## Statewide program changes

The 2005 program year saw a continuation of the statewide reform to the Agency for Health Care Administration's (AHCA) Medicaid Non-Emergency Transportation (NET) program that began in 2004. In late 2005, AHCA renewed an existing contract with the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) to provide NET services around the state, but instituted an approximately 7.7% reduction in the overall funding for the contract. Concurrently, AHCA also allowed for newly-formed Medicaid Health Management Organizations (HMOs), a key ingredi-



Boyd Thompson accepts the award for Regional Excellence in Transportation at the 2005 Northeast Florida Regional Leadership Awards Ceremony.



## Local Emergency Planning Committee

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

The District IV LEPC serves as a public repository for annual inventory reports submitted by facilities in the region that store hazardous materials and chemicals on site, and assists companies in complying with the law.



LEPC Chairman, Ray Ashton, reviews an agenda immediately preceding an LEPC Quarterly meeting held in the Regional Council Board Room.

## Hazardous materials training conference



The District IV Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) held its "2005 Hazardous Material Training Conference" on May 18 & 19, 2005. This event took place at the North Campus of the First Coast Technical Institute (FCTI) in St. Augustine. FCTI's North Campus is dedicated to programs for firefighters and EMS personnel.

This was a multiple-course conference attracting over 75 first responders, HAZMAT technicians, corporate safety officials and interested citizens from within and outside the region. Classes consisted of meters and monitoring, railcars and chlorine, HAZMAT awareness, risk analysis, CAMEO™ software and other specific technical courses.

## Regional Domestic Security Task Force Tabletop exercises

In a major catastrophe, it is possible that State and Federal resources may not reach an impacted community for up to 72 hours. Seeking to address this issue, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) and Florida Department of Emergency Management (FDEM) began to implement the Multi-Agency Coordination (MAC) concept in Florida in 2005.

MAC is simply a group of response agencies and/or jurisdictions that come together during a disaster to make decisions regarding the prioritizing of incidents, and the sharing and use of critical resources. Within the State, the seven Regional Domestic Security Task Forces (RDSTF) will become MAC Groups in response to a major disaster. These MAC Groups will coordinate the request and deployment of their region's resources, until State and Federal resources can arrive.

The Northeast Florida Regional Council has been tasked to coordinate the Statewide RDSTF exercises, which will focus on implementation of the MAC concept. In 2005, the seven RDSTF Regions participated in tabletop exercises. In each tabletop, selected RDSTF members discussed the issues and scenarios involved in the execution and performance of the MAC concept in their region. NEFRC staff developed the standard exercise to be used around the State. Council staff also facilitated the sessions in each Region, along with FDLE and local staff.

## Highlights 2004-2005

In 10 Florida counties, the Business Development Corporation provided 504 loan approvals totaling \$14,968,000 for 18 companies with project costs totaling \$46,346,000. Twenty-nine of the 504 loans were loans in construction or "bridge loans." Projects amounts totaled \$54,735,000 of which the 504 loan portion totaled \$21,654,000.

BDC services 81 active 504 loans. The original 504 loan amounts total \$36,626,000 with outstanding loans totaling \$32,923,705.

**BDC Servicing Portfolio consists of 81 loans that are serviced on a monthly basis with a total loan amount of \$35,529,000 and an actual outstanding loan amount of \$31,864,465.86.**

**The number of loans approved by county between October 1, 2004, through September 31, 2005, was 18 with a total net debenture amount of \$14,968,000 and total project amount of \$46,344,500.**

### BDC Servicing Portfolio (18 loans)

*Loans closed, funded and being serviced as of September 30, 2005*

County	# of Projects	Total Project	Property Taxes Estimate
Alachua	1	\$810,000	\$1,965,000
Broward	1	\$547,000	\$3,450,000
Clay	2	\$2,142,000	\$9,369,000
Duval	5	\$4,438,000	\$11,109,000
Flagler	1	\$825,000	\$2,000,000
Hillsborough	1	\$504,000	\$1,090,000
Nassau	2	\$2,713,000	\$8,182,000
Orange	2	\$386,000	\$1,071,000
Pinellas	1	\$294,000	\$810,000
St. Johns	2	\$2,309,000	\$7,298,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>\$14,968,000</b>	<b>\$46,344,500</b>

## Disaster Lending Program

In light of the devastating hurricane seasons that have plagued the state for two years consecutively, Floridians have become especially mindful of necessary precautions to secure their homes and property.

