

# Southeast Florida Regional Partnership



U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development  
Sustainable Communities Planning Grant Program

## “Regional Vision and Blueprint for Economic Prosperity”

Submitted By the South Florida Regional Planning Council  
on behalf of the

**Southeast Florida  
Regional Partnership**

Indian River - St. Lucie - Martin  
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## **Abstract and Work Plan Summary**

### **Southeast Florida Regional Vision and Blueprint for Economic Development**

Southeast Florida is home to 6.2 million people (one-third of Florida's total population) that, combined, create the fifth largest metropolitan region in the country. It is also a region in rapid transition. Regional issues that go beyond traditional local boundaries, such as international migration, global trade, and tourism, including expansion of the Panama Canal, Everglades restoration, transportation, water management, the housing and unemployment crisis, and climate change are reshaping the region. How we address those issues could very well determine Southeast Florida's long-term success.

With substantial in-kind and leveraged support from the Southeast Florida Regional Partnership (Partnership), and funding pursuant to U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program, the Partnership will develop Southeast Florida's Regional Vision and Blueprint for Economic Prosperity to ensure that planning and investment decisions yield a more prosperous, inclusive, and sustainable region. The process will be the first comprehensive effort to develop a regional plan that spans the existing jurisdictions of two regional planning councils, multiple state agency sub-districts, 6 metropolitan and transportation planning organizations, numerous special districts, seven counties, over 100 municipalities, and a diverse mix of business, social and ethnic organizations.

Because Southeast Florida is on the cutting edge of global issues such as international immigration, trade, communication, and climate change, regional solutions developed in Southeast Florida will provide a model for other regions. As those issues have become dominant, traditional regional planning and development processes will have to recreate themselves in order to stay competitive for domestic public funding, reflect demographic changes, and provide the framework for successful private investment and the creation of jobs. The regions that successfully manage that transition will create the models for future sustainable, regional planning.

Southeast Florida is well-positioned to create such a model. The Sustainable Communities Initiative provides Southeast Florida with a unique and exceptionally well-timed opportunity to build on its local and regional plans, capitalize on its past successes, learn from its past failures, and forge a real regional alliance for the future. Funds will be used to:

- Develop and begin implementation of the long-term Regional Vision and Blueprint for Economic Prosperity including specific implementation strategies, assignments, and timelines to ensure accountability and follow-through.
- Create integrated data, tools, and models to assess the region today, understand the region's future, and track progress toward the Vision and Regional Blueprint. A monitoring plan will focus on measuring progress toward specific regional outcomes aligned with all six livability principles, plus a seventh climate change principle because of Southeast Florida's extreme vulnerability.
- Build and sustain inclusive leadership and partnerships to strengthen regional collaboration and stewardship, providing a foundation for the region's future long-term success. That the Southeast Florida Regional Partnership already has 200 public, private, and non-profit member and supporting organizations, and can leverage substantial federal, state and local funds toward development and implementation of the Regional Vision and Blueprint provides a strong testimony to the region's commitment to creating a region that is economically competitive and prosperous, socially inclusive, and environmentally sustainable.

The intersection of major federal investments in the region's infrastructure for trade, transportation, housing, and the environment with a comprehensive and strategic regional vision and plan promises dividends in new

jobs, vibrant equitable communities, an enhanced and sustainable environment and a region prepared to be successful in the global economy.

## Work Plan Summary

The work plan presented below defines the process for addressing the issues and working towards the goals highlighted above, culminating in the **Southeast Florida Regional Vision and Blueprint for Economic Prosperity**.

A full copy of the work plan and supporting materials can be found at: <ftp://www.sfrpc.org/> To download a copy to your computer, right click on the file and “save as” to save it locally.

### **Objectives**

The Southeast Florida Regional Partnership is embarking on a regional visioning, strategic planning, and consensus building initiative to enhance economic, environmental, and social sustainability in the region for the next 50 years and beyond. The resulting Regional Vision and Blueprint will be the result of partnerships among the region’s many separate jurisdictions and public, private, and civic stakeholders. It is those partnerships that will engender cooperation in guiding growth and development on a local level that will, at the same time, produce better benefits to the region as a whole.

