



COVID-19 ECONOMIC RESILIENCE STRATEGY

For South Florida's Future



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INTRODUCTION

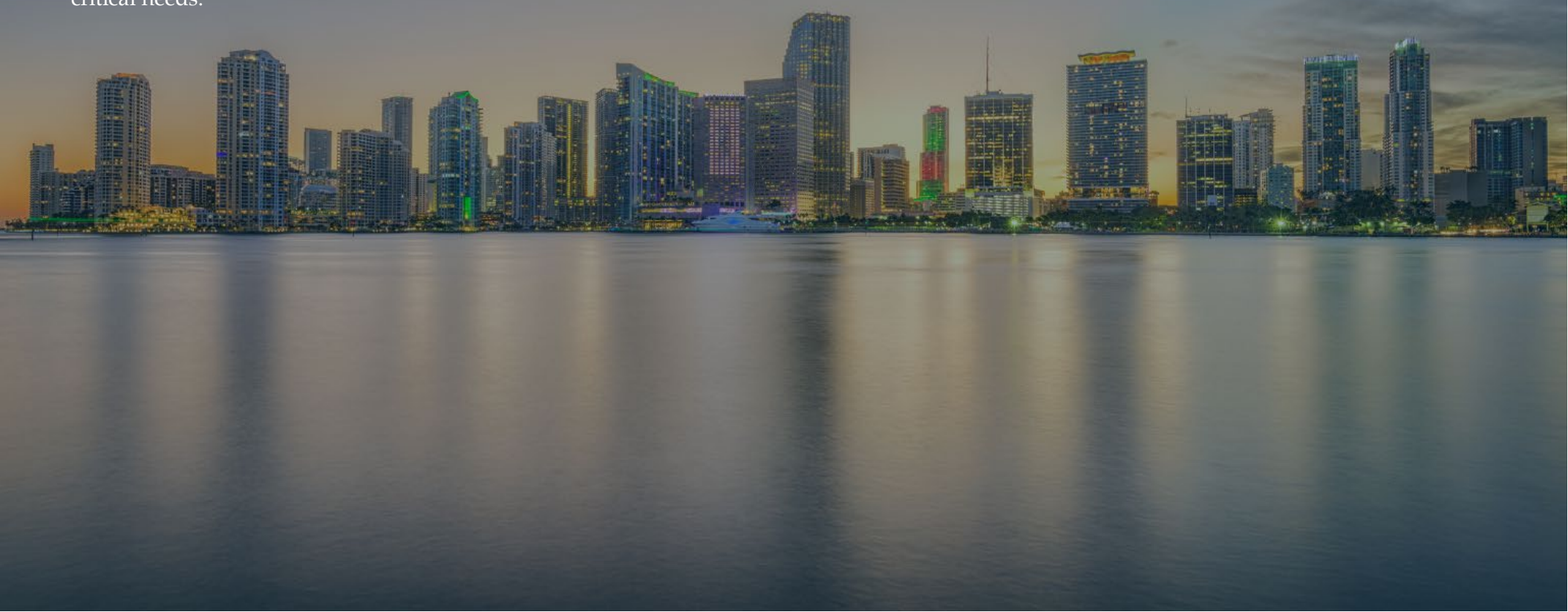
About the SFRPC

Our mission is to identify the long-term challenges and opportunities facing South Florida and assist the Region's leaders in developing and implementing creative strategies that result in more prosperous and equitable communities, a healthier and cleaner environment, and a more vibrant economy.

The Council has served Monroe, Miami-Dade, and Broward counties since 1974 through regional, collaborative planning, and was designated an Economic Development District by EDA in 1993. The Council offers a robust economic development program which includes planning, technical assistance, and revolving loan fund programs for small businesses, COVID-impacted businesses, and other critical needs.

