Southeast Florida Prosperity Plan

seven 50 counties  years

Southeast Florida Prosperity Plan

A Time To Lead

Vision & Executive Summary
January 15, 2014

Four years ago the South Florida and Treasure Coast Regional Planning Councils embarked on a far ranging project to develop a Regional Prosperity Plan for Southeast Florida.

We successfully competed for a Regional Sustainable Communities grant from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (US HUD) with the support of numerous organizations - public, private and not for profit- who voluntarily formed the Southeast Florida Regional Partnership. We formed an Executive Committee representing key interest groups to guarantee we focused on issues relevant to our region. Our grant allowed us to secure a professional consulting team, led by Dover, Kohl and Partners, that focused on expanding citizen involvement through the use of innovative outreach tools, four Summits and active use of social media. The Florida Department of Transportation and the South Florida Regional Transportation Authority also provided additional resources that enhanced the project. We express our appreciation to all who have participated and invested in completing this important phase of the project.

In a region that is over 200 miles long with seven counties and over 100 municipalities it is imperative that a long range vision be based on a reaffirmation of the importance of local control and the need to respect private property rights. Nothing in these resource documents attempt to do otherwise. We do recognize that there are national and international trends such as demographics, international trade, wireless communication, education and workforce that will impact our local communities. Our goal is to provide tools to address those trends and encourage regional collaboration on key overarching issues such as transportation, climate and environment.

Today completes a key phase in our Regional Prosperity Plan. We are providing a Regional Prosperity Plan consisting of a Executive Summary, an extensive on-line report, and established a web page and data bank that will support local and regional efforts. In the immediate future we will also end our grant obligations with US HUD. The two Regional Planning Councils will undertake actions to maintain and update regional data, continue the regional communication network and establish annual assessments and biannual summits. We will support existing regional coalitions and help new ones to form. We will maintain the Southeast Florida Regional Partnership by allowing existing organizations to choose to remain as members, while others may choose to cease participating and new groups may choose to “opt into” the ongoing implementation phase.

Together we can make Southeast Florida a better region ensuring a better life for all our current and future residents and visitors.

Regards,

James F. Murley, Executive Director
South Florida Regional Planning Council

Michael Busha, Executive Director
Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council
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A connected, sustainable paradise positioned as a leader in the global markets. A world class destination that balances the pressures of the built environment and its natural resources. Strong local control that, when necessary, becomes a driving force at the state and national levels. A region where economic disparity is being addressed through higher paying jobs. A region of choice and diversity. A vibrant, solid and resilient economic climate with place-making as the magnet for cutting-edge, innovative industries and the creative class. A knowledge-base workforce that stands at the forefront of the world’s technological and research advances and education. A community that is prepared to resist and overcome natural disasters before they happen. A place where the young and the elderly interact and find their needs and hopes and fulfilled. Stunning climate and rich soils at the heart of the nation’s food supply. A place for inspiration and wonder. A region of opportunity and prosperity.

THIS IS SEVEN50.

THIS IS SOUTHEAST FLORIDA IN 2060.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: THE SEVEN50 DIFFERENCE

BETTER REGION, BETTER LIFE: THE PREFERRED VISION

OUR COMMUNITY’S VISION FOR A QUALITATIVELY BETTER REGION

The Southeast Florida “Region in Motion” preferred vision for its future is the result of the effort of hundreds of local governments and organizations and thousands of individuals from the seven-county region (Monroe, Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach, Martin, St. Lucie and Indian River), made possible by funding from the Housing and Urban Development. It builds on many important plans and efforts both current and past. It is data driven and the result of extensive research. But most importantly, it exists because of extensive public input and the strong commitment of the public, private and civic organizations that committed to this three-year process to plan for a better future for all. Our preferred vision outlines significant short-term strategies and focuses on the long-term, coordinated effort of the public and private sectors with active participation of the diverse voices in our region to achieve resilience and prosperity for generations to come.

Our “Region in Motion” vision suggests a way to accommodate 3 million new residents projected by 2060 while protecting and enhancing the quality of life of those currently living in the region. The preferred vision sets the stage for a landscape where existing and future neighborhoods and communities are better connected with increased transportation options and where streets provide a balance between all users of the rights of way: cars, buses, transit, cyclists, and pedestrians. The vision strives to create or complete safe and healthy cities, towns and villages in a manner that is consistent with each community’s hopes and concerns for their future. It is an effort to ensure the kinds of places that will attract tourists, businesses and a diversity of residents alike. Our preferred vision focuses on our people, working towards providing opportunity for all. It highlights our fragile natural environment and sets a path for preparedness, resilience and competitiveness. Our “Region in Motion” is about providing the best possible quality of life to all of Southeast Florida’s residents, becoming more resilient, both economically and physically while leaving a worthy legacy for generations to come.
THE REGION TODAY

Our seven-county region is faced with a variety of challenges and opportunities. Here is information on where the region is today and a few trends and future impacts if these trends continue.
FUTURE TREND:

250+ SQUARE MILES

of additional farmland developed

Growth management policies hold, but development in farmlands is still significant

SOUTHEAST FLORIDA TRADE IS SURGING

NATIONAL LEADER in Trade & Tourism

Southeast Florida

1st INTERNATIONAL AIR CARGO TONNAGE & HOME PORT CRUISE PASSENGERS

3rd international visitors
5th air passengers
6th waterborne containers
8th value of exports

AIR & SEA CARGO TRADE GROWING

98.7% OF TRIPS INVOLVE A CAR

Drive Alone
Carpool
Public Transit

Source: Fair Housing and Equity Assessment (FHEA)

Source: Air - Total Trade
Ports - Total Trade
A robust economy, a solid and growing job base, and a more adaptable and competitive region and State: this is our responsibility.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: THE SEVEN50 DIFFERENCE

Can our region accommodate and sustain the projected increase in population?

