NEWSLETTER

November 2026 - Bringing Communities Together Since 1977

Welcoming New Council Leadership



The Northeast Florida Regional Council welcomes Flagler County Commissioner Andy Dance as its 2026–2027 Board President. The Council handed Commissioner Dance the gavel during its October Board of Directors meeting at the Nexus Center in Bunnell.

In his remarks, President Dance expressed gratitude for the opportunity to serve and emphasized the value of regional collaboration. As Northeast Florida continues to grow and evolve, regional partnerships help local governments address shared challenges, learn from one another, and identify solutions that benefit communities across county lines.

NEFRC looks forward to working with President Dance, the Board of Directors, and regional partners to advance the Council's mission of supporting Northeast Florida through planning, technical assistance, and collaborative problem-solving.







Regional Leadership Academy Celebrates 2026 Graduates



The Northeast Florida Regional Council congratulates the 2026 Regional Leadership Academy (RLA) graduates on completing this year's program. This program deepens participants' understanding of Northeast Florida and the regional issues that connect their communities. Throughout the Academy, participants explored the opportunities and challenges shaping the Region while building relationships with fellow leaders from across its seven counties.

RLA recognizes that leadership is already at work throughout our communities. The Academy builds on the experience and commitment participants bring to their roles, helping them see how their decisions, expertise, and community contributions can have an impact beyond their own organizations and local boundaries. By connecting leaders across counties, industries, and areas of expertise, RLA encourages a broader regional perspective and creates opportunities for continued collaboration.

As we celebrate the Class of 2026 and the contributions these leaders make to Northeast Florida, we also look ahead to the next class. Take an opportunity to recognize a regional leader who would benefit from a deeper understanding of the Region and the connections that help it thrive. We encourage you to nominate individuals committed to their communities and ready to explore how their leadership can shape Northeast Florida's future.

Now Accepting Applications For The Next Class Of Regional Leaders

Save the Date: 2027 Elected Officials Luncheon & Regional Awards of Excellence



Please save the date for the Annual Northeast Florida Elected Officials Luncheon, with the Presentation of Regional Awards of Excellence, on **Thursday, January 7, 2027**.

This year's luncheon will be especially meaningful as the Northeast Florida Regional Council prepares to celebrate 50 years of service to the Region in 2027. The event will recognize the outstanding leadership, projects, and partnerships making a difference throughout Northeast Florida and reflect the importance of working together to support strong, thriving communities.

As we prepare for this milestone year, we invite the public to help recognize the people and initiatives advancing our region. Nominations for the Regional Awards of Excellence close early November 2026.

We encourage you to nominate deserving leaders, projects, and partnerships whose work makes a lasting contribution to Northeast Florida. Please see the official Save the Date for event details. A formal invitation with registration information will be shared soon.



Submit Your Nominations

NEFRC 2025 - 2026 Annual Report
A Year of Regional Progress



Throughout the past fiscal year, the Northeast Florida Regional Council continued working alongside local governments, regional partners, and community stakeholders to address shared challenges and advance solutions that benefit the Region. Through planning support, technical assistance, and regional collaboration, NEFRC helps communities make informed decisions, prepare for future needs, and strengthen quality of life across Northeast Florida.

From Community Visioning and economic development to regional preparedness, environmental initiatives, transportation access, and military installation readiness, the Council's work spans a wide range of priorities that shape the Region's future. Programs such as the Resilient First Coast Collaborative, Healthcare Coalition, Regional Leadership Academy, and Brownfields redevelopment efforts demonstrate how bringing people, resources, and expertise together can turn shared priorities into meaningful progress.

Explore the FY 2025–2026 Annual Report to learn more about the projects, partnerships, and accomplishments supporting NEFRC's seven counties and 25 municipalities.

Read The Full Report

Program Highlight: Community Development

Supporting Northeast Florida's Shrimping Industry

Building on its commitment to regional economic development, the Northeast Florida Regional Council is advancing a two-year initiative to support Northeast Florida's wild-caught shrimping industry through a $100,000 U.S. Department of Agriculture Local Food Promotion Program grant. Building on the earlier Northeast Florida Shrimping Market Study, the project aims to increase awareness of locally harvested shrimp, expand market opportunities, and support the long-term sustainability of this historic regional industry.

NEFRC is currently working with shrimpers, seafood buyers, restaurants, and other industry stakeholders to develop a comprehensive branding and marketing plan grounded in the needs and experiences of those who bring local shrimp from the water to the table. Recent discussions have highlighted opportunities to strengthen connections between shrimpers and restaurants, improve consumer awareness of locally caught shrimp, and make local products easier to identify and access.

As the project moves forward, this collaborative approach will help shape strategies to better communicate the value of Northeast Florida shrimp and connect local producers with new market opportunities. By bringing industry perspectives together and building on the Region's longstanding shrimping heritage, NEFRC is working to support local businesses, strengthen regional economic opportunities, and help sustain an important part of Northeast Florida's identity.







Program Highlight: Community Development

APA First Coast 2026 Legislative Roundtable



NEFRC's Community Development Team supported and hosted the APA First Coast 2026 Legislative Roundtable with Planning Directors and Local Officials. The session brought together legislative experts, local planning directors, building officials, city attorneys, and development stakeholders to discuss issues shaping land development and local planning across Northeast Florida.

Participants reviewed key 2026 legislative updates related to building and development administration, land use, and the Live Local Act. The discussion also provided space for local governments and development stakeholders to share challenges, compare perspectives, and explore potential solutions.

The roundtable reinforced the value of bringing different perspectives to the same table. While each community faces its own planning and development considerations, sharing information and discussing practical approaches can help local leaders make informed decisions and navigate a changing planning landscape.