OUR SERVICES

- Economic Development
- Revolving Loan Fund
- Emergency Preparedness
- Transportation & Alt Fuels
- Resiliency & Sea Level Rise
- Mapping & Geospatial Analysis
- Regional Development & Local Government Comprehensive Plan Review



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“Resilience” became an increasingly important concept since the COVID-19 pandemic arrived in South Florida in March 2020. Becoming more resilient is something that cities and states must do if they are to survive global economic disruptors, such as future pandemics. The COVID-19 pandemic dramatically exposed the region’s economic inequality and the underlying weaknesses of the economy. While all economic sectors in South Florida have been affected, the Leisure and Hospitality industry has been the hardest hit sector in terms of employment loss and economic activity. The virus wielded unequal impacts on low-income workers who were laid off in higher numbers at the start of the pandemic due to higher levels of employment in the Leisure & Hospitality Sector. Some of the region’s workers were able to transition smoothly to remote work without disruptions to their employment, but others could not.



The South Florida Regional Planning Council (SFRPC) received funding from the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) in August 2020 to support economic resilience efforts across the region directly related to COVID-19. This funding enabled the SFRPC to focus staff resources on priorities related to COVID-19 response, recovery, and long-term planning. This Economic Resilience Plan (ERP) was developed by the South Florida Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Strategy Committee and Work Group members.

From its inception, the vision for the ERP included engaging a multi-disciplinary team of subject matter experts in a coordinated effort to develop a strategic plan aligned with the CEDS for South Florida to address



recovery from the economic shock of COVID-19, future pandemics, and similar economic shocks. In all, more than 20 agencies participated in the process representing critical focus areas of Economic Diversification, Business Attraction & Workforce Development, Mobility & Access, and Environment & Resilient Infrastructure. The process included multiple discussions per month among the stakeholders and staff. At these meetings, regional experts discussed goals and objectives and overall plan-making. The focus groups identified the highest priority issues in each category, set goals and objectives, and identified priority projects to address identified needs, goals, and objectives.

This strategy was built upon multiple data points produced by the SFRPC as part of the effort. This included primary data collected through outreach webinars and a local survey that was sent to municipalities, counties, chambers of commerce, and economic development organizations in the region. These organizations reported the four top issues identified by small businesses as loss of income, lack of financial support, lack of communication/misinformation from the government, and loss of staff and operating capacity.

Additional data was collected from the publication of “The COVID-19 Pandemic in Florida and the South Florida Area Economic Impact Assessment,” conducted in collaboration with the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council (TBRPC), and various government agencies

including the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, the U.S. Census, and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.



The Evaluation Framework for the CARES Act program is based on two primary components: (1) the Argonne and FEMA County High-Level Economic Recovery and Resilience Index (CHERRI) and (2) Outcomes of Successful Projects. The

report provides details related to either completed local community and region wide projects that have been funded and implemented to support economic resiliency, or projects that are in the planning process but have not been launched or funded.

Upon release of this plan, the SFRPC will begin a plan implementation process that will involve community outreach, presentations to local communities, and additional technical assistance activities.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

CARES Act Award

“Resilience” became an important concept since the COVID-19 pandemic arrived in South Florida in March of 2020. Becoming more resilient is something that cities and states must do if they’re to survive global economic disruptors, such as future pandemics.

With funding through the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA) Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act grant, the SFRPC was contracted to

develop an Economic Resilience Plan (ERP) for the future to support economic recovery work in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, and to fortify businesses and workers against future economic crises. The strategic ERP aligned with the South Florida CEDS as a specific element to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from the economic shock of COVID-19 and future pandemics and similar economic shocks.

For economic resilience strategies to be successful, equity must be an integrated component of long-range plans ensuring that people of all backgrounds, particularly the underprivileged and those in other marginalized groups, who live and work, within a given community, have access to a good education, affordable housing, transportation and can prosper.

What Is Economic Recovery and Resiliency?

According to the EDA "Economic resilience refers to the ability of local economies to “bounce back” to normal conditions after losing function because of an uncontrollable event. Resilient economies have the capacity to quickly respond to, withstand, and recover from adverse situations such as a public health crisis or high intensity storm. At the regional or community level, economic development practitioners are instrumental in building the capacity for economic resilience. Economic development professionals and organizations often become the focal point for post-incident coordination, information dissemination, responding to external inquiries, and the lead grant administrator for federally funded recovery initiatives. In building



economic resilience, it is critical that economic development organizations consider their role in the pre-and post-incident environment to include steady state and responsive initiatives."