How do we diversify our economy so that in addition to the jobs in tourism, construction/real estate, and agriculture we attract the knowledge-based jobs of the future and the right kind of investment and talent the ensures high-paying, secure employment?

How do we prepare our workforce for the knowledge-based jobs of the future?

How do we preserve the unique character and aspirations of each community in light of the projected growth?

How do we become more resilient to the natural disasters our region is prone to?

How do we become more globally competitive as a region, increasing exports and local manufacturing opportunities?

How do we keep the region moving and avoid high commute times and increased congestion?

How do we build upon our diversity?

How do we move towards an environment that ensures access to opportunity to all?

However, aging infrastructure, unbalanced mobility, increasing congestion, increasing housing costs, economic pressures on agricultural lands, environmental challenges and the impacts of sea level rise add to the pressure of relatively limited diversity of industries, lower-than average educational attainment for the middle class, and growing income gaps.

Admirable ongoing efforts are underway to address these issues of regional concern, yet a surge of larger-scale efforts is necessary seek to tackle larger scale, more broad or complex ones such as transportation, environmental issues and climate resilience. Many multi-jurisdictional alliances have resulted in significant progress and have become nationally recognized efforts. But we still face a generally disconnected region. Many initiatives are duplicated, contradictory, uncoordinated, competing against each other, or simply made harder by the impossibility of sharing resources and strengths, or even by a lack of understanding a common goal. We are faced with important questions that need to be answered if we are to guarantee a high quality of life for generations to come:
PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

103,509,585+ TRACKABLE MEDIA IMPRESSIONS

REACHING 78,732+ WITH 498+ FACEBOOK LIKES

A PROCESS THAT REACHED MORE THAN 1 MILLION

REACHING 3,336+ WITH 634+ TWITTER FOLLOWERS

2,245+ SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

1,367,131+ WEBSITE VIEWS

1,874+ PUBLIC EVENT PARTICIPANTS

Source: ROAR Media
Public events such as summits, roadshows, workshops, and executive committee meetings allowed a wide range of people throughout the region to participate and weigh in on the future of the Southeast Florida region.
PREFERRED SCENARIO

The Online Scenario Modeler gave the region the ability to explore and vote on their preferred future scenario. In four months of voting mid-June through mid-October of 2013 the site was visited by over 100 people a week. Thousands got a chance to comment and weigh in on the scenarios throughout the scenario modeling process.
A significant percentage of the roughly 3 million new residents by 2060 are accommodated in walkable, transit oriented development centers along existing rail lines such as the FEC and CSX lines which extend from south of Miami to Sebastian and beyond. Neighborhoods and communities are better connected to rail transit by streetcar or bus. Public streets are upgraded to provide a balance between all users of the rights of way: cars, buses, transit, cyclists, and pedestrians. Diverse transportation options keep the growing region in motion.

At the new walkable centers a range of building types and densities are developed to avoid monotonous places with one building type and an overwhelming scale. A diversity of housing also allows a variety of people in different stages of their lives and different incomes to live together, generating more complete, stable, and active communities. The region begins to attract more young, highly paid, information-economy workers who seek walkable urban environments.

Climate change adaptation becomes a high priority and not just along the coast. Sea’s rise effect on regional drainage becomes a priority. Numerous areas along the coast are protected against some effects of sea level rise with increased investments including stormwater system enhancement, back-flow preventers, increased natural and constructed coastal defences, and other investments. Current Everglades restoration projects are completed and regional and state cooperation bolster the efforts to help mitigate the effects of saltwater intrusion into the water supply for additional years. The individual, unique character of each community and our region’s diversity is enhanced and celebrated.

Region in Motion Metric Summary

**Transit Investment:**
High transit investment: North/South Major Transit Oriented Developments (TODs) along FEC line and CSX line (heavy rail/premium transit), East/West Minor TODs along inter-county transit lines (streetcars, bus rapid transit).

**Percentage of Trips By Transportation Option (Mode Share):**
Car (60%), Transit (20%), Bike (10%), Walk (10%)

**Distance To Transit:**
75% of households will live within walking distance (1 mile) of transit.

**Distance To Schools:**
75% of households will live within walking distance (1 mile) of a public school.

**Distance To Parks:**
90% of households will live within walking distance (1 mile) of a park.

**Vehicle Emissions/Pollution:**
7.4 million vehicular trips contribute to air pollution yet fossil fuel emissions are reduced by 40% of today.

**Transportation Costs:**
Total percent of Household Income Spent on Transportation Costs: 10%

**Housing Costs:**
Total percent of Household Income Spent on Housing Costs: 33%

**Health/Obesity Rates:**
The rate of obesity is 17%, less than many regions around the US and in Florida. Transportation choices & walkable areas help avoid the rate increase.

**Artists in the Workplace:**
An increase in artistic employment from 1.5% to 3.34%, establishing Southeast Florida as a creative enclave comparable to New York, Portland, and Boston.

**Creative Class In The Workforce:**
The creative class makes up 35% of the total working population, bringing the region average up to the top 50 of the US. Other regions within the top 50 include Washington D.C., Atlanta, New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago.

**Migration:**
More people will choose to live in the southern counties than is currently projected under the trend scenario due to multimodal transportation and redevelopment investments in the southern counties of Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach.

**Farmland**
190 square miles of farmland protected over the trend scenario. The majority of the farmland protected is in the northern counties of St. Lucie, Martin, and Indian River.