The fundamental objectives for the process are to:

- Develop a unifying vision for the Southeast Florida region that will result in a vibrant, resilient economy; livable communities; and sustainable development over the next 50 years. The vision will include implementation steps for local governments as well as recommendations for private and civic stakeholders;
- Initiate a broad educational effort to increase understanding of shared regional assets; issues, challenges and opportunities facing the region; and the necessity for cooperation to sustain the economy, environment, and quality of life as the region moves into the future;
- Achieve regional public participation and engagement in the planning process to engender community champions and supporters of the process who will translate the vision into reality;
- Expand the capacity of local governments and regional and community leaders from the public, private, and civic sectors to develop and implement the Regional Vision and Blueprint;
- Improve communication and build bridges to ensure participation in ongoing planning and decision-making in the region; and
- Ensure that all segments of the population are involved and engaged in the decision-making process, with particular emphasis on traditionally under-represented residents.

### **Principles**

The Southeast Florida Regional Partnership recognizes the value of working together to envision an achievable future that improves economic prosperity, respects the environment, and supports livable, unique communities. Therefore, the work plan will be built on and incorporate the six Livability Principles established by the federal interagency partnership as well a seventh principle related to climate change resiliency.

The work plan will ensure that:

- All residents in the region have the opportunity to participate in the educational and decision-making process of defining a vision for the region.
- Inequities within the region will be addressed in both decision-making and outcomes of the visioning and strategic planning process.
- The Regional Vision and Blueprint and associated policies will be clear and understandable, will address the deeply held values in the region, and will include specific actions for implementation by public, private, and civic partners, including integration into existing regional and local government planning processes.

### ***Planning Process Summary***

The planning phase for the Southeast Florida Regional Vision and Regional Blueprint for Economic Prosperity is designed to be substantially complete within 30 months of its approval, with implementation measures extending for the full 36 months of the Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant and beyond.

The work plan identifies seven activity areas which are not necessarily sequential activities. Many will be continuous throughout the project and some will extend beyond the project horizon.

#### **1 – Build Collaborative Partnerships.**

Over the past year, more than 200 organizations have come together to create the Southeast Florida Regional Partnership. More than 40 of these organizations have committed to provide technical or financial support for the development of the Regional Vision and Blueprint for Economic Prosperity as members of the Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Consortium. This first activity area, which will continue for the duration of the process, will be to continue to build these collaborative partnerships with emphasis on the ongoing role of the Partnership and its work groups. The outcome will be a more fully integrated partnership composed of local, regional, and state partners from the public, private, and civic sectors with the expertise required to address the full range of the region’s challenges and opportunities. By the end of the 30-month period, the Partnership, under the leadership of its Executive Committee, will develop a structure for its ongoing operations so it can continue to play a meaningful role in shaping the region’s future.

#### **2 – Develop Regional Resource Library and Scorecard.**

Measuring progress is a central component in the long-term success of the Regional Vision. Identification of key indicators and the methods of measuring progress toward achieving them is the focus of this activity. That process will begin at the inception of the project with a review of existing indicators and extend beyond the creation and adoption of the Regional Vision and Blueprint.

An additional outcome will be a Regional Resource Library of documents and comprehensive data and information about each jurisdiction and subregional area of Southeast Florida. A data warehouse will be developed as a part of the Regional Resource Library and it will be used to create a “virtual present” and “trend future” scenario.

#### **3 – Conduct Public Engagement.**

Engaging key stakeholders and the public in the decision-making process is central to its ultimate success. Without broad public support, the vision will not have the momentum to assure its integration into local plans and implementation.

That effort will be engaged on many levels to reach as wide an audience as possible, and will integrate both traditional and modern communication techniques. Additional effort will be made to reach traditionally

under-represented populations and find ways to engage them in the education and decision-making process.

**4 – Enhance Regional Leadership and Technical Capacity.**

Building leadership capacity within the region is essential both during and after the visioning process. A particular focus will be on helping individual jurisdictions, agencies, and community groups develop a regional perspective on the issues and opportunities facing Southeast Florida. Civic organizations and the business community will also be meaningfully involved throughout the process to ensure their input into the vision and its implementation.

Attention will be given on how to assist local governments, regional leaders, and Partnership members with expanding their technical and analytical capacities to provide improved information and tackle regional challenges and opportunities.

**5 – Develop Regional Vision.**

This phase of work will build on the regional data warehouse, the virtual present, and the trend future scenario, all of which will establish the baseline for alternative futures scenario development. This ‘business-as-usual’ trend future scenario will be modeled and the results widely disseminated to initiate public discussion, forming a backdrop for the development of scenarios to describe “alternative futures.”