In South Florida, that means creating an environment that supports and welcomes new and existing businesses, trains and attracts a skilled workforce, creates a connected vibrant region that is supported by a robust multimodal mobility network, and ensures that government staff and other related entities establish a process for regular communication, monitoring, and updating of business community needs and issues.

Method

This strategy was built upon multiple data points produced by the SFRPC as part of the effort. This included primary data collected through outreach webinars and a local survey that was sent to municipalities, counties, chambers of commerce, and economic development organizations in the region. It also included the publication of "The COVID-19 Pandemic in Florida and the South Florida Area Economic Impact Assessment," conducted in collaboration with the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council. Additional data was collected from various government agencies, such as the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, the U.S. Census, and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, to gauge the impact of COVID-19 on the South Florida's businesses.

To initiate the implementation process the SFRPC asked the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Committee and work group members to address challenges and opportunities for economic diversification and develop strategies for training and shifting displaced tourism / leisure workers into existing and emerging essential industries such as Manufacturing, Health Care, Life Sciences Supply Chain, and Technology.

Who Participated in the Economic Recovery and Resiliency Committees?

From its inception, the vision for the ERP included engaging a multi-disciplinary team of subject matter experts to develop a coordinated effort and develop a strategic plan aligned with the South Florida CEDS to address recovering from the economic shock of COVID-19 and future pandemics and similar economic shocks.

In all, more than 20 agencies participated in the process through four working groups representing critical focus areas.

ECONOMIC RESILIENCE WORK GROUPS

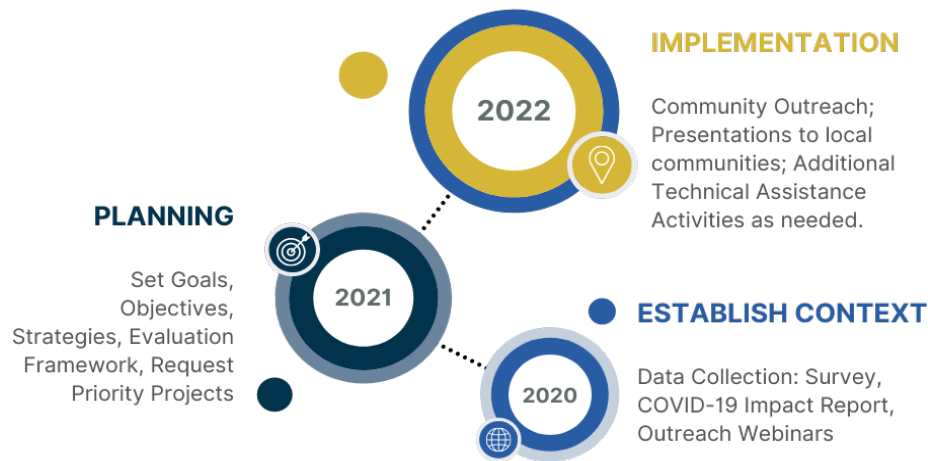
1. Economic Diversification
2. Business Attraction & Workforce Development
3. Mobility & Access
4. Environment & Resilient Infrastructure

Council Timeline

Over six months, the CEDS Strategy Committee met as a large group and individually to pursue its work of developing an economic recovery and resiliency plan to align with the CEDS plan. Per EDA, the CEDS is "a locally based, regionally driven economic development planning process and document that creates the space for a region to identify its strengths and weaknesses and brings together a diverse set of partners to generate good jobs, diversify the economy, and spur economic growth".

The process included multiple discussions per month among the stakeholders and staff. At these meetings, regional experts discussed goals and objectives and overall plan-making. The focus groups conveyed their category's highest priority issues and strategies to

address those issues, identified priority projects available to engage those strategies, and determined the resource gaps.



Outreach Webinars

The SFRPC held several presentations and webinars open to the public related to economic disaster recovery in the region. Those included:



May 26, 2021: The webinar “Supporting Economic Development in South Florida” hosted a presentation by the EDA Economic Development Representative. Geared towards all Economic Development Representatives in the tri-county area, the program illustrated how South Florida

communities can work with the EDA and the SFRPC to build capacity for economic development based on local conditions and needs. Best practices, grant funding opportunities including the American Rescue Plan, and project development ideas were discussed within the context

of locally driven, community-supported approaches to create the foundation for high-quality job growth and private sector investment.

