



Annual Report
2021-2022



Our Mission

Leveraging partnerships to build a strong economy and improve the lives of all Floridians

The Florida Regional Councils Association is an alliance of Florida's ten Regional Planning Councils and serves to enhance regional collaboration throughout the state.



President's Message

Challenged by bringing communities successfully through economic recovery, preparing for the impacts of the next natural disaster, and identifying the best practices to create resiliency and sustainability from those impacts, Florida's regional planning councils have led the way. The ten regional councils across Florida prepared Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) blueprints for each region in partnership with the US Economic Development Administration (EDA). Each RPC worked with the Florida Department of Emergency Management (DEM) to ensure first responders have access to training and provided coordination for all communities to support natural and manmade disaster emergency response. All RPCs actively support resiliency planning, and five are now leading resiliency coalitions.

The Florida Regional Councils Association (FRCA) works on building and sustaining partnerships. Through internal coordination among RPCs and collaborative partnerships with associations such as the Florida Association of Counties, Florida League of Cities, Small County Coalition, Florida Chapter of the American Planning Association, Florida Chamber of Commerce, and many non-profit organizations, FRCA fosters more effective relationships and program delivery with state agencies and Florida policymakers.

During this demanding year, it has been my privilege to serve as President of FRCA and work with the Policy Board Members throughout the state to support the critical mission of these multi-disciplinary organizations. Regional planning councils bring local knowledge to create regional solutions and make impacts statewide on the shared problems and unlimited opportunities of Florida's communities. Highly technical and dedicated staff work throughout the state with local governments, state and Federal agencies, the business community, and citizens to bring a better quality of life to Florida. We bring you this Annual Report that reflects the diverse work of our organizations.

Kristin Dozier, President
Florida Regional Councils Association



1st VICE PRESIDENT
Commissioner Robert Wilford
North Central Florida RPC

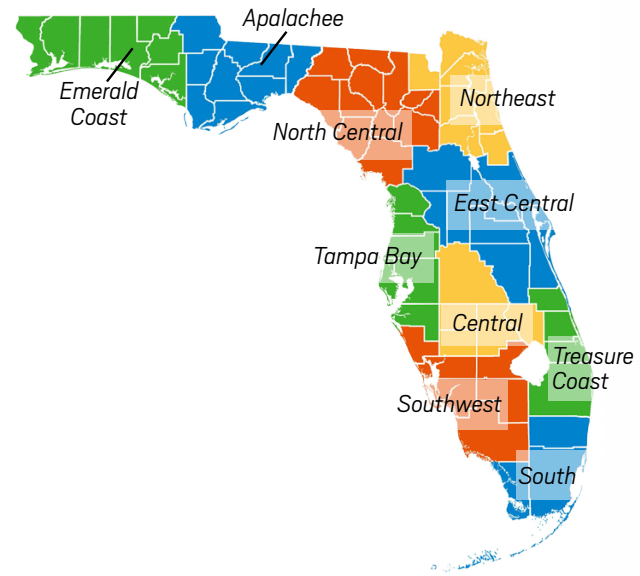


2nd VICE PRESIDENT
Mr. John Lesman
East Central Florida RPC



PAST PRESIDENT
Commissioner Peter O'Bryan
Treasure Coast RPC

Policy Board



APALACHEE REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

Honorable Kristin Dozier, Leon County
Ms. Lisa Miller, Gubernatorial Appointee
Honorable Gene Wright, Town of Malone

CENTRAL FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

Honorable Nathaniel Birdsong, City of Winter Haven
Honorable Kelly Owens, Okeechobee County
Ms. Jacqueline Tucker, Gubernatorial Appointee

EAST CENTRAL FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

Mr. John Lesman, Gubernatorial Appointee
Commissioner Sean Parks, Lake County
Commissioner Julian Green, City Of Wildwood, Sumter County

