



NORTHEAST FLORIDA REGIONAL COUNCIL  
Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)  
Steering Committee Meeting  
March 27, 2009

MINUTES

The second meeting of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Committee was held on Friday, March 27, 2009, at 9:00 am, at the St. Johns County Agricultural Center, 3125 Agricultural Center Drive, St. Augustine, FL 32094.

9:05 – Welcome / opening of meeting: Chairperson Milissa Holland

9:10 – Pledge / Moment of Silence for US Military Troops: Chairperson Milissa Holland

9:15 – Brief discussion concerning the update of the CEDS data presented at the February 20, 2009: Brian Teeple

9:20 – Subcommittees: Chairperson Milissa Holland

Commissioner Holland asked for volunteers for the following two subcommittees: *project subcommittee* and *final report subcommittee*.

*Project Subcommittee*

- Sally Sherman (Flagler County)
- Darryl Register (Baker County)
- Mike Holcomb (Clay County)
- Alex McCoy (Putnam County)
- Brenda Ezell (Duval County / Jacksonville)
- Greg Geiner (St. Johns County)
- Mike Cole (Nassau County)
- Steve Rieck (Nassau County)

*Final Report Subcommittee*

- Sally Sherman
- Mike Cole
- (Did not get)
- Anna Lebesch
- Deborah Kobza

Subcommittee Discussion:

- *How long will the subcommittees last?*

The Final Report Subcommittee will last until the CEDS document is adopted and accepted by EDA. The Project Subcommittee will last in some fashion beyond the adoption of the CEDS. The Committee itself will last for the purpose of updating the CEDS every five years.

- *How much money are we talking about having available to us through EDA?*

Projects upwards of a million dollars will be typical. The EDA funds are matching infrastructure funds.

Brian Teeple led the discussion on Strengths and Weaknesses.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>Quality of Life – <i>nice climate, mild winters, extensive coastline, accessible beaches, relatively short commute times</i></p> <p>Availability of Land – <i>large, contiguous acres of undeveloped land</i></p>	<p>Development Costs – <i>concurrency requirements</i></p> <p>Primary and Secondary Education – <i>nationally, the educational system in Florida ranks 50<sup>th</sup>; public education is not adequately funded; our public education system does not adequately teach math and science; and our education system does not instill critical thinking. Additionally, 60% of community college students have to take remedial courses.</i></p>
<p>Intermodal Transportation – <i>the Northeast Florida region has deep water ports connected to the rest of the state and nation by both interstate highways (I-95, I-25, and I-10) as well as by rail lines (Florida East Coast and CSX rail lines)</i></p>	<p>Infant Mortality – <i>according to the National Vital Statistics System, in 2002 the South, generally, had higher infant mortality rates than the national average; in between 2000 and 2002, Florida exceeded the national average of infant deaths per 1,000 live births: the national average was 6.9 infant deaths per 1,000 live births; Florida average between 7.0 and 7.9 infant deaths per every 1,000 live births.</i></p> <p><i>According to the State of Florida Department of Health, in 2007 the statewide infant mortality rate in Florida was 7.06 deaths per every 1,000 live births. Both Duval and Putnam Counties slightly exceeded the statewide infant mortality rate.</i></p>
<p>Trained / Skilled Workforce – <i>the Northeast Florida workforce is substantially trade oriented; retired and former military personnel stay within Northeast Florida; and we have a substantial financial services based workforce as well.</i></p>	<p>Crime – <i>in 2007, the regional crime rate was 3,755 incidents of crime per every 100,000 persons. This is less than the statewide average of 4,632 incidents of crime per every 100,000 persons. However, both Putnam and Duval Counties have higher incidents of crime than the statewide average (Duval = 6,081 incidents per every 100,000 persons; Putnam = 5,486 incidents per every 100,000 persons). Of the 1,129 murders committed in Florida in 2007, 144 occurred in Northeast Florida.</i></p>
<p>Higher Education – <i>There are many colleges and universities that are either within the Northeast Florida region or are within proximity to it, including: Jacksonville University, the University of North Florida, the University of Florida, Bethune-Cookman University, Edward Waters College, Flagler College, and Jones College. Additionally, both Daytona Beach Community College and Florida Community</i></p>	<p>Digital Divide –</p>

## Strengths

*College at Jacksonville will offer 4-year degrees.*

*Hurricanes – there is a perception that Northeast Florida is less vulnerable to hurricanes than the remainder of the State of Florida.*

