



AGENDA ITEM #VI.D

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DATE: MAY 24, 2021  
TO: COUNCIL MEMBERS  
FROM: STAFF  
SUBJECT: COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

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Attached are brief descriptions of some ongoing programs and activities of the Council.

Information only.



**South Florida Regional Planning Council**

*Proudly serving South Florida since 1974*

**MAY 2021**



The SFRPC hosted a webinar on Tuesday, May 12, 2021 to share information on how Monroe County achieved a Class 3 [Community Rating System](#) from the National Flood Insurance Program. The new automatic CRS premium discounts of 35 percent will begin April 1, 2022 for Monroe County constituents. Topics discussed included lessons learned, best practices, and how these efforts can benefit communities. The County is also underway with [resiliency planning](#). These efforts include sea level rise modeling, analysis of SLR on capital/critical facilities and infrastructure, roads elevation and drainage study, and creation of SLR adaptation action areas, to govern public infrastructure and private development.

Webinar guests were welcomed by Councilmember Mayor Michelle Coldiron and treated to an expert panel that included Christine Hurley, AICP, Assistant County Administrator; Rhonda Haag, Chief Resilience Officer; Lori Lehr, Community Rating System Consultant; Emily Schemper, Sr. Director, Planning & Environmental Resources; Lisa Tennyson, Legislative Affairs & Grants; and Erin Deady, Attorney. Meeting materials and the webinar audio recording are posted on the Council Website <https://sfregionalcouncil.org/webinars/>





For additional information please contact Christine Hurley, AICP, ([hurley-christine@monroecounty-fl.gov](mailto:hurley-christine@monroecounty-fl.gov)); Rhonda Haag ([haag-rhonda@monoecounty-fl.gov](mailto:haag-rhonda@monoecounty-fl.gov)); and Eralda Agolli, MPA, ([eagolli@sfrpc.com](mailto:eagolli@sfrpc.com)), SFRPC Disaster Recovery Coordinator.

**THANK YOU TO OUR GUEST PRESENTERS!**

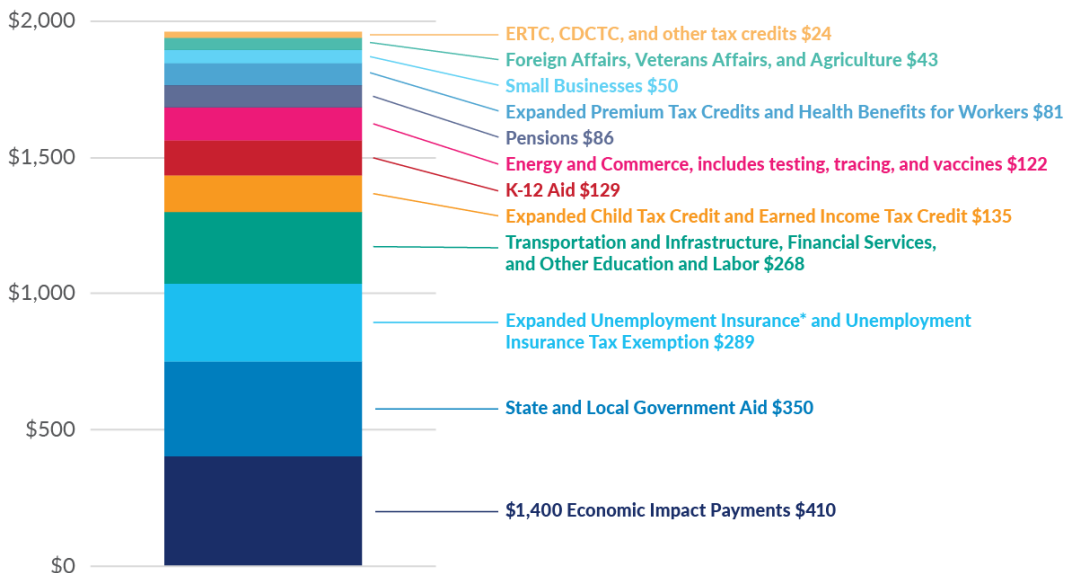
## 2021 American Rescue Plan Resources

The SFRPC has provided resources regarding the newly released American Rescue Plan Federal Investment Guide issued by the U.S. Conference of Mayors along with summaries from the National Association of Counties and National League of Cities. We hope that these summaries will be helpful to you.

