

NEERIC

Highlights

Monthly Report of the Northeast Florida Regional Council

July 2008

Planning Directors play the Chip Game, and get a Reality Check!

On July 24, 2008, the Planning Directors of the region gathered for their quarterly meeting. The meeting began with the usual discussion of issues affecting planning in the region, including an overview of the status of First Coast Vision. It ended, as so many good meetings do, with everyone playing a game.

The Chip Game

The Chip Game is not new. Council staff uses it many times each year to help regional leaders understand the difficulties in deciding where to place new growth, and understand the concerns of stakeholders with diverse positions on how we should grow. The Chip Game requires players to identify the type and density of residential development associated with the growth scenario developed in the game.



The Hybrid Game

As a way to begin to test some of the aspects of the Reality Check exercise that are not part of the Chip Game, Council staff adjusted the Chip game to allow for the placement of yarn to indicate new transit and roads. Yarn was also used to indicate protection of natural areas. In addition, players were given the assumptions staff has generated using a methodology similar to what is expected to be used for Reality Check. Using that methodology, it was projected that the region will grow by 1.6 million people and 800,000 jobs by 2060. Unlike the standard Chip Game, players were asked to place jobs on the map as well the new housing.



Scenario Analysis

A member of the Data Committee of Reality Check First Coast was on hand to play the game and observe the finer points of scenario analysis after the game is played. Council staff will provide the players with analysis of their scenarios, including how much land each scenario assigned to new development and what type of residential development was included. These are the usual results of the Chip Game. In addition, the analysis will cover how many miles of road and transit was added to the region by each scenario, and at what estimated cost. Similarly, acreage was determined for natural areas protected and the costs of acquisition estimated.

Benefits to Reality Check

The scenario analysis results will not only be helpful to the players in understanding the impacts of their scenarios, but will also provide lessons learned to the Data Committee of Reality Check. That group is working on what scenario analysis should entail in our region, so the hybrid Chip Game gave them a taste of what might happen when Reality Check is played. It also gave Council staff an appreciation of how well planned this aspect of reality Check must be, as scenario analysis for representative scenarios must be done within about an hour of completion of the game, so there is little room for error or delay.

For more information, please contact Ed Lehman, at (904) 279-0885 x 130 or Margo Moehring, at extension 161.

Quarterly TD Directors' Meeting

Directors from the seven counties in Northeast Florida met on July 30 for the third Quarterly Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) Directors' Meeting. The purpose of these meetings is to bring together individuals who work in the same profession, and have the greatest knowledge of the transportation system, to meet and discuss current legislation, regional and state topics, and items of concern with each other and Council staff. TD directors not only discuss how to manage travel in the most efficient, effective way possible with barriers and limited funding to the transportation system, but they also discuss ways to minimize the impact to their riders, who are the elderly and most fragile citizens in the communities.

At the July 30 meeting, the rising cost of fuel was noted, but it took a back seat to several other items of concern. Discussion included: 1) a four percent allocation reduction by Medicaid, who funds a large portion of transportation budgets, 2) a Medicaid out-of-state travel provision with the potential to put some transportation agencies out of service, and 3) a proposal for a Regional CTC Pilot Program. These quarterly meetings have proven to be very beneficial and informative for the participants, and future plans will include guests from the Transportation Disadvantaged Commission.

For more information, please contact Jeanie Palmer at (904) 279-0885 x146.



The Northeast Florida Regional Council would like to welcome its recently appointed Board Members:

Councilman Bill Bishop
City of Jacksonville

Mr. Jeff Cole
St. Johns River Water Management District

Mayor Shirley Graham
Callahan

Mayor Catherine Robinson
Bunnell

Commissioner Ben Rich
St. Johns County

The deadline for application to be a part of the Northeast Florida Regional Leadership Academy has been extended.

To obtain an application, please visit our Web site at: www.NEFRLA.com or contact Mike Hadden at (904) 279-0885 X 104.

The Class of 2009 commences at its Opening Retreat on September 15-16, 2008



CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

Nominations are now being accepted for the Northeast Florida Regional Council's **2008 REGIONAL LEADERSHIP AWARDS.**

In 2003, in response to the high level of Regional Excellence in a variety of critical arenas, the Council launched a Regional Leadership Awards Program. This marks the fifth year the Awards Ceremony has been held. Once again, the Council takes great pride in showcasing the remarkable achievements of the Northeast Florida region and coupling this event with our popular "Elected Officials Reception."

The outstanding nominations submitted in the past have truly reflected the diversity of programs and projects, the quality of these efforts and the leadership demonstrated by the nominees. The accomplishments of all of the nominees are evidence of the positioning of our Regional Community as a model of cooperation and coordination.

Nomination forms are available electronically on the homepage of our Web site at www.NEFRC.org or by calling Mike Hadden at (904) 279-0885 X 104.