EMERALD COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL

Honorable Kasey Cuchens, City of Freeport
Honorable Tray Hawkins, Washington County
Mr. J.D. Smith, Gubernatorial Appointee

NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

Honorable Charles Chestnut IV, Alachua County
Honorable Janice Mortimer, City of Starke
Ms. Lorene Thomas, Gubernatorial Appointee

NORTHEAST FLORIDA REGIONAL COUNCIL

Honorable Randy DeFoor, City of Jacksonville
Honorable Larry Harvey, Putnam County
Mr. Darryl Register, Gubernatorial Appointee

SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

Mr. Mario Bailey, Gubernatorial Appointee
Honorable Jordan Leonard, Town of Bay Harbor Islands
Honorable Michael Udine, Broward County

SOUTHWEST FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

Mr. Tommy Perry, Gubernatorial Appointee

TAMPA BAY REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

Honorable Scott Black, City of Dade City
Honorable Ronald Kitchen, Citrus County
Ms. Barbara Sheen Todd, Gubernatorial Appointee

TREASURE COAST REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

Honorable Jeff Hmara, Village of Royal Palm Beach
Mr. Reece Parrish, Gubernatorial Appointee
Honorable Doug Smith, Martin County

Advisory Committee & Staff

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Chair | Sean T. Sullivan, Tampa Bay RPC
Vice Chair | Elizabeth Payne, Northeast Florida RC
Treasurer | Thomas J. Lanahan, Treasure Coast RPC
Immediate Past Chair | Chris N. Rietow, Apalachee RPC

STAFF

Ronald L. Book, Executive Director
850.224.3427 | 305.510.2000
ron@rlbookpa.com

Rana Brown, Governmental Affairs Consultant
850.224.3427 | 305.510.2000
rana@rlbookpa.com

Denise Imbler, Statewide Coordinator
850.312.3685 | 850.509.4320
dimbler@arpc.org





2021-2022
By the Numbers

▶ **5**

**METROPOLITAN/
 TRANSPORTATION
 PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS
 STAFFED**

▶ **101**

**ECONOMIC ANALYSES
 COMPLETED (REMI)**

▶ **722**

**PLANNING ACTIVITIES
 CONDUCTED**

▶ **182**

**NUMBER OF REVOLVING
 LOAN FUND APPLICATIONS
 REVIEWED**

▶ **1,009**

**TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
 ACTIVITIES PROVIDED TO
 LOCAL GOVERNMENTS**

▶ **1,409**

**HAZARDOUS MATERIALS
 INSPECTIONS OF SMALL
 QUANTITY GENERATORS (SQG)**

▶ **1,029,930**

**TRANSPORTATION
 DISADVANTAGED
 TRIPS PLANNED**

Regional Councils

bring local governments together to solve problems at the regional level and help communities grow.

	Date Established	2021 Regional Population ¹	Governing Board Size	Staff Size (FTE) ²	Square Miles ³	Budget (in millions)
 <p>Apalachee Calhoun, Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Jackson, Jefferson, Leon, Liberty, Wakulla</p>	Aug. 23, 1977	484,168	27	17	6,757	\$4.2
 <p>Central Florida DeSoto, Hardee, Highlands, Okeechobee, Polk</p>	July 1, 1974	948,878	18	21	5,287	\$5.3
 <p>East Central Florida Brevard, Lake, Marion, Orange, Osceola, Seminole, Sumter, Volusia</p>	Feb. 22, 1962	4,437,866	35	16	9,244	\$2.6
 <p>Emerald Coast Bay, Escambia, Holmes, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, Walton, Washington</p>	Oct. 1, 1964	1,030,456	28	28	6,509	\$4.4
 <p>North Central Florida Alachua, Bradford, Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Lafayette, Levy, Madison, Suwannee, Taylor, Union</p>	May 7, 1969	580,595	45	8	8,660	\$1.5
 <p>Northeast Florida Baker, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Nassau, Putnam, St. Johns</p>	Feb. 14, 1977	1,838,821	35	16	5,097	\$2.6
 <p>South Florida Broward, Miami-Dade, Monroe</p>	July 1, 1974	4,770,725	19	16	7,492	\$3.3
 <p>Southwest Florida Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry, Lee, Sarasota</p>	Nov. 8, 1973	1,850,007	36	3	7,278	\$1.0
 <p>Tampa Bay Citrus, Hernando, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas</p>	Feb. 16, 1962	3,794,119	44	12	4,998	\$3.1
 <p>Treasure Coast Indian River, Martin, Palm Beach, St. Lucie</p>	Aug. 19, 1976	2,163,310	28	10	4,441	\$2.7