**New Roads & Infrastructure to Build & Maintain:**
7.3 billion in public investment is saved on new roads and utilities over the trend scenario.
THE REGION TOMORROW

According to the “Region in Motion” Scenario, described in more detail in the “Preferred Scenario” portion of this Executive Summary report, our region will seek to accomplish the following over what the “Trend” scenario would result in.

- +65% increased households within 1 mile of transit, schools, parks
- +20% multi-family homes
- +15% regional migration toward urban counties
- +8% creative class in workforce
- Over 200 square miles of farmland saved

3x more investment in climate resilience
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: THE SEVEN50 DIFFERENCE

-1.54% ARTISTS IN WORKPLACE

INCREASE IN TRANSIT USE, BIKING, WALKING

HEALTH/OBESITY RATE -11.5%

SPENT ON HOUSING + TRANSPORTATION -17% per household

LESS EMISSIONS/ POLLUTION with 2.2 MILLION LESS TRIPS -60%

$2.3 BILLION SAVED on new roads

$7.3 BILLION SAVED on infrastructure cost

+38%
## REGIONAL PRIORITIES

After two years of deliberation, consensus was reached on priorities that impact the livability of the region as a whole. These priorities constitute a common objective so that everyone, whether from the private, public or civic realm, can support and understand their benefit to the overall region. They are the type of endeavours that can only be accomplished if we join forces and address as a common goal. There are 44 priorities grouped into six different categories, which in turn constitute six distinct regional goals.

| 1 | Strengthen Southeast Florida’s role as a global hub for trade, visitors, talent & investment |
| 2 | Create & expand strong regional innovation clusters |
| 3 | Develop & retain a highly skilled, diverse, globally fluent workforce |
| 4 | Promote an entrepreneurial culture that fosters new business opportunities |
| 5 | Plan for the impact of climate change & sea level rise on private & public investment in the form of rising insurance rates & costs of new resilient infrastructure |

| 6 | Enhance Southeast Florida’s quality of life to attract & retain a diverse mix of families, workers, visitors, retirees & businesses |
| 7 | Develop & maintain globally competitive infrastructure & economic development sites that support the region’s economic vision |
| 8 | Improve coordination & collaboration to help Southeast Florida compete globally as a leading region |
| 9 | Position Southeast Florida to attract national & international events |

| 1 | Integrate land use & transportation planning to provide more transportation choices & increase opportunities |
| 2 | Enhance physical infrastructure to increase economic competitiveness & growth |
| 3 | Provide more housing & workplace choices in response to emerging trends |
| 4 | Integrate land use & transportation planning; plan more transit-oriented development areas to support transit |

| 5 | Improve coordination & collaboration among all levels of government & the private sector |
| 6 | Protect & enhance the unique character of all communities & ensure protection of private property rights |
| 7 | Explore sustainable transportation funding with alternative ways to finance improved mobility |
| 8 | Leverage our natural assets to connect the region |
**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: REGIONAL PROSPERITY PLAN**

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<th><strong>CELEBRATING ARTS &amp; CULTURE</strong></th>
<th><strong>1</strong></th>
<th>Embrace great design as a core Seven50 planning principle &amp; policy</th>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td>Connect with local arts &amp; culture to create communities with a distinctive sense of place</td>
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<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td>Invest strategically in the creative arts</td>
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<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td>Recognize that culture is a significant driver for economic competitiveness &amp; quality of life</td>
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<td><strong>5</strong></td>
<td>Add the “A”(rts) to STEM to produce the competitive workforce of tomorrow</td>
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<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td>Develop regional cultural assets according to a hub &amp; spoke strategy</td>
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<td><strong>7</strong></td>
<td>Empower the region’s arts leadership to implement the arts objective of the Seven50 plan</td>
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<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td>Promote sustainable development that emphasizes the region’s natural, historic, &amp; cultural assets &amp; preserves sense of place</td>
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<th><strong>VALUING THE ENVIRONMENT</strong></th>
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<th>Ensure the future supply &amp; quality of water to meet the region’s economic, environmental &amp; quality of life goals</th>
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<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td>Redevelopment opportunities should be prioritized over new development</td>
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<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td>Enhance independence, quality, access &amp; security of the region’s food supply</td>
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<td>Ensure that development in coastal areas is resilient &amp; sustainable</td>
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<td><strong>5</strong></td>
<td>Mitigate damage &amp; assure proper freshwater flows to the St. Lucie &amp; Lake Worth estuaries, Indian River Lagoon, Lake Okeechobee, the Everglades &amp; Florida Bay</td>
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<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td>Ensure future growth &amp; development decisions strengthen agricultural opportunities &amp; meet natural resource &amp; ecosystem restoration goals</td>
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<td><strong>7</strong></td>
<td>Support Everglades restoration</td>
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<th>Ensure water supply: identify &amp; prioritize at-risk natural resources &amp; infrastructure &amp; minimize saltwater intrusion</th>
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<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td>Engage &amp; educate the public to create new policy regarding climate change issues</td>
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<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td>Utilize adaptive planning for natural systems</td>
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<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td>Infrastructure, utilities, transportation choices &amp; the built environment should reflect goals for conservation, energy efficiency &amp; sustainable infrastructure</td>
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<td><strong>5</strong></td>
<td>Value &amp; enhance agricultural assets</td>
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<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td>Ensure a sustainable, consistent, independent &amp; cost effective energy supply &amp; delivery system throughout the region</td>
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<td><strong>7</strong></td>
<td>Prioritize storm preparedness, risk reduction &amp; emergency management</td>
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<td><strong>8</strong></td>
<td>Focus on the region’s barrier islands: they host unique destinations &amp; also provide frontline barriers for the mainland</td>
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<th><strong>INCLUSIVE REGIONAL LEADERSHIP</strong></th>
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<th>Continue the discussion on creating regional leadership organizations focused on resolving major regional issues</th>
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<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td>Regional leadership organizations should be politically independent</td>
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<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td>Regional leadership organizations should advocate with one voice for the region</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td>Establish regional coalitions to address regional issues.</td>
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THE SOUTHEAST FLORIDA REGIONAL TOOLKIT

IT’S ABOUT OUR QUALITY OF LIFE

With population anticipated to increase from 6.2 million to 9.3 million over the next 50 years, our region chose to join forces and create strategic alliances and coalitions to embrace the future as a “Competitive Region.” One where its constituents can choose to discuss the future together, investing time and energy to explore the consequences of different decisions before committing to them.