- [Federal Investment Guide](#)
- [Legislative Analysis for Counties](#) – The National Association of Counties
- [Local Allocations in the American Rescue Plan](#) – The National League of Cities

## What's in the \$1.9 Trillion American Rescue Plan Act?

*Topline summary of relief in Billions of Dollars*



Note: \*Subject to change pending estimate of Senate version of unemployment insurance expansion.  
 Source: Joint Committee on Taxation and Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget

## Community Engagement in the COVID-19 World: Improving Access at FIU Biscayne Bay Campus Study Update

From June 2020 through February of 2021, the South Florida Regional Planning Council implemented a robust community engagement process for the Florida Department of Transportation District 6 (FDOT) and their consultant team Kimley-Horn as they undertook an update of the 2011 Miami-Dade MPO Improving Access in FIU Biscayne Bay Campus Work Area. Requested by State Senator Jason Pizzo, 38th District, this independent, impartial Study Update sought to identify a road alignment that could be constructed to provide a second ingress and egress point to the Florida International University Biscayne Bay Campus to address safety and mobility concerns while minimizing adverse impacts to the environment, neighboring residents, economy, and private development interests.



In the COVID-19 context, the Council quickly adapted a traditional community engagement process by transferring it effectively and seamlessly to the virtual world. By doing so, the Council ensured a broad community and stakeholder involvement and input for the process that was of paramount interest to the local communities and stakeholders. From September 2 – 23, 2020, five (5) presentations of the initial findings of the July 2020 “Improving Access at Florida International University Biscayne Bay Campus Study Update” were presented to stakeholders including community residents and other members of the public. These virtual meetings consisted of presentations to Miami-Dade County Commissioner Heyman (focus group - 9/2/20), Florida International University (focus group - 9/18/20), Solé Mía (focus group - 9/21/20), Regional Stakeholder Group (focus group - 9/23/20 – 1:30 p.m.), followed by a Public Workshop to gather public input and additional information (Public Workshop - 9/23/20 – 5:30 p.m.) Each subsequent meeting and

opportunity for public input provided greater information and insight as did the additional research and analyses following these meetings. Additionally, the Council, through its Sharepoint, site provided public access to the original study, ongoing study materials, meeting recordings and transcripts, meeting registrants, public comment that was received, and additional meeting materials throughout the process.

A final virtual Public Workshop was held on January 29, 2021, to present additional study updates that were undertaken pursuant to stakeholder input, and FDOT’s recommendation. By quickly adapting to the COVID-19 socially distanced world and effectively engaging the community virtually, the Council not only allowed the process to proceed, but enhanced the community engagement process by broadening the audience and facilitating easier access to public input. **For additional information please contact Christina Miskis, Senior Planner (cmiskis@sfrpc.com).**



## Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)



As part of the Council's responsibility to maintain the region's CEDS document, Council Staff is organizing a CEDS Strategy Committee to formulate an approach for revitalizing the economic development strategy of the region and guide economic development investment by identifying the most significant needs of the region and

incorporating the new recommendations from the Economic Development Administration to increase the focus on economic resiliency and Opportunity Zones. The 2022-2027 CEDS document is to be submitted to EDA by September 2022.

**For additional information please contact Mark Cassidy, MRP, Economic Development & Research Manager ([mcassidy@sfrpc.com](mailto:mcassidy@sfrpc.com)).**

## Southeast Florida Clean Cities Coalition

**Listening Sessions:** The Southeast Florida Clean Cities Coalition (SEFLCCC) hosted two (2) Listening Sessions for the U.S. Department of Energy in December 2020 and January 2021. The Listening Sessions provided the Coalition with comprehensive knowledge on stakeholders needs in South Florida. The Coordinator chose a representation of Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) and Propane end users, local governments, and private alternative fuel companies. The Coalition chose these individuals because of their experience of working with CNG and Propane as alternative fuels. The participants were very vocal when it came to cost savings and educational training. The stakeholders believe that an increase in public safety information will eliminate the concerns of using alternative fuels.



**EV Ride & Drive:** The Southeast Florida Clean Cities Coalition organized the first virtual [EV Ride and Drive](#) with the Southern Alliance for Clean Energy on December 8, 2020. Due to the severity of COVID-19 impact in South Florida, social distance orders were put in place that prohibited gatherings in groups. The event provided an in-depth knowledge of electric vehicles and received positive feedback from all the participants. The Coalition partnered with the Southern Alliance for Clean Energy for an Earth Day Virtual Ride & Drive on April 24, 2021.