¹Source: Florida Estimates of Population, 2021, Table 5, Bureau of Economic and Business Research, University of Florida, 2021.

²FTE means Full-Time Equivalent.

³Total land and water area.

Regional Councils Work Together

FOR HURRICANE EVACUATION & RECOVERY

In a rapidly changing climate and severe weather events, Florida is an epicenter of tropical storms and hurricanes, which are predicted to become more intense and destructive in the coming years. A future with physical devastation, the potential risk of loss of life, property, and economic disruption caused by major hurricanes, requires all hands on deck to prepare our state.

The regional planning councils of Florida are partners not only with local governments, emergency management officials, state agencies including DEM and DEO, Federal agencies including FEMA, EDA, and SBA, but also nonprofit and religious organizations providing aid to citizens and businesses impacted by these disasters. Through staffing to Local Emergency Planning Committees and coordination and presence in Emergency Operations Centers (EOC) around the state, RPC's continually assist with planning and preparing for manmade and natural disasters but are also there for service during declared events.

From a statewide perspective, the regional councils supported DEM in the update of the Statewide Regional Evacuation Study and continue to provide technical input to update the study with new data. This study covering every region in the state provides critical evacuation times based upon predictive models of the travel behavior of persons in preparation for a declared emergency evacuation.

All ten Florida RPCs have been involved in recovery from various storm-related impacts in the last decade. Whether dealing with inland flooding, tornadoes, wind damage, or devastating coastal storm surge and beach erosion, RPCs have worked with both recovery partners and with sustained long-term economic development initiatives to rebuild our communities. Unwelcomed visits from Irma, Michael, Maria, Ian, and Nicole, will undoubtedly be joined by future names. This continuing commitment to be there in the planning and preparation, evacuation and emergency operations, and short and long-term recovery is a hallmark of the mission of Florida's regional planning councils.



Regional Councils *Are Building Resiliency*

Resilience is the ability to bounce forward; absorb, recover and get better in the face of short term shocks like hurricanes or infrastructure failures and long – term stressors like affordable housing, aging infrastructure, shifting economic trends and climate change. All 10 RPCs are actively involved in supporting resiliency planning and five now are leading resiliency coalitions.

**Apalachee Strong Regional Resiliency Collaborative • Heartland Regional Resiliency Coalition
East Central Florida Regional Resilience Collaborative • Resilient First Coast
Tampa Bay Regional Resiliency Coalition**



East Central Florida RPC Participates in Partnership for the Goals Event

More than one hundred regional leaders from different organizations in east central Florida came together as part of the region's first Partnership for the Goals event. The two-day summit was a partnership between the Brookings Institution, the East Central Florida Regional Resilience Collaborative, housed at the East Central Florida RPC, the Central Florida Foundation, the University of Central Florida's Center for Global Environmental and Economic Opportunity, Orange County, the City of Orlando, and Florida for Good.

Partnership for the Goals was to break from business-as-usual and leverage the Sustainable Development

Goals (SDG) framework as a tool for conversation across government, philanthropic, academic, business, and civic society that often struggle to connect across professional vocabularies and organizational reference points.