As mega regions emerge at the national scale, their goal is to become stronger, more efficient, and as a result, out-compete others. Up-and-coming global mega regions join the already established ones in the contest for prosperity. In an era of limited financial resources, tremendous technological advances, rapidly changing trends and not fully known extents of future climate impacts, it becomes evident that many of the challenges and opportunities that the Southeast Florida Region faces will require a unified vision and collective action to accomplish. Others will be the local government’s responsibility and choice. The Seven50 toolkit catalogs and categorizes initiatives and actions that, at different scales, further the long-term, resilient and competitive regional vision. It is up to each local government to decide which, if any of these ideas, are appropriate to their own character and hopes for the future.

The tools are available online at the interactive Seven50 report site, the online regional assets map and the regional data warehouse.
REGIONAL DATA

Access to data about our region and a simple platform to visualize and download the data is an increasingly important driver of economic prosperity and social progress. Seven50 was developed following the premise that easy access to relevant and updated data enables citizens and local governments to chart their own prosperous futures. The region’s resources and ability to access and produce data are unparalleled. Unique platforms to house and communicate data have been developed. Sharing and collaborating with the upkeep of relevant information, statistics, facts, trends and measures is our joint responsibility.

REGIONAL DATA WAREHOUSE

This seven-county Data Warehouse has resulted from a three-year effort to collect and consolidate data sets from a variety of sources. It serves as one-stop shop for data needs of the public and private sector. It is Google-based, giving users the capability of customizing, mapping and analyzing data sets and to turn the raw data into useful information. Detailed economic development siting and mapping of demographic, land use, transportation, and housing trends affecting the public and private sector are some of the important capabilities the Data Warehouse offers. The Data Warehouse provides a nice supplement to FP&L’s Powering Florida data base--an economic development planning tool--and other more proprietary, limited access data bases it has developed for economic development purposes. The Data Warehouse is available to all users at no charge. Maintaining and updating the Data Warehouse will require the assistance of the public and private sector. The regional planning councils need to take the lead in finding a sustainable source of revenue to maintain the system.

SOUTHEAST FLORIDA KNOWLEDGE CENTER

Private and public sector agencies are continuously creating, updating and implementing plans and visions with varying scopes and extent. In an effort to coordinate information, optimize our resources and facilitate access to data, the South Florida and Treasure Coast Regional Planning Councils have created a Seven50 Website and Seven50 report site. The Councils will seek to work with others in the region to develop an interactive and innovative Knowledge Center where the region’s partners can access, maintain, update and expand trends and relevant regional data, publish progress indicators, maintain and update a regional calendar, link to projects that are consistent in intent with the “Region in Motion” vision for Southeast Florida, and serve as a center for information on future coalitions.
3 REGIONAL INITIATIVES

COALITIONS FOR THE FUTURE

Building new strategies, transforming business models and adopting new ways of collaboration are critical to a more prosperous southeast Florida in the future. Common Regional Priorities have been identified. A Preferred Vision has been outlined. But the reality is that much of this vision will not be possible and our regional priorities will not effectively affect positive change unless we tackle a few, yet significant regional issues. In a region as large, diverse and complex as ours, no one organization or individual can do this alone. We need special coalitions of individuals and/or organizations. These coalitions should include representatives of nearly every segment of the community, depending upon the breadth of the issue. These individuals must share the common interest and agree to work together, understand, advocate, lead and address these core regional issues.

Seven50 strives to support existing and help launch new coalitions as well as establish a system by which interested or affected parties may join, participate or even lead these coalitions. The South Florida and Treasure Coast Regional Planning Councils commit to jointly support these coalitions for the future.

- Everglades & Waterways
- Balanced Mobility
- Climate Preparedness & Resilience
- Education & Workforce
- Economic Competitiveness
- Economic Opportunity
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: REGIONAL INITIATIVES

CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

7 Goal Areas
137 Initiatives

4 Counties
Regional Climate Action Plan

Local mitigation strategy
- stormwater master planning
- local comprehensive plan

Local & Regional Alignment of Planning
Working Together on Climate Initiatives

2 Regional Planning Councils
7 Livability Principles

SE Florida Prosperity Plan

2023
EVERGLADES & WATERWAYS

Water is a common feature, resource and concern throughout the seven counties. Our region’s relationship with water presents tremendous advantages and equally large challenges. The Seven50 vision and many of the goals suggested will not be achieved if the effort to modify the region’s “plumbing system” is not successful. Our natural systems will not be pristine unless we stop polluting them. Our drinking water supply needs to be shielded from the impacts of sea level rise. We need to find a balance between home affordability and probable flooding.

There is existing regional leadership in place for the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP) lead by the South Florida Water Management District and the US Army Corps of Engineers. The US Congress has also set up the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force to provide coordination among levels of government and native America tribes. The Water Resources Advisory Commission provides an ongoing venue for other stakeholders to provide comment and the Everglades Foundation and the Everglades Coalition actively support funding requests to the state and federal governments. Today, the larger Everglades ecosystem has evolved into special planning and implementation programs for the Northern, Western and Central Everglades. In reality the Seven50 area encompasses the Eastern Everglades and we need to stay focused on the long and short term priorities such as protecting the Indian River Lagoon and Biscayne Bay.

