

Resolution

Northeast Florida Regional Council

2021-09

Recognizing the Ongoing Work of the Northeast Florida Regional Council as a Regional Resilience Collaborative

WHEREAS, Northeast Florida's land area covers 4,428 square miles with a population of more than 1.5 million residents as of 2021; and

WHEREAS, the Region is characterized by an abundance of natural resources with 140 miles of coastline and five barrier islands boasting some of the State's most magnificent, pristine beaches; and

WHEREAS, the Region's natural geography includes the Atlantic Ocean, Intracoastal Waterway, St. Johns River, and hundreds of tributaries; and

WHEREAS, the Counties of Baker, Nassau, Duval, St. Johns, Clay, Putnam, and Flagler of the Northeast Florida region, and the municipalities within, have faced extraordinary challenges because of climate change, coastal flooding, sea level rise, and economic disruptions; and

WHEREAS, the Northeast Florida Regional Council (NEFRC) has supported local and regional resiliency efforts across the Region related to adaptation planning, mitigation, and economic resilience, and provided technical assistance to local governments on resiliency-related matters since 2012; and

WHEREAS, the Northeast Florida Regional Action Plan on Sea Level Rise was published in 2013 to guide local and regional decision-making related to community resiliency; and

WHEREAS, Northeast Florida's regional approach to resiliency has been guided by the Public/Private Regional Resiliency (P2R2) Committee, which has utilized a business-oriented framework to shape strategies; and

WHEREAS, the P2R2 Committee convened between 2014 and 2019 with the guiding principle that resiliency is good business, and with the goal of having community and regional discussions regarding how to build, where to build and where not to build back; and

WHEREAS, the Northeast Florida Regional Council Board of Directors extends its appreciation to volunteer members of the P2R2 Committee for their dedication and service to advancing regional resiliency priorities over the past several years; and

WHEREAS, the Northeast Florida Region has become increasingly more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, including: sea level rise, nuisance flooding, and storm surge, which threaten community priorities, human well-being, and natural resources; and

WHEREAS, recent extreme weather events like Hurricanes Matthew and Irma have resulted in increasing stresses to the Region's economy, security, health, environment, and built infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, recent changes in global and national markets, like the COVID-19 pandemic, have highlighted the importance of economic resilience; and

WHEREAS, local governments and partners across the Region have become increasingly more invested in resiliency, necessitating the urge for a comprehensive regional resilience collaborative to become formalized; and

WHEREAS, the Governor of Florida signed historic legislation into law in May 2021 focused on addressing resiliency and sea level rise challenges across the State; and

WHEREAS, recent statewide legislation has produced new funding opportunities within the Florida Department of Environmental Protection that will assist regional resilience entities to plan and implement resiliency-related projects and priorities; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Federal Government has established and implemented new streams of funding opportunities to advance local and regional priorities related to coastal and economic resilience; and

WHEREAS, additional regional approaches are critical to building on local efforts and increase adaptive capacities to improve resilience; and

WHEREAS, to support efforts that continue to mitigate the increasing impacts of hazards and their complexity in the Region, we must elevate ways to work cooperatively across disciplines and jurisdictions to identify issues, using existing resiliency research with additional technical expertise to identify ways to improve resiliency; and

WHEREAS, the ongoing efforts by the Northeast Florida Regional Council, are recognized as work of a regional resilience collaborative; and

WHEREAS, work will continue as *Resilient First Coast*, an initiative of the NEFRC, to coordinate climate adaptation, mitigation, and economic resilience activities across county lines, to advance

local and regional responses to and preparations for economic and social disruptions projected to result from climate change and global events, and to provide state and local agencies with technical assistance and support in addressing these effects; and

WHEREAS, the collaborative is shaped around five respective domains: (1) coastal resilience; (2) economic resilience; (3) healthcare resilience; (4) military installation resilience; and (5) inland flooding resilience; and

WHEREAS, this collaborative approach will position the Region, jurisdictions, and agencies to plan better for resilience, meet state and federal regulations and guidelines, and enable greater access to long-term financing sources;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Northeast Florida Regional Council Board of Directors that:


Section 1. The ongoing resiliency work of the Northeast Florida Regional Council be recognized as *Resilient First Coast* moving forward, a regional resilience collaborative of Northeast Florida.

Section 2. *Resilient First Coast* will begin work convening stakeholders across the Region, including local governments, military partners, the healthcare sector, nonprofits, and other key partners to determine the path forward in Northeast Florida.

Section 3. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon adoption hereof.

Unanimously adopted by the Northeast Florida Regional Council in a regular meeting assembled in the City of Jacksonville, on the fifth day of August 2021.





Sean Lynch
President



Elizabeth Payne
CEO