**Fleet Tour:** The Coordinator participated in a one-on-one [fleet tour with City Furniture](#) on December 4, 2020. The site tour allowed the Coalition to highlight a CNG fleet in an entertaining way. The Coalition took an in-depth look at CNG conversion and heavy-duty CNG vehicles focusing on the engine and maintenance. The Coalition showcased the type of media outreach that is necessary to engage typical diesel users on the aspect of converting to CNG as an alternative fuel.



**Webinars:** The Coalition hosted its first webinar of 2021 with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT). Tanner Martin, a senior transportation planner, presented Florida’s EV Master Plan on April 14, 2021. Stakeholders had the opportunity for a live question and answer session with FDOT regarding the implementation and structure of the Master Plan. On May 13, 2021, the Coalition hosted its first ever Hydrogen Fuel Webinar. The webinar focused on hydrogen fuel technology, cost-sharing opportunities, and coordination with state leadership.



**Upcoming Events:** The Coordinator positioned the Coalition for future events with prominent agencies and other Clean Cities Coalitions. The Coordinator is currently working with Patti Earley, the Fleet Fuel Operations Specialist at FPL, to conduct a tour of the Nuclear Plant and Biodiesel Fleet in June 2021. The Coalition is partnering with Clean Cities Georgia for a regional event on July 15, 2021. which will showcase CNG fleets in both states. The Coalition is planning an electric vehicle car show for National Drive Electric week in September 2021. The Coordinator will work with all EV stakeholders for support and outreach.

For additional information please contact Alisha Lopez, Clean Cities Coordinator ([alopez@sfrpc.com](mailto:alopez@sfrpc.com)).

## Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) Updates



Since 1988, the Council has served as staff to the South Florida Local Emergency Planning Committee (SoFlaLEPC), which encompasses Broward, Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties. The LEPC was established as required by the Emergency Planning and Community Right-To-Know Act (EPCRA), Title III of the EPA Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA). Congress enacted EPCRA in an effort to help local communities protect public health and safety and the environment from chemical hazards.

The LEPC, as established pursuant to Section 301 of Title III, shall:

- prepare regional hazardous materials emergency plans that indicate the facilities that use, produce, or store hazardous substances that are present in the jurisdiction
- serve as the repository for regional reports filed under Title III
- direct regional Title III implementation activities
- perform associated outreach functions to increase awareness and understanding of and compliance with the Title III Program.

The South Florida LEPC prides itself in being able to provide hazardous materials response training at no-cost to public agencies. We are pleased to announce that there are multiple responder training courses that are taking place and being planned this quarter. Once the COVID-19 pandemic took storm, hazardous materials response training ultimately came to a halt. Fortunately, the LEPC was able to work with an instructor to develop a virtual version of a vital training course, the Occupational Safety and Health

Administration's Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response Awareness Course (OSHA HAZWOPER).

The completion of OSHA HAZWOPER Refresher Courses is a requirement for many essential workers that provide us with our everyday services. The list includes environmental protection employees, employees of water treatment plants, and emergency responders. This training course covers a wide range of subjects relating to hazardous materials response, including personal protection equipment and spill mitigation.

The LEPC has collaborated with Broward County Environmental & Consumer Protection to provide OSHA HAZWOPER training to 50 of their employees. The LEPC is also working with Miami Dade's Water and Sewer Department to provide 300 of their employees with OSHA HAZWOPER training, which starts in April 2021. The LEPC is able to provide this training thanks to a grant offered by the Pipeline Safety and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, distributed by Florida's Division of Emergency Management.

For additional information please contact Jason McMahon, LEPC Coordinator ([jmcmahon@sfrpc.com](mailto:jmcmahon@sfrpc.com)).