Short-Term Priority:

- Secure state and federal funding for the next five mile elevated highway extension for US 41, Tamiami Trail.
Regional coalition needed. Six-county Indian River Lagoon coalition should expand to include nine (Miami-Dade, Monroe, Broward), and then all 16 counties and private sector participation. Leadership should be provided by all regional planning councils, leagues of cities, and South Florida Water Management District. There are also many navigable waterways in the region that need to be maintained for recreational uses and their water quality enhanced.

Short-Term Priority:
- Support the Indian River Lagoon Collaborative efforts to secure funding for upgrading treatment of sewage flowing into the Indian River Lagoon.

Leakage from coastal septic sewage systems has been suggested as a contributing factor to the current poor health of the Indian River Lagoon and St. Lucie River Estuary. Within the counties of Indian River, Martin and St. Lucie, there are about 120,000 private septic systems. Brevard, Volusia, and Palm Beach counties share this same issue. Many local and state political leaders in the region have expressed some desire to eventually get septic system users on public sewer systems. The cost of switching from septic tanks to public sewer systems may be prohibitive for individual counties and property owners. But, combining their political influence, the counties and cities together may have more opportunities to get the funding help necessary to at least begin replacing the most troublesome septic tanks. The recently established six-county Indian River Lagoon Counties Collaborative is in a good position to take a leadership role in this task.

Short-Term Priority:
- Assist in preparing funding applications to federal and state agencies.
Without premium transit and funding for operating transportation costs, much of the Seven50 vision and goals will not be achievable. Building and maintaining a world-class multi-modal transportation system for the region will not be possible if this initiative is not successful. At the same time it is important to understand that the different counties in the region play different roles when it comes to transit. The more urban counties cannot continue on the current, predominately road-building path. The less populated counties need to balance their current transportation options and work on a more balanced mobility system for their future.

Regional coalition needed. This region needs to invest in premium transit and that this will not happen unless there is new funding for operating subsidy. Premium transit is so critical that without this there are no options for any alternative other than the “Stay the Course” or “Suburban Expansion” scenarios for the future. Seven counties and the private sector should work together to implement an alternative road usage assessment system to replace or supplement the old gas tax system. Join with other groups around the state to get this done by legislation. Push at the federal level to keep a greater share of monies collected for transportation improvements due to our size and position as an outsized global trade and logistics hub. The region needs to work together identify and advocate for funding tools at the local, state and federal levels that will provide sustainable transportation funding.

Short-Term Priority:

- Organize a Corridor Coalition to reach consensus and build support for a feasible, implementable funding plan for premium transit.
Regional coalition and private sector partnership needed. The Florida Department of Transportation, South Florida Regional Transportation Authority, MPOs, TPOs, and regional planning councils are working together to expand the Tri-Rail commuter rail service onto the FEC Rail Corridor in Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach counties. Local government, public agency, and private sector leadership is needed to determine station locations, financing alternatives, and integration with the multi-modal transportation network.

Short-Term Priority:
- Work with local governments to finalize station locations and develop Transit Oriented Development (TOD) plans that will attract public and private funding.

In addition to the growing use of regional rail corridors for freight and passenger service there is a need to organize stakeholders around key roads that connect the counties within the region and to other regions. Existing corridor alliances exist for US 441/SR 7 and other can be created as needed. There are also key road corridors that connect Southeast Florida to Southwest (SR 41) and Central Florida (US 27).

Short-Term Priority:
- Initiate a corridor study for US 27, working with the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council and the Central Florida Regional Planning Council, as part of FDOT Future Corridors program.
CLIMATE PREPAREDNESS & RESILIENCE

Southeast Florida Preparedness and Resilience Initiative is a combination of the existing work of the Southeast Florida Climate Compact, the Energy Resilience work of the two regional planning councils through the Florida Regional Councils Association (FRCA), and the ongoing work the Regional Planning Councils do for Florida Division of Emergency Management such as storm surge mapping, and a focus on making our coastal communities, especially those located on the barrier islands, more resilient to future storms and sea level rise.

Public infrastructure retrofits, their costs, and policy changes necessitated by sea level rise impacts are as difficult to quantify as accurately predicting exactly how high sea level will rise in the future. At the same time some counties in the region are already investing in retrofit and mitigation work. The Climate Compact is a four-county resource for addressing the issue of sea level rise. By expanding this resource to the seven-county region, there should be some advantages gained by all in sharing ideas about ways to plan for sea level rise and obtaining state and federal financial assistance for implementing mitigation and adaptation measures. This coalition would grow stronger through the participation of the county commissions of Martin, St. Lucie and Indian River counties.

Short-Term Priority:
- Integrate regional Adaptation Action Area guidance into local climate action plans.

BIGGERT-WATERS FLOOD INSURANCE REFORM ACT OF 2012

Southeast Florida, including the Florida Keys, pays more federal flood insurance premiums than any other region in the US. The Biggert-Waters Act will significantly harm the economy of our region as a vast number of homes and businesses are required to have flood insurance. The Act seeks to reduce subsidies for flood insurance policies and increase premiums until they are “actuarially sound.” A bipartisan deal has been struck to delay implementation for approximately four years until a study has been completed and for implementation to take effect. Our region not only needs the delay in implementation, but we also need to keep federal flood insurance.