*Health Sciences – Northeast Florida is home to several world-renowned hospitals, including Nemours Children Hospital, Shands (affiliated with the University of Florida), and the Mayo Clinic.*

*Real Estate Costs – land in Northeast Florida is generally inexpensive when compared with other parts of Florida.*

*Homestead Exemption – Florida's homestead exemptions reduces the assessed value of primary residence properties by \$50,000 and greater.*

*Regional Cooperation – there are many regional organizations within Northeast Florida such as Cornerstone Partners (a regional chamber of commerce), the Northeast Florida Regional Council (a regional planning agency), and the North Florida T.P.O (the regional transportation organization).*

*Lower Cost of Living – generally, the cost of in Northeast Florida is 8.67% less than the national average, while the quality of life remains high.*

*Sports – in addition to the Jacksonville Jaguars, northeast Florida's professional football team, there are minor league hockey and baseball teams, college teams, including the University of Florida Gators (four national championships in this decade alone). Additionally, TPC Sawgrass hosts the Players Championship every year.*

*Tourism – Northeast Florida is home to the Nation's oldest city – St. Augustine, home to*

## Weaknesses

*Water Availability – currently, Flagler County is in a water resource caution area, meaning that projected demand for water will exceed its availability. It is expected that the remainder of Northeast Florida will be within a water resource caution area within the next few years.*

*Property Insurance –*

*Hurricane Threat – despite perception, Northeast Florida is vulnerable.*

*Lack of Support for Small Business – in Northeast Florida, there is a lack of access to capital and a lack of other support, such as business incubators, small business mentoring, and other small business support systems.*

*Lack of High Tech Incubators – only two of Northeast Florida's counties – Putnam and Flagler Counties, are within Florida's high tech corridor. The Florida High Tech Corridor Council's mission is to "...attract, retain, and grow high tech industry and the workforce to support it within the 23-county Florida High Tech Corridor." Educational partners include the University of Florida, the University of Central Florida, and the University of South Florida.*

*Worker Compensation Costs – Behind California and Hawaii, Florida has the third highest worker compensation costs in the nation (source: the National Federation of Independent Business)*

*High School Drop Out Rates and School District Rankings – compared with the rest of the state, Northeast Florida has two of the worst school districts in the worst primary and secondary education state – Putnam County is ranked 58<sup>th</sup> and Duval County is ranked 59<sup>th</sup> out of 74 districts. Drop out rates range from a low of 1.9 in Flagler County to a high of 6.6 in Duval County.*

*Art and Culture*

**Strengths**

**Weaknesses**

*miles of beaches, the St. Johns River, and is within several hours of Disney World and Sea World in Orlando. Northeast Florida has world class fresh and saltwater fishing, as well as canoeing, kayaking, and boating.*

*Cecil Commerce Center – Cecil Commerce Center, a former military airfield, has 17,000 (gross) acres of industrial and non-residential lands, intermodal infrastructure, and entitlements, including a sport space license.*

Not A Philanthropic Region

DRAFT

10:15 – Goals and Objectives

Brian Teeple led the discussion on Goals and Objectives.

Goals	Objectives
Improve education in Northeast Florida.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Decrease drop out rates</li><li>• Increase graduation rates</li><li>• Ensure that education curriculum is preparing children for high-tech jobs</li><li>• Increase school district rankings within the state</li></ul>
Improve and expand infrastructure throughout Northeast Florida.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Completion of 9B</li><li>• Completion of the “Outer Beltway”</li><li>• Develop and fund a commuter rail line throughout the region</li><li>• Increase availability of centralized water and sewer throughout the region</li><li>• Increase availability of natural gas throughout the region</li></ul>
Create regional employment centers in Northeast Florida.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Create regional “megasites” as regional employment centers</li><li>• Entitle property within regional employment centers to create “shovel ready” properties</li><li>• Have expedited permitting procedures for development within regional employment centers</li></ul>
Make Northeast Florida conducive for small business success.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promote the successful development of entrepreneurial companies and small businesses through development of a Northeast Florida <i>business incubator</i></li><li>• Increase access to capital for small business</li><li>• Increase access to shared services</li><li>• Further relationships with colleges and universities</li><li>• Ensure that prioritization is given for small-businesses in government contracts</li></ul>
Create a regional land use plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul>
Create a full-service community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li></ul>
Increase regional awareness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Inventory and market regional assets</li><li>• Create a regional image</li><li>• Create a regional marketing effort.</li></ul>

10:55 – Chair Holland adjourned the meeting.