The event resulted in new connections and yielded more than two dozen actionable ideas. Most importantly, the event culminated in new collaborations across regional sectors. The Brookings Institute stated it is quickly becoming a model for other global communities. It will remain a cornerstone event of the East Central Florida Regional Resilience Collaborative's efforts for years to come.

Northeast Florida Develops Resiliency Plan for the Health and Medical Lifeline

Administered by the Northeast Florida RC, the North Florida Resiliency Plan for the Health and Medical Lifeline aims to significantly enhance the healthcare sector's ability to adapt and recover from flooding, storm surge, and sea level rise impacts. This Resiliency Plan will provide supporting data, analysis, and mitigation strategies that will be useful during normal operations and extreme weather events. By focusing specifically on improving healthcare infrastructure resilience and essential clinical care service delivery, this Resiliency Plan aims to assist organizations in reducing future vulnerabilities and losses and improving the functioning of a broad range of healthcare facilities across the 18-county region.

In February, the State's Chief Resilience Officer, Dr. Wesley Brooks, met with county and city officials across the Tampa Bay region to tour and discuss resiliency projects and challenges faced by the Tampa Bay Region community. Dr. Brooks oversees the Office of Resilience and Coastal Protection at the Department of Environmental Protection and supports the resiliency efforts of several state agencies.



Tampa Bay Regional Resiliency Leadership Summit 2022

The Tampa Bay RPC hosted its 2nd Resiliency Leadership Summit on April 5 & 6, 2022. During the Summit, the Council unveiled the efforts, progress, and work that has taken place in the last year with the introduction of the Draft Regional Resiliency Action Plan. The Action Plan includes strategies and actions based on technical data that assesses sea-level rise vulnerability, informs planning efforts, and provides guidance on the sea-level rise projections to inform local planning efforts.



Tampa Bay Regional Mayors shown above (left to right): Jane Castor, City of Tampa; Ken Welch, City of St. Petersburg; Frank Hibbard, City of Clearwater; and Woody Brown, City of Largo.

QUALITY OF *Life*

The RPCs assist local communities as they implement community visions and strategies. Brownfields programs across the state work to provide resources that clean up abandoned or underused commercial and industrial sites. Many RPCs also provide other services to enhance the quality of life using GIS mapping and affordable housing initiatives.



North Central Florida RPC Promotes Eco-tourism

The North Central Florida RPC provides staff support services to the Original Florida Tourism Task Force, a multi-county destination marketing organization promoting nature-based, heritage-based, and cultural-based tourism in the north-central Florida region. The area comprises 14 predominantly rural counties and covers approximately 10,000 square miles. The Task Force brands and markets the region as Visit Natural North Florida. Marketing activities include a website, digital and print advertising campaigns, brochures and a quarterly electronic newsletter distribution, and participation at travel shows.

This project is an innovative regional partnership approach to tourism promotion. This partnership supports rural counties throughout the north central Florida region to reach a larger market to promote their nature-based, heritage-based, and culture-based tourism opportunities. Visit the website: naturalnorthflorida.org for more information.

Central Florida RPC Partners on Florida Wildlife Corridor

The Florida Wildlife Corridor stretches from the Everglades to Georgia and west to Alabama. Its conservation helps ensure Florida's wildlife populations are connected and protected and was developed to create incentives for sustaining and conserving the green infrastructure. As a foundation of Florida's economy and quality of life, the Corridor includes nearly 18 million acres, with 46% identified as Opportunity Areas or Corridor areas yet to be conserved.



Through an agreement with Archbold Biological Station, the Central Florida RPC identified Florida Wildlife Corridor Opportunity Areas within the Heartland counties of DeSoto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, Okeechobee, and Polk with the potential for near-term development. Data collected and analyzed to inform the report included building permits, zoning changes, land suitability, generalized future land use, existing infrastructure relevant to future development, and development entitlements. Activities included coordination with State agencies, non-profit organizations, and landowners to identify Opportunity Areas potentially available for acquisition, voluntary conservation easements, or those requiring coordination to support new development or redevelopment projects.