Short-Term Priority:
- Work with Congressional delegation to obtain delay in the significant increases in the flood insurance rates.
SEVEN-COUNTY ENERGY CONSERVATION INITIATIVE

In 2011, St. Lucie County helped establish a Solar and Energy Loan Fund (SELF). It is a federally designated 501(c)(3) and a certified Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) able to serve the region. Its purpose is to help homeowners and businesses identify solutions to their rising energy costs and then provide favorable financing to make recommended energy saving improvements. This model program has spread from St. Lucie County to include a lending territory of Brevard, Indian River, and Martin counties. SELF is in discussions with the cities of West Palm Beach and Orlando for program expansion. In a relatively short time SELF has completed 848 energy audits and has a $2 million dollar loan portfolio. The program is making it possible for home and business owners to make much-needed energy conservation improvements, saving money, creating local jobs and promoting clean energy alternatives and energy independence.

Short-Term Priority:

- The regional planning councils should seek funding for SELF and for other energy conservation and alternative fuel activities.

BEACH RENOURISHMENT & INLET MAINTENANCE

All seven counties of the region are in the beach renourishment and/or inlet maintenance business. All have a need for high quality sand and funding to periodically replenish their beaches and keep their inlets navigable. All should be interested in a sustainable source of sand and funding for beach renourishment and inlet dredging. Sea level rise may increase the need for such renourishment and maintenance activity. Currently, the US Army Corps of Engineers and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection are taking a regional approach to this issue, looking at sand deposits from Miami to Fort Pierce, including those in state and federal waters which lie beyond three nautical miles offshore and are in the process of deciding how to distribute this resource regionally. Rather than have the state and federal government decide for the region, the seven counties should be given the opportunity to devise their own regional strategy for utilizing these sand resources. This will require leadership from the county commissions to begin meeting together and discussing this issue. Some counties need sand, some need a sustainable source of funding to maintain their inlets, some need both. Either way, there is a solution that can be negotiated among the seven counties where each could benefit equally.

Short-Term Priority:

- A single long-term regional permit for inlet maintenance and beach renourishment within the seven county area.
EDUCATION & WORKFORCE

An educated and skilled workforce is essential if we want to achieve a strong and economically competitive region. Our workforce affects the prosperity of our businesses and the ability to preserve our quality of life for generations to come. We have to provide our current workforce with the tools to satisfy current and short-term market’s demands. At the same time we need to prepare our children for the jobs of the future. We do not know what skills many of those jobs will require, or which technology we will be using to conduct business or even socialize in the future. What we do know is that a society of literate and skilled citizens has the highest chance at success and has the ability to reduce poverty and social injustice by providing everyone resources and opportunities for social mobility and social inclusion.

REGIONAL WORKFORCE ALIGNMENT INITIATIVE

The bringing together of the academic community with the career/job marketplace is an initiative to make the region globally competitive. A regional research initiative to identify current and future talent requirements to fill workforce gaps should be a priority for the seven-county region. The initiative should showcase how we can build a stronger workforce to meet the needs of an ever-changing marketplace. Jobs, employees and employers are not confined by county boundaries. A vision and plan for this must be shared and developed by the academic and career community in the region. This is a monumental task, but one that our local high schools, through specialized academics; that our local college and universities, through additional degree programs and partnerships with businesses; should be willing to undertake. Economic Development office’s, workforce organizations and school district, college and university leadership, partnered with private sector business leaders could form a coalition to continuously be working on developing and aligning the region’s future employee pool with the needs of the job marketplace.

Short-Term Priority:

- Evaluate the recent proposal by the Brooking Institute for the designation of Innovation Districts and then identify possible locations within the seven county region.
LIFE SCIENCE SOUTH FLORIDA:
Expand this regional coalition to become a seven-county public/private leadership consortium to grow this important industry cluster. A huge public and private investment has already been made to get the cluster established and diversify our economy. This coalition has a good opportunity to organize, create and push a legislative agenda to capture increased research funding, targeted workforce and job training, increased STEM initiatives, sustainable public-education funding, attracting and increasing venture capital and philanthropy, etc. It has also been suggested that STEM become STEAM to include the arts which will help to attract potential employees.

AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY & RESEARCH SUPPORT:
A regional coalition and private sector partnership is needed. Agriculture, and the countryside it occupies is not only a key industry cluster for the state and region, it also is critical for the environmental services, native land and endangered species protection, and for the food security it provides the state and nation. It is Florida’s original heritage and cultural institution and a direct link to our future quality of life. Maintaining agriculture as a viable industry in Florida will require funding and legislative initiatives for assistance with everything from disease/pest research, farm-to-market mobility, branding, and fair trade practices. The agricultural industry should be able to count on the region’s public and private leadership for help and support when needed.

Short-Term Priority:
- Support the upcoming eMerge Americas International Conferences in Miami.
Understanding the key factors, unique advantages and complex challenges determining our future prosperity and economic growth is the first step. Coordinating our resources and jointly committing to working towards the same goal comes next and represents our best opportunity to succeed. A strong and vibrant private sector is key to our prosperity, to securing a leading position in this fast-changing global economy, to addressing employment challenges and to creating a sufficient number of jobs to absorb the region’s growing young workforce. The public sector’s role is to improve Southeast Florida’s economic policies and remove obstacles in order to facilitate investment and progress in each community’s terms. Improving education, focusing on innovation and investing in our regions human capital is the path towards a strong and resilient economy of the future.

Broward MPO has taken the lead in developing the “Cargo 2040” freight plan through Southeast Florida Transportation Council for the three southern counties. This effort is intended to recommend actions that improve the movement of goods within Broward, Miami-Dade and Palm Beach counties. It will be overseen by a 21-member “Regional Transit Technical Advisory Committee Freight Subcommittee” with membership from the 3 southern MPOs, FDOT (Central Office plus District 4 and District 6), the airports and seaports, economic councils, Miami-Dade Expressway Authority, Florida Turnpike Enterprise, railroads (CSX and FEC), and freight business representatives. The movement of freight and goods impacts the entire region as it must continue north through Martin, St. Lucie and Indian River counties via their network of highways, railroads, and waterways.