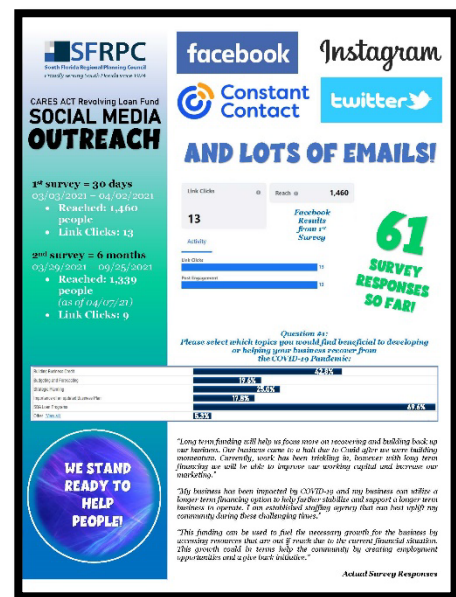
## EDA CARES ACT Revolving Loan Fund Programs – Social Media Outreach

The EDA CARES Act Revolving Loan Fund Program (RLF) has successfully conducted an outreach program through our social media accounts (i.e. Facebook, Instagram and Twitter). The first survey was run from 03/03/2021 – 04/02/2021 and reached 1,460 people within our Region. After such success, the survey was extended for another 6 months, to end in September 2021. To date, the second survey has reached 1,251. The Council has also received 114 responses, in which our RLF Administrator has filtered through and been able to assist additional borrowers with the necessary funding to help their businesses recover from the COVID-19 Pandemic.

- [Client Testimonials](#)

For additional information please contact Jennie Sullivan, MPA, Communications and Social Media Coordinator ([jsullivan@sfrpc.com](mailto:jsullivan@sfrpc.com)).

To apply for a business loan, please contact Steve Foreman, EDA CARES Act Revolving Loan Fund Administrator ([sforeman@sfrpc.com](mailto:sforeman@sfrpc.com)) or Alisha Lopez, Revolving Loan Fund Specialist, [alopez@sfrpc.com](mailto:alopez@sfrpc.com).



## South Florida Regional Planning Council organizes and hosts Department of Economic Opportunity Regional Broadband Workshop



The South Florida Regional Planning Council, in partnership with the Florida Office of Broadband at the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO), hosted a workshop on February 9, 2021 that included leaders from various sectors of the region, including Economic Development, Small Business Development, and Community Organizations, Colleges/Universities, K-12 Education, Private Businesses, Local Governments, and Internet Service Providers.

The input gathered during the meeting will help direct the Office of Broadband in understanding the regional availability and accessibility of broadband internet in the region, ultimately assisting in the design of state programs and resources for broadband adoption, deployment, expansion, and resiliency. The information shared during the workshops will also be used in the development of the Florida Strategic Plan for Broadband.

**For additional information please contact Mark Cassidy, MRP, Economic Development & Research Manager ([mcassidy@sfrpc.com](mailto:mcassidy@sfrpc.com)).**

## Florida Statewide Evacuation Study Program

Council Staff continues working with the Northeast Florida Regional Council and the other eight Florida RPCs to continue the efforts of the RPCs and the Florida Department of Emergency Management (FDEM) in the Statewide Regional Evacuation Study Program. Recent accomplishments of the study include updating baseline demographic and economic GIS data inputs for FDEM's evacuation model, called Transportation Interface for Modeling Evacuations (TIME). Council Staff is coordinating with regional County Emergency Managers to review the inputs and results of the FDEM model and update the region's Operational Scenarios if necessary.



Further, Council Staff is hosting regional County Emergency Managers for a presentation of the draft Behavioral Analysis update, which is led by a consultant team of Cambridge Systematics and the University of Central Florida. Council Staff will continue working with the working group to finalize the Evacuation Study and post the Study information on an online dashboard instead of a long-form report as done previously. The project will conclude June 2022.

**For additional information please contact Mark Cassidy, MRP, Economic Development & Research Manager ([mcassidy@sfrpc.com](mailto:mcassidy@sfrpc.com)).**



## Miami-Dade Transportation Planning Organization's COVID-19 Travel Behavior Trend Analysis on schedule for completion in June 2021.