EMERGENCY Preparedness

Working together, RPCs conduct cooperative statewide projects such as the award winning statewide Regional Evacuation Study, the Energy Assurance Study, and coastal resiliency planning.

Central Florida RPC Hosts Full-Scale Airplane Crash and Mass Casualty Exercise

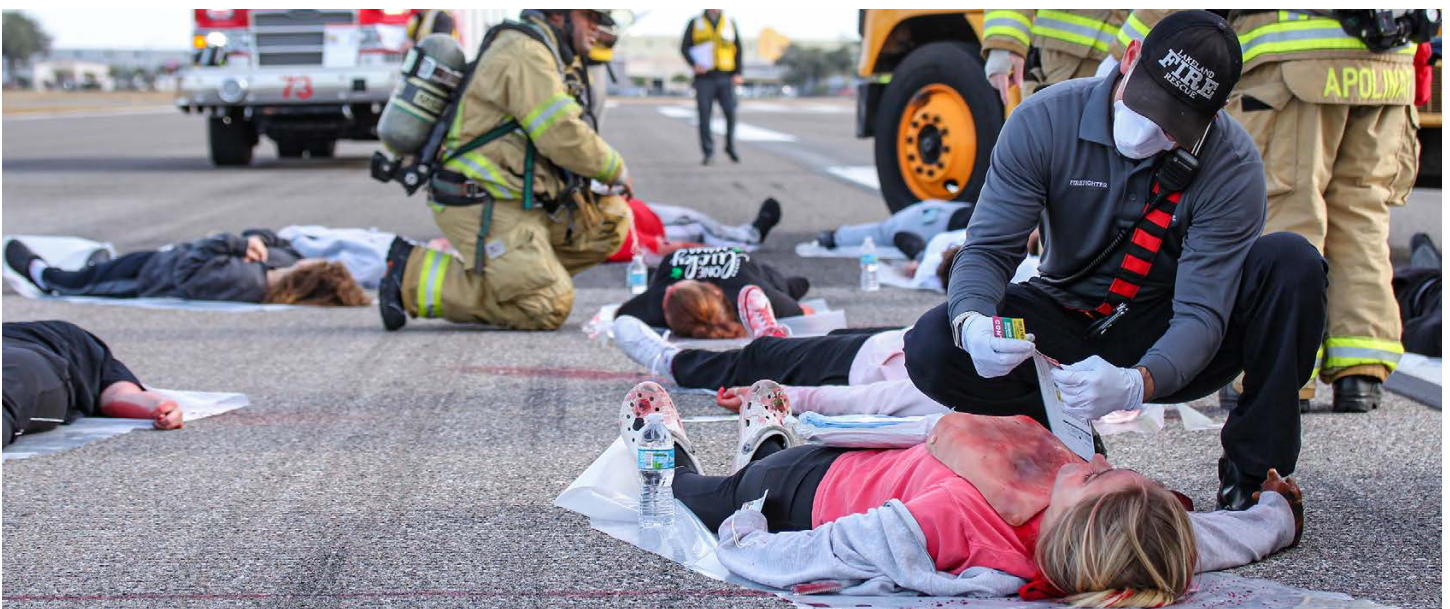
Over 170 first responders, volunteer victims, and evaluators worked together to simulate an airline crash at the Lakeland Linder International Airport to test existing plans, systems, and processes on February 15, 2022. The Central Florida RPC contracted with Emergency Response Educators and Consultants Inc. (EREC) to coordinate the triennial full-scale exercise, engaging multiple agencies to test emergency response policies and procedures.

An After-Action Report and Improvement Plan will provide participating agencies with a full report of the event and guide them in improving their response to real-time disaster events.