August 25, 2021: The SFRPC hosted the “Coronavirus Planning, Response, and Recovery for the South Florida Region” webinar where 300 participants attended to hear the County Mayors of Miami and Broward, and the Mayor of the City of Cooper City discuss the biggest issues facing each county and city and how the American Rescue Plan funds will be applied. The Mayors discussed what the counties are proposing to implement as economic recovery and resilience plans with the goal of rebuilding resilient and sustainable communities throughout South Florida.



October 21, 2021: The SFRPC hosted a presentation of the International Economic Development Council’s report “Leadership in Times of Crisis: A Toolkit for Economic Recovery and Resiliency” followed by a local panel of municipal leaders. Through real life case studies, best practices, and strategies that communities around the country have employed in response to the pandemic and other disasters, and how they are being applied at the local level, attendees learned why local governments and economic development organizations should play a leadership role in both disaster preparedness and the economic recovery process as disaster preparation builds resiliency into the community.



November 9, 2021: The “Future of South Florida’s Workforce Post COVID” featuring the Presidents / CEOs from the Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance, Beacon Council, and Business Development Board of Palm Beach County and moderated by the publisher of the South Florida Business Journal, provided an insider’s look at ongoing



initiatives to diversify the economy and reduce reliance on Hospitality & Leisure as a primary driver of South Florida's economy. The discussion focused on the emerging sectors and higher wage opportunities in technology, health care, aviation, financial services, available workforce training

programs for emerging sectors, challenges, opportunities, specific initiatives that have worked and how they can be improved, and which jobs, professions, and skill sets are most in demand.

Survey

As part of the coordination and outreach efforts, the SFRPC distributed a survey to the region's economic development representatives, particularly those working at the community level, from December 2020 through January 2021. They were asked to report the top issues and impacts identified by small businesses and the community because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The top issues reported were:

1. **Loss of income, revenue, and business:** As a result of policies and restrictions designed to prevent the spread of COVID-19, many of the businesses within the Council's region experienced economic downfalls not seen in decades.
2. **"Lack of financial support":** There was not widespread knowledge of available government assistance, funding, and grants and how to access available resources. Most small business owners reported that they did not know how to navigate the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans, or they lost out to big corporations. The PPP program established by the CARES Act, was implemented by the Small Business Administration with support from the Department of the Treasury. This program provided small businesses with funds

to compensate for up to 8 weeks of payroll costs including benefits. Funds could also be used to pay interest on mortgages, rent, and utilities.

3. **Communication:** During the pandemic, a weakness of governmental agencies was their siloed systems that didn't correspond with other agencies. The COVID-19 crisis rapidly increased citizen demand for government services and programs and public agencies failed to properly communicate what programs and services were being offered to small business owners.
4. **Staff and operating capacity:** In the early months of the pandemic, the statewide economic lockdown significantly affected the tourism industry in the region. Staff was reluctant to return to tourism, retail work, or to the office, preferring to work remotely due to fear of contracting the virus.