These alternative futures scenarios will be purposely designed to articulate consequences relating to the region’s key issues, challenges and opportunities, and major goals. Gathering input from across the region on these alternative futures will represent the apex of public engagement, and the Partnership will attempt to reach the broadest possible segment of the region’s population through the full range of communication strategies.

The scenarios will be analyzed and the results disseminated for discussion. Out of those scenarios a preferred alternative will emerge that crystallizes the best features of the scenarios. That preferred alternative will be refined into a Regional Vision that reflects the most robust elements of the scenarios.

**6 –Develop Regional Blueprint.**

The Regional Vision will be further refined through a policy framework that defines the Regional Blueprint. This framework will establish the goals, objectives, and implementation strategies to be pursued going forward, including the roles of key Partnership members. The Blueprint will cover the full set of 10 regional issues identified below, along with others that will emerge during this process.

The Partnership has identified 10 major issues related to the future of Southeast Florida as a region, including the overarching issues of economic prosperity and inclusive regional leadership. The issues are as follows:

Topic Identified in Work Plan	Proposed Combination
Economic Development	Education, Workforce & Economic Development
Education	
Housing	Development Patterns, Housing & Transportation
Transportation	
Environment	Environment & Natural Resources
Water	

Climate Resiliency	Climate Resiliency
Community Assets & Culture	Community Assets, Health & Culture
Healthy Communities	
Inclusive Regional Leadership	Inclusive Regional Leadership & Equity (cross-cutting group)

The Partnership intends to create work groups to identify regional opportunities and challenges and recommend potential goals, objectives, and strategies in each of these 10 areas. It is likely that some related areas (for example, economic development and education) will be combined into joint work groups to facilitate cross-cutting conversations. These work groups will serve as the initial structure for involving regional stakeholders and the public in developing the Regional Vision and Blueprint for Economic Prosperity. The findings and recommendations of the work groups will be integrated through the work of the overall Partnership, the Sustainable Communities Grant Consortium, and the Executive Committee.

**7 – Begin Implementation.**

This stage of the project will focus on tools for implementation and the initiation of a series of demonstration projects throughout the region. It will include an Implementation Toolbox consisting of model ordinances and policies that could be adopted by regional jurisdictions and descriptions of analytical techniques and strategies for regional coordination.

Progress toward achieving the Regional Vision and Blueprint will be monitored at regular intervals after adoption to provide feedback on its success far beyond the planning process. The Regional Vision and Blueprint will be modified and supplemented as new information becomes available or pertinent conditions change.

Since the Vision and Blueprint will take many years to fully realize, and will likely adjust to changing conditions, we anticipate the process initiated during the planning phase will be refined and modified to respond to new information. Maintaining a focus on the region’s major issues, challenges, and opportunities will occur throughout the process. Table 1 on the following page summarizes how the focus is achieved.

Table 1 - Summary of Work Plan and Issues

	Build Collaborative Partnerships	Develop Regional Resource Library & Scorecard	Conduct Public Engagement	Enhance Regional Leadership Capacity	Develop Regional Vision	Develop Regional Blueprint	Begin Implementation
<b>Economic Development</b>							
<b>Housing</b>	Establish Partnership Executive Committee and subcommittees	Develop regional resource library	Develop public engagement strategy with continuing focus on issue areas	Assess current leadership capacity in each issue area	Build issues based scenarios and evaluate with Regional Scorecard	Use Work Groups and public input to create Blueprint elements for each issue area	Conduct demonstration projects
<b>Transportation</b>		Identify indicators for each issue area	Conduct regional values survey	Develop training, collaboration, and other strategies to build capacity among current and emerging leaders	Use Work Groups and public input to create vision statement and illustration for each issue area	Build Implementation Tool Box	
<b>Water</b>	Establish Partnership issue-specific Work Groups	Develop regional scorecard	Engage public at key points of project through summits, workshops, etc.				
<b>Environment</b>	Collaborate among partners throughout process	Develop “virtual present” and “trend future” scenarios	Develop and use on-going communication capabilities				
<b>Climate Resiliency</b>							
<b>Communities Assets / Culture</b>	Identify long term structure for Southeast Florida Regional Partnership						
<b>Health</b>							
<b>Education</b>							
<b>Inclusive Leadership</b>							
<b>Regional Leadership</b>							

**Link to information about the Southeast Florida Regional Partnership:**

<http://www.sfrpc.com/Regional%20Partnership.htm>

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