Now the Business Development Corporation is involved in providing assistance to those affected by naturally occurring disasters. In the event of a storm-related destruction, the BDC has participated in a unique disaster bridge loan program aimed primarily at residents in Putnam County.

Last year with money provided by Florida's Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic Development (OTTED) the BDC underwrote over \$100,000 in funds provided for clients affected by Hurricane Jeanne.

With Small Business Administration (SBA) disaster lending expertise through staff members, the BDC is able to participate with the State to underwrite funds, and advise on SBA disaster lending to current clients and any prospective clients needing funding and assistance through the application process.

The SBA will again offer assistance to home owners and renters to repair or replace disaster damages to real estate or personal property owned by each victim.





# Emergency Preparedness

*All-Hazards Planning; keeping our communities safe*

## Emergency Management Exercises

Within the first 10 months of 2005, the Emergency Preparedness Programs section of the Regional Council completed the planning and implementation of 20 exercises - an average of one exercise every two weeks.

### The exercises include:

- 1 "Super Bowl" EOC Functional exercise
- 1 Nassau County **national** exercise "Dingo King"
- 1 Nassau County Tabletop exercise
- 1 Duval Swat/HAZMAT/Fire exercise "August Drive"
- 1 St. Johns County Hospital/City LE/HAZMAT/EOC exercise
- 1 Baker County Hospital/Fire/Local Emergency Management
- 1 Putnam County Hospital/Swat/Electric Company/Fire exercise
- 7 RDSTF tabletop regional exercises held statewide
- 3 RDSTF functional regional exercises held statewide
- 1 Health Department Super Bowl Exercise
- 1 State EOC tabletop exercise
- 1 RDSTF state leadership exercise

Emergency Preparedness has always been a priority of the Northeast Florida Regional Council. The catastrophic events of September 11, 2001, and the devastating hurricane seasons of 2004 and 2005 have further cemented the utter necessity of an intensified focus on hazards planning for disasters and emergencies that affect the Northeast Florida region.

## Emergency Preparedness for Super Bowl XXXIX



The excitement that accompanied the Super Bowl's presence in Jacksonville in 2005 also brought with it a much heightened sensitivity to the possible vulnerabilities of the city and therefore an intensified focus on emergency preparedness.

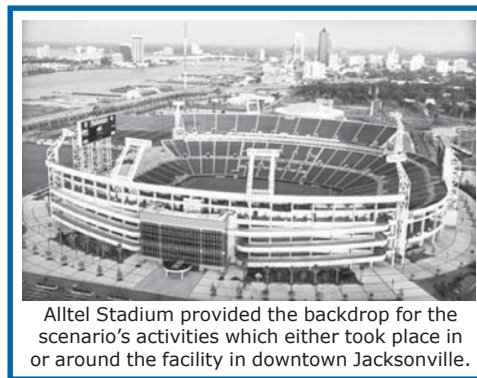
Prior to the "big event", the Super Bowl Exercise - Plan, Operations, Teamwork was held on Thursday, January 13, 2005, at the Event Operations Center

for the City of Jacksonville. The focus of the exercise was the preparedness of security and response forces planned for Super Bowl XXXIX which was held February 6.

The scenario's activities took place in and within sight of the Alltel Stadium in downtown Jacksonville. The overall scenario was broken down into three activities, each taking place on game day and progressing in security from day-to-day response to special response to terrorist event response.

Twenty-two agencies, ranging from the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office to the Florida Highway Patrol to the St. Johns County Fire Liaison were invited and participated in the exercise.

Five evaluators from the Northeast Florida Regional Council were briefed on the exercise design, objectives and evaluation techniques prior to the exercise and participated in the exercise observation on January 13. The five evaluators conducted a debriefing on the morning following the exercise to capture lessons learned.