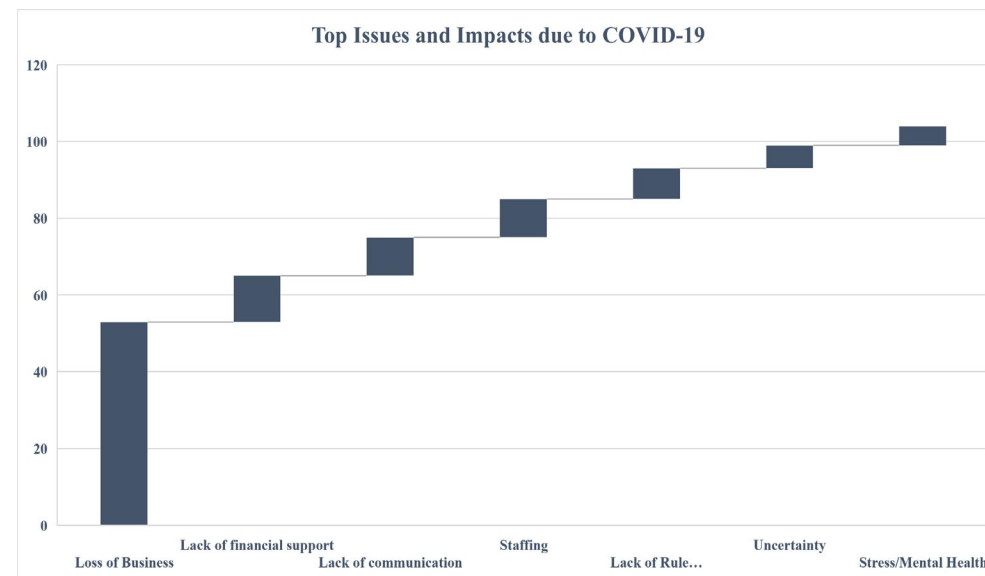


Figure 1: SFRPC Survey Results

COVID-19 ECONOMIC IMPACT REPORT

In May of 2021, the SFRPC, in collaboration with the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council (TBRPC), conducted and published “The COVID-19 Pandemic in Florida and the South Florida Area Economic Impact Assessment”. The report results were used by the CEDS Strategy Committee and the Work Groups to develop recommendations for the Regional Economic Resilience Plan. The COVID-19 pandemic swiftly and dramatically impacted the state’s economy and tested its resiliency. Shutdowns from Covid-19 had a severe impact on employment in Florida. The report identified the following key areas that must be addressed to recover from the pandemic and become resilient to future shocks.



Entrepreneurship, Innovation, Small Business

Jobs in Broward, Miami-Dade, and Monroe counties decreased by more than 394,000 (-16%) during the peak of the Covid-19 crisis from Q3-Q4 2020.

The SFRPC and TBRPC analyzed the direct and indirect impacts caused by jobs lost from Covid-19 and projected the future recovery of those jobs in Broward, Miami-Dade, and Monroe counties.

The job loss during Covid-19 caused decreases in consumer spending throughout Florida, especially Miami-Dade County, where there was a \$6 billion (-39%) decrease in sales in Q4 2020. South Florida businesses generated over \$88 billion in total taxable sales at the end of 2020. Comparing the total taxable sales in 2020 to the corresponding total

taxable sales in 2019 shows a decrease of \$13 billion (-13%) in 2020. Accordingly, even though the increase in sales from Q4-Q2 was not enough to offset the stall in sales in Q4, a general trend of increased spending benefited the region.

However, many of the individuals unemployed during the Covid-19 shutdown have returned to work. Over 147,000 jobs (7%) returned from Q1 2020 – Q3 2021.

Although the South Florida economy is recovering, Covid-19 slowed the growth of the region. When comparing the March Michigan’s Research Seminar in Quantitative Economics (RSQE) forecast to the pre-Covid-19 forecast, South Florida job levels in 2020 are about 300,000 jobs (-8%) less than what was estimated if Covid-19 had never happened.

This resulted in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) being \$15 billion (-5%) less in 2020 than was expected before the pandemic. The compounded impacts seen in 2020 will continue into 2021. A full Regional Economic Models, Inc. PI+ (REMI) analysis of employment change in the region is included in the appendix.

Mobility and Transportation

The pandemic significantly impacted transportation in the South Florida region. Social distancing and employment changes had a major impact on mobility. In April 2020, average workplace trips decreased by 46%. In April 2021, average workplace trips decreased by 24%.

Trips to workplaces, recreation, and retail places were less than average. Research published by the Federal Maritime Commission (COMMISSION, 2020), in September 2020, indicated that through August 2020, Florida ports had lost \$3.2 billion in economic activity and 49,500 jobs paying \$2.3 billion in wages. Port Everglades and the Port of Miami are two of the largest hubs for the cruise industry from which



the hospitality and tourist industries greatly benefit. The cruise industry generates thousands of jobs, and millions in personal income and taxes, for the area. According to the Local and Regional Economic Impacts of Port Everglades report published in April 2020, the cargo and cruise activity at Port Everglades produces a total of \$1.1 billion of state and local tax revenue.