Short-Term Priority:
- Invite a freight representative from Martin, St. Lucie, and Indian River counties to join the Regional Transit Technical Advisory Freight Subcommittee.
A globally competitive, fiber optic network that provides free or very low-cost opportunities to local governments, colleges and universities and our research and hospitals has been at the center of Seven50. This type of competitive connectivity is not an option, it is imperative in order to compete in this technological era. A coalition is necessary to realize and increase current work to accomplish this initiative in the seven-county region. Ultimately, a seven-county public and private investment pool will be needed to accomplish this mission.

Short-Term Priority:
- Support a regional coalition to secure commitments and funding for a seven-county regional fiber optic network.

Southeast Florida is strategically positioned as a global gateway for business and commerce. As we focus on diversifying our region’s economy, we have the opportunity to intensify what could become one the strongest drivers of our economy over the coming decades: international commerce, global trade and logistics activities. In order to do this successfully, we need to address the challenges, among others, of increasing local manufacturing and exports, increasing port and airport capacity and competitiveness, and balancing the impacts of transporting goods and people. Significant efforts such as the Cargo 2040 Southeast Florida Regional Freight plan and Florida Chamber’s Trade and Logistics Plan 2.0 are essential to strengthen Southeast Florida’s presence as a global trade hub are underway.

Short-Term Priority:
- Create an Alliance to support implementation of Trade and Logistics Plan 2.0 in Southeast Florida.
Whether it’s the Summer Olympics or the soccer World Cup, securing a bid for the region to host these kinds of international events requires long-term regional planning and cooperation among the private and public sector. The economic benefit to the region as the host should be evaluated. If there is interest in working towards this goal, a regional coalition of organizers and supporters from all seven-counties should be convened. The regional planning councils, tourist development boards and others can organize such a long-range planning effort. Assistance can also be provided by Enterprise Florida through their Sports Industry Development Division and the Florida Sports Foundation. This effort should provide the region some additional incentive to develop a world class transportation system that can provide the necessary transportation options between some of the existing and potential venue locations situated throughout the region.

Short-Term Priority:
- Poll the region on the kind of events it would like to see. Where is their excitement and possible consensus?

Coalition needed to push establishment of a seven-county assessment of all brownfields in the region. Brownfields represent a significant, but currently under-capitalized land resource and tax base. In order to unlock the potential of brownfields for economic development sites and redevelopment, they must be identified and cleaned up. A regional proposal for their identification, assessment, and cleanup could be developed in cooperation with the private sector and affected local governments. This would help move the region to the front of the line in securing state and federal funding assistance to clean these sites up and render them usable for development. The regional planning councils have active brownfields assistance programs and could provide leadership for this effort.

Short-Term Priority:
- Work with the development community to introduce representatives to brownfield sites. Some sites are on the waterfront, other sites unlock vast tracts of possible acreage. Many sites have advantages that outweigh their disadvantages.
Ready Or Not Here It Comes

Coalition

The leaders of the seven-county commissions as well as the region’s largest cities must have the kind of relationship that will allow them to quickly gravitate together in case of unanticipated events of regional impact. For example, the eight counties of the Big Bend Region after the BP oil spill working together to shape federal policy and implement $5-20 Billion RESTORE ACT. In order to cultivate and maintain this kind of relationship, annual or biennial summits should be organized to bring these groups together over an agenda of common interest and action items. The regional planning councils, in cooperation with the private sector and universities, and perhaps the Florida Association of Counties and Florida League of Cities could provide the leadership needed to arrange these regional summits.

Short-Term Priority:

- Plan the first coalition event using Seven50 networks to keep the momentum that Seven50 has generated going.
Our region ranks 17th in diversity out of 150 in the nation. Projections show that we will continue to diversify in the decades to come. This presents both challenges and opportunities. Our population is highly entrepreneurial and brings a unique advantage to address the needs that arise from participating in a global market. At the same time, we face challenges of integration, a shrinking middle class, and many areas of segregated poverty with disproportionately limited access to opportunity.

Given the diversity of the region, improving competitiveness will require a continued focus on education and innovation, and at the same time an environment that provides the tools for all residents in Southeast Florida to prosper, have access to affordable housing and jobs, an increased educational attainment and a chance at leadership and participation in the decision-making process. A coalition is needed to support and further the efforts initiated by Seven50 and the Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity, efforts like the Six Pillars and the Regional Planning Councils Economic Development Strategies and the work by numerous civic and public organizations throughout the region that are devoted to investing and enhancing our human capital. Providing assistance and a friendly environment for businesses is essential.