Florida Hazardous Materials Symposium

The 9th Annual Florida Hazardous Materials Symposium hosted over 575 participants and included 65+ training sessions. Led by the East Central Florida RPC, the Symposium aims to educate and train first responders, first receivers, manufacturers, and industry partners on hazardous materials response, mitigation, prevention, and safety through classroom and hands-on training.

During the four-day conference, hazmat teams compete in simulated hazardous materials scenarios and are scored according to National Fire Protection Association guidelines by independent experts. Seven HazMat Teams competed in the competition, with Orange County Fire Rescue winning first place, the City of Orlando Fire Department taking second place, and Palm Beach County Fire Rescue coming third.



ECONOMIC *Development*

RPCs complete regional economic impact analysis using the nationally recognized REMI software, facilitate Post Disaster Redevelopment Planning, and administer revolving loan funds for small business loans and brownfields redevelopment.

Revolving Loan Funds Recapitalized in Apalachee and South Florida RPCs



For decades regional planning councils have supported small businesses through revolving loan programs established with funding through the EDA. This ongoing partnership, and local matching funds, allowed Apalachee and South Florida Regional Planning Councils to capitalize over \$6.8 million to help alleviate sudden and severe economic impacts caused by the coronavirus pandemic and Hurricane Michael.

South Florida RPC reached the milestone of lending the entirety of the EDA's CARES Act Revolving Loan Fund of \$5.38 million six months ahead of schedule. The SFRPC was recognized as a successful program by the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration.

Apalachee RPC expanded its RLF Program, adding two new funds totaling just over \$1.5 million. The Regional Economies Vested in Vital Enterprises (REVIVE!) program was established to grow small businesses and create more jobs within Leon County and the City of Tallahassee. A separate CARES Act RLF provided businesses in Calhoun, Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Jackson, Jefferson, Liberty, and Wakulla counties with gap financing to help them survive and recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Southwest Florida RPC Promotes SWFL Fresh – Choose Local, Choose Fresh

The Southwest Florida RPC was selected for the 2021 USDA Regional Food System Partnership grant to implement the trademarked regional brand "SWFL Fresh: Choose Local, Choose Fresh." The trademarked regional brand showcases SWFL food producers and their products. The RPC is leading the three-year project in collaboration with the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Services Cooperative Extension Service and Tropical Research and Education Center.

Transportation

RPCs participate in the Transportation Disadvantaged program, as staff to local Metropolitan/ Transportation Planning Organizations, and provide planning services for Complete Streets, Safe Routes to Schools, and Greenways and Trails.



Hosted by the Emerald Coast Regional Council, the Transportation Symposium brings together leaders across transportation industries to learn, connect, and be inspired by the latest innovations in the transportation realm. This year's event was held on Thursday, October 6, and Friday, October 7, 2022, in Panama City Beach, Florida.



Apalachee RPC Coordinates "Cycle the Arts" Campaign

In collaboration with Council on Culture and Arts (COCA), Apalachee RPC staff coordinated and developed the "Cycle the Arts" campaign. This new biking experience highlights over 300 outdoor works of public art throughout Tallahassee. ARPC staff created an interactive PDF map for this initiative illustrating bike-friendly routes to public art sites around Tallahassee. Public art is people-powered, and the ARPC/ COCA "Cycle the Arts" campaign offers a new perspective on the accessibility and equity of public art.

REGIONAL *Converging*

RPCs serve as regional conveners. They lead community and regional vision efforts, engage the public in a variety of plans and programs, and maintain Strategic Regional Policy Plans.

Northeast Florida Regional Council Hosts 2022 Overdose Summit



The Northeast Florida RC hosted the 2022 Overdose Summit at the World Golf Village in St. Augustine. The educational Summit brought together more than 120 attendees from around the region for a day-long event examining various aspects of addiction and overdose. While the Summit targeted all forms of addiction, the focus was primarily on fentanyl and the extreme danger it poses. The Summit included 19 speakers covering topics such as the neuroscience of addiction, the stigma of addiction, the risks of the opioid epidemic, and public safety.