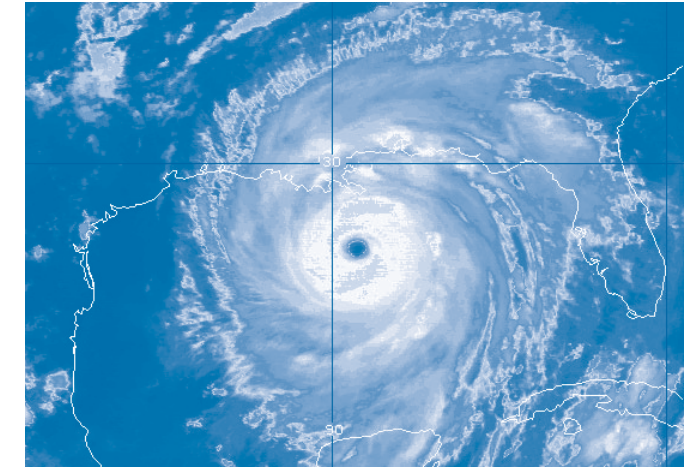


Alltel Stadium provided the backdrop for the scenario's activities which either took place in or around the facility in downtown Jacksonville.

The objective of familiarizing participants with the function and role each would play during the Super Bowl was accomplished. Recommendations made from the analysis of the exercise were immediately put into place for effective implementation during the actual Super Bowl activities.

## Disaster relief assistance far beyond our region

The 2005 hurricane season was the busiest on record and extended the active hurricane cycle that began in 1995—a trend likely to continue for years to come. The season included 26 named storms, including 13 hurricanes in which seven were major (Category 3 or higher). This season shattered records that have stood for decades. Arguably, it was the most devastating season the country has experienced in recent times.



And while the storms of the season didn't have as strong a direct impact on the Northeast Florida region as they have in the past, the devastation still created opportunities for action on the part of Council staff. In particular regarding Hurricane Katrina which was the 11th named tropical storm, fourth hurricane, third major hurricane, and first Category 5 hurricane of the season. It first made landfall in Florida as a Category 1, then again along the Central Gulf Coast near New Orleans, Louisiana, as a Category 4 storm. Its storm surge soon breached the levee system that protected New Orleans from Lake Pontchartrain. Most of the city was subsequently flooded by the lake's waters. This and other major damage to the coastal regions of Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama made Katrina the most destructive and costliest natural disaster in the history of the United States.

Council staff was deployed by the Florida Division of Emergency Management to the South Florida Fairgrounds in Palm Beach to lend support to a Logistical Staging Area set up by providing resources to anticipated victims of Hurricane Katrina in South Florida. This deployment involved working 18-hour days with approximately 150 other relief workers to supply food, water and ice to several points of distribution. All six of the Council's emergency preparedness staff, along with selected regional staff from planning councils around the state, are now trained and ready to serve as "surge staff" to supplement regular emergency management personnel in our seven counties, Tallahassee and along the Gulf.

Council Director of Emergency Preparedness Programs, Jeffrey Alexander, departed from Jacksonville the first week of September on what he referred to as a "life saving mission." His trip, which lasted nearly 10 days, was part of an assignment of the North Florida Incident Management Team (IMT). In this role, his mission was specifically to resupply and reinforce the team emergency management staffers in Harrison County, Mississippi.

In addition to meeting the basic needs of food, water and gasoline, the IMT accomplished the major feat of setting up six management structures which became the temporary municipal structure for the town of Pass Christian, Mississippi. Within 72 hours, the IMT was able to reestablish the critical functions of communication and computer resources so that the city could begin operations as soon as possible.

The Northeast Florida Regional Council is committed to "bringing communities together" and the devastation of the 2005 hurricane season provided a format to put those words into action. Through the skill and experience of its emergency preparedness staff, the Council is able to leverage the quality work it is doing in Northeast Florida and witness the far-reaching effects of those efforts far beyond the impact of its region.