Short-Term Priority:

- Support creation of an Opportunity Alliance to further the work done by Seven50.
GO TO SEVEN50.ORG FOR THE COMPLETE PLAN
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

HUD OFFICE OF SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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Vice Chair:
The Honorable Suzanne Gunzburger,
Commissioner, Broward County

Mr. David Armstrong
President, Broward College

Mr. Doug Bournique
Executive Vice President,
Indian River Citrus League

Mr. Doug Bartel
Director of Business Development/
Public Affairs, Blue Cross and Blue
Shield of Florida

The Honorable Heather Carruthers
Commissioner, Monroe County

Mr. Art Cobb
Managing Partner, Richard Publications

Ms. Carla Coleman
Executive Director, Urban Land Institute
Southeast Florida/Caribbean

The Honorable Chris Dzadovsky
Commissioner, St. Lucie County

Ms. Sara E. Fain
Senior Staff Counsel,
Everglades Law Center

The Honorable Ed Fielding
Commissioner, Martin County

Mr. Kevin J. Foley
TCRPC

Dr. Dennis P. Gallon
President, Palm Beach State College

The Honorable Kathryn Hensley
School Board Member, District 4
St. Lucie County School Board

Mr. Donald Kiselewski
Director, External Affairs,
Florida Power & Light Company

The Honorable Peter O’Bryan
Chair, TCRPC
Commissioner, Indian River County

The Honorable Karen Marcus
Ex-Officio Member

Dr. Edwin Massey
President, Indian River State College

Ms. Gepsie Metellus
Executive Director,
Haitian Neighborhood Center

The Honorable Jean Monestime
Commissioner, Miami-Dade County

Mr. Jack Osterholt
Deputy Mayor, Miami-Dade County
Sustainability, Planning and Economic
Enhancement

Ms. Susan E. O’Rourke
President/Traffic Engineer,
Susan E. O’Rourke P.E., Inc.

Mr. Gus Pego
Secretary, Florida DOT, District 6

Mr. William Perry
Managing Shareholder,
Gunster Law Firm – WPB Office

The Honorable Raquel Regalado
School Board Member, District 6
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City of Coral Gables

Mr. Carlos Vidueira
Vice President, Rybovich, Inc.

Mr. James Wolfe
Secretary, Florida DOT, District 4

Mr. Barrington Wright
Business Development Manager
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROJECT MANAGEMENT
Marcela Camblor, AICP, Principal
Marcela Camblor & Associates, Inc.
Project Director, Sustainable Communities Initiative
Isabel Cosio Carballo
Partnership Coordinator, South Florida US HUD Point of Contact
Stephanie Heidt
Partnership Coordinator, Treasure Coast
Eric K. Swanson
Policy Analyst/Regional Planner, SFRPC

REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCILS
James Murley
Executive Director, SFRPC
Michael J. Busha
Executive Director, TCRPC

CONSULTANT TEAM
Dover, Kohl & Partners
Victor Dover & Joe Kohl, Firm Principals
Jason King, Project Director
Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company
Jean Scott
Emerge Consulting
Criterion Planners
Roar Media
Dr. Robert Burchell, Rutgers University
Cardno ENTRIX
Spikowski Planning Associates
HDR Engineering
Hall Planning & Engineering
Metroquest
Cambridge Systematics
Carras Community Investment
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Advanced Green Technologies
Advanced Roofing
Audubon of Florida
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Broward County*
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Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization*
Broward Workshop
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Business Forum of Palm Beach County
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Citi Community Development*
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City of Weston
Clean Water Fund
Consolidated Credit Counseling Services, Inc.
Coordinating Council of Broward
Credit Card Management Services, Inc.
Delray Beach CRA
Delray Beach Housing Authority*
Dover, Kohl & Partners
Drawing Conclusions LLC
Dream Home Organization, Inc.
Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company
Economic Council of Martin County
Economic Development Council of St. Lucie County
Enterprise Development Corporation of South Florida
Enterprise Florida
Florida Atlantic University*
Florida Department of Transportation Dist. IV*
Florida Department of Transportation Dist. VI*
Florida Housing Coalition
Florida International University*
Florida Public Health Institute
Florida Redevelopment Association*
Gold Coast Clean Cities Coalition
Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance*
Greater Hollywood Chamber of Commerce
Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce
Habitat for Humanity – Greater Miami
Habitat for Humanity – Indian River County
Health Council of South Florida
LETTERS AND RESOLUTIONS IN SUPPORT OF THE PARTNERSHIP

AIA Treasure Coast
Arts Council Martin County
Broward Cultural Council
Business Development Board of Martin County
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City of Boynton Beach
City of Coral Gables
City of Florida City
City of Greenacres
City of Hialeah
City of Lauderhill
City of Miami Gardens
City of Miami Springs
City of North Miami
City of Pembroke Pines
Clean Water Fund
Cultural Council of Indian River County
Department of Children and Families, Circuit 17
Economic Development Council of Martin County
Economic Council of Palm Beach County
Enterprise Florida
Everglades Foundation
Farm Credit of South Florida
Florida Brownfields Association
Florida Departments of Community Affairs, Elder Affairs, Health, and Transportation
Florida Poison Information Center - Miami
Florida Power & Light (FPL)
Florida’s Research Coast
Gate House Home & Estate Services
Girl’s Club
Hollywood Council of Civic Associations
ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability
Indian River Citrus League
Indian River County Chamber of Commerce
Indian River Economic Development Council
Latin Chamber (Broward County)
Marine Industries Association of South Florida
Martin Soil and Water Conservation District
Miami-Dade Climate Change Advisory Task Force
Miami Dade College Earth Ethics Institute
Miami-Dade County Public Schools
Miami-Dade League of Cities
Museum of Discovery and Science (Fort Lauderdale)
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Northern Palm Beach Chamber of Commerce
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PNC Community Development Banking
Port Everglades (Broward County)
RCL Development
School Board of Broward County
Seminole Improvement District
South Florida Water Management District
Southeast Florida State Legislative Delegation
Southeast Florida Utilities Council
St. John’s Water Management District
The Miami Foundation
Treasure Coast Council of Governments
Treasure Coast Regional League of Cities
Tropical Audubon Society
United States Congressional Delegation for Southeast Florida
United States Senator Bill Nelson - Florida
United States Senator George Le Mieux
Urban Environmental League
Urban Land Institute – National
US Green Building Council South Florida Chapter
Village of Islamorada
Workforce One (Broward County)
Workforce Solutions (Martin County)