Treasure Coast RPC Regional Economic Development Summit

In March 2022, Treasure Coast RPC hosted its Regional Economic Development Summit. It was a unique opportunity to review the latest economic trends, interact with industry leaders, and provide input to update the 2018 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Plan for the Treasure Coast Region. The goal of the summit was to provide an opportunity for broad-based and diverse stakeholder participation that addresses economic challenges and identifies unique opportunities for the entire Region.



Awards & Partners

2022 NADO Impact Awards

Apalachee Regional Planning Council

- *Cycle the Arts*

Central Florida Regional Planning Council

- *City of Lakeland's Comprehensive Plan: Our Community*
- *Hardee County Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Trails Master Plan*

East Central Florida Regional Planning Council

- *Southeast Volusia Economic Development Strategic Plan*
- *Partnership for the Goals*
- *Pipeline Emergency Response Initiative (PERI)*

North Central Florida Regional Planning Council

- *Gainesville Metropolitan Area Multimodal Level of Service Report*

Northeast Florida Regional Council

- *2022 Overdose Summit*

South Florida Regional Planning Council

- *The Southeast Florida Clean Cities Coalition*

Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council

- *An Industrial Land Strategy for Pasco County*
- *Resilient Ready Tampa Bay*



Central Florida RPC was recognized for City of Lakeland Comprehensive Plan: Our Community 2030 by NADO, APA Florida, and Florida Planning and Zoning Association. Pictured (left to right): Commissioner Chad McLeod, Pat Steed, Commissioner Sara Roberts McCarley

NADO Excellence in Regional Transportation Awards

Central Florida Regional Planning Council

Meeting Your Communities' Needs through Mobility Management

STATEWIDE PARTNERS





2507 Callaway Road, Suite 200
Tallahassee, FL 32303
850.312.3685 | flregionalcouncils.org

**APALACHEE
REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL**

Executive Director: Chris N. Rietow
2507 Callaway Road, Suite 100
Tallahassee, FL 32303
850.488.6211 | arpc.org

**CENTRAL FLORIDA
REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL**

Executive Director: Patricia M. Steed
555 East Church Street
Bartow, FL 33830
863.534.7130 | cfrpc.org

**EAST CENTRAL FLORIDA
REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL**

Executive Director: Tara McCue
LYNX Building, 4th Floor,
455 North Garland Ave., Orlando, FL 32801
407.245.0300 | ecfrc.org

**EMERALD COAST
REGIONAL COUNCIL**

Executive Director: Austin L. Mount
4081 East Olive Rd., Suite A,
Pensacola, FL 32514
850.332.7976 | ecrc.org

**NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA
REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL**

Executive Director: Scott R. Koons
2009 Northwest 67th Place
Gainesville, FL 32653
352.955.2200 | ncfrc.org

**NORTHEAST FLORIDA
REGIONAL COUNCIL**

Executive Director: Elizabeth Payne
100 Festival Park Avenue
Jacksonville, FL 32202
904.279.0880 | nefrc.org

**SOUTH FLORIDA
REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL**

Executive Director: Isabel Cosio Carballo
1 Oakwood Blvd, Suite 250
Hollywood, FL 33020
954.924.3653 | sfregionalcouncil.org

**SOUTHWEST FLORIDA
REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL**

Executive Director: Margaret A. Wuerstle
PO Box 60933
Fort Myers, FL 33906
239.938.1813 | swfrpc.org

**TAMPA BAY
REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL**

Executive Director: Sean T. Sullivan
4000 Gateway Centre Blvd., Suite 100
Pinellas Park, FL 33782
727.570.5151 | tbrpc.org

**TREASURE COAST
REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL**

Executive Director: Thomas J. Lanahan
421 Southwest Camden Avenue
Stuart, FL 34994
772.221.4060 | tcrpc.org