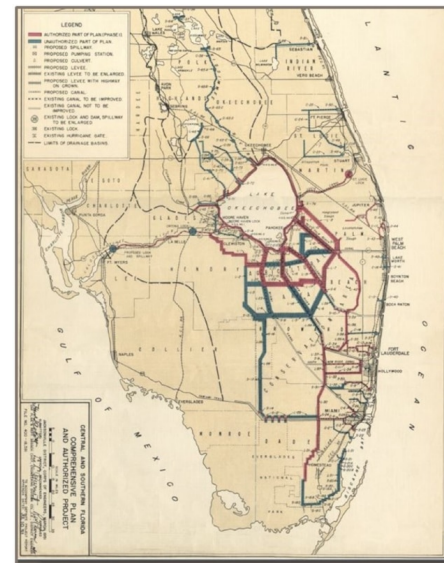


Council Staff continues its partnership with the Miami-Dade Transportation Planning Organization with its ongoing COVID-19 Travel Behavior Trend Analysis. In its analysis, the Council is assessing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on commuters' travel patterns in the Miami-Dade County by comparing pre-and-post lock down traffic movement for passenger vehicles and freight vehicles, vehicular travel volumes, transit ridership volumes, bicycle and pedestrian movement activity volumes and patterns, hotel bookings, airport enplanements, as well as seaport embarkations/debarkation and other data as available. The goal of the effort is to understand the impact the pandemic has had on travel patterns and the transportation network and project forward how behavior shifts may impact long-term mobility trends in the future. This project will conclude in June 2021.

For additional information please contact Christina Miskis, Senior Planner ([cmiskis@sfrpc.com](mailto:cmiskis@sfrpc.com)).

## South Florida and Treasure Coast Leaders ask Congressional Leaders to support the Central and Southern Florida Project Resilience Update in FY 2022

At its April 26<sup>th</sup> monthly Council Meeting, the South Florida Regional Planning Council (SFRPC) adopted TCSR #21-01, a Joint Resolution of the South Florida and Treasure Coast Regional Planning Councils, and added its voice once again to that of public, private, and nonprofit leaders throughout the region who have joined together to urge U.S. Senator Marco Rubio, U.S. Senator Rick Scott, and Southeast Florida's congressional leaders to fast track the funding of a Central and South Florida Flood Control Project (C&SF) Resiliency Study as a matter of urgency. This Resiliency Study and update of the C&SF is needed to address flooding and water management objectives (such as water supply) impacted by our substantially altered landscape and changes in environmental conditions relative to conditions observed and predicted 70 years ago when the system was planned and constructed. These include sea level rise, rainfall intensity, land development, and population growth.



The C&SF Project, authorized by Congress pursuant to the Flood Control act of 1948, directed the USACE to design and construct water management infrastructure to serve a population of 2 million people. Its authorized purposes included flood control, water supply, navigation, prevention of saltwater intrusion, and the protection of fish and wildlife resources. Fast forward to 2020, we now have 8.7 million residents in the region, realized sea level rise, more extreme rainfall, and higher groundwater levels. The South Florida Water Management District, USACE, and the region's Resilience Officers have observed alarming signs pointing to the urgent need for a new, comprehensive study to guide resilience improvements to this system. These signs include sunny day flooding, saltwater intrusion into fresh water drinking supplies, and the breaching of critical water control structures.

Despite these realized changes and impacts, the C&SF Project has not been reviewed with consideration of sea level rise, changes in rainfall patterns, and overall higher groundwater and flood elevations. These changing conditions constrain our gravity-controlled drainage system and regularly preclude operation of the flood control gates throughout this important, but increasingly limited, infrastructure network. Despite significant local and state investment in resilience including land use, design standards, and infrastructure improvements, these efforts are dependent upon an updated, functioning C&SF Project.

Experts agree that absent a timely Resiliency Study and accompanying infrastructure investments, South Florida's economic viability and quality of life for residents and visitors alike is in great peril. The good news is that significant progress has been made to support the C&SF Resiliency Study effort. First the Governing Board of the SFWMD agreed in March 2020 to be the local sponsor of the feasibility study. The USACE completed an Initial Appraisal Report for the study in March 2020 stating that "there is a Federal interest in proceeding to the feasibility phase of this study to further analyze and evaluate improvements to the C&SF project." And finally, in May 2020 the South Atlantic Division of the USACE approved the Initial Appraisal Report making the study eligible for federal funding. We urge the region's residents and stakeholders to communicate with your federal elected officials to request their continued support for the C&SF Flood Resiliency Study as a new study under the "New Starts" program of the FY 2022 Work Plan for the Army Civil Works program. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the many dedicated individuals and professionals at the SFWMD; USACE; State of Florida; counties; cities; regional public, private, and nonprofit stakeholders; and residents who have unceasingly advocated for this important regional priority.

**For additional information please contact Isabel Cosio Carballo, MPA, Executive Director (isabelc@sfrpc.com).**