However, South Florida can become more resilient to future economic shifts by attracting and retaining a skilled workforce for those high-skill

industries coming to South Florida. Overall, the region needs to cultivate entrepreneurship and economic diversification through mentorship and tax incentives and help small businesses start up and thrive with more robust emergency programs.

ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

Action Plan

As described in the previous sections, regional experts met to discuss the critical focus areas of Economic Diversification, Business Attraction & Workforce Development, Mobility & Access, and Environment & Resilient Infrastructure, including goals and objectives, and challenges that need to be addressed to achieve the goals and objectives. The focus groups identified the highest priority issues in each category, set goals and objectives, and listed priority projects to address the needs, goals, and objectives. To build a regional capacity for economic resilience, a network of partner organizations and individuals must anticipate risk,

evaluate how that risk can impact critical economic assets, and build a responsive capacity.

The following section details how each project outcome, together with their challenges, opportunities, and partner lists would fill the missing gap with the recommended strategies and help achieve the desired goals and objectives to have a resilient economy.

If funded, the selected projects and strategies are projected to have the following outcomes:

1. Creation of a fully staffed and operational training facility that can serve as an Emergency or Security Operations Center responding to disasters (pre, during, post) and improve training and communication channels for government and other local agencies.
2. Provide innovative solutions and digital technologies that will help resource constrained governments and regulators address capacity challenges and improve regulatory capacity, service delivery, and crisis management.
3. Augment and enhance support services in the areas of job training, childcare, success coaching, education, social services, and assist with work-related needs to transition low-income, structurally unemployed individuals to living wage jobs and career pathways.
4. Advance equity by assisting resident entrepreneurs from low-wealth communities in launching sustainable businesses that will generate and build generational and community-based wealth.

5. Advance equity by assisting resident entrepreneurs from low-wealth communities in launching sustainable businesses that will generate and build generational and community-based wealth.
6. Build a “Worker-Owned Enterprises” incubator that will provide services such as technical and legal assistance, consulting, and access to funding to businesses that wish to develop a worker cooperative.
7. Development of a much-needed talent skills pipeline that will advance the design and implementation of new programs including degrees and certifications to attract new talent, and train and retain local talent.
8. Create new technologies, recruit new companies, and generate scaling of early stage and young startup companies that will bring job creation.
9. Provide multimodal connectivity and create an interconnected system of transit and transportation opportunities that are easily accessible to all residents.
10. Secure regional grant funding which can be used for program development (degrees, certifications, short courses, seminars, workshops, events), Research & Development, “Train the Trainer” programs, the creation of new technologies, etc., through enhanced regional collaboration and diverse partnerships.



Focus Area 1

Government and Organizational Capacity

Collaboration among the public, private, education, and nonprofit sectors may strengthen a region's reaction to an economic shock, provided they are aware of each other's roles and responsibilities in the recovery process. The more able government and stakeholder organizations are to share essential information, the more quickly the region can respond in times of crisis.



GOAL 1

Government and Organizational Capacity

Enhance the resilience of the South Florida economy in the face of natural disasters and changes to the national and state economies through increased awareness and preparation by businesses for environmental and pandemic related risks.

***Objective 1.1:** Train government staff and other related entities, and disseminate information on plans and contingency actions before, during, and after disasters.*

1.1 STRATEGIES

- Strategy 1.1: Work with member agencies to align and strengthen policies, procedures, and operations that advance economic development, including recovery and resiliency strategies.
- Strategy 1.2: Maintain open communication channels and provide timely and accurate information.
- Strategy 1.3: Expand economic development capacity with increased partnerships and enhanced resources that support and oversee the implementation of strategies that build community and regional resilience.
- Strategy 1.4: Unify response in communicating and designate the key members of your crisis communications teams and their backups.

1.1 ALIGNED PROJECTS

1. **Disaster Preparedness, Alerts and Assessment Surveys** – Miami – Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs.
2. **Cybersecurity Training Range** – Alan B. Levan NSU Broward Center of Innovation (Levan Center).

1.1 PROJECT OUTCOMES

- The planning guide and e-alerts enable arts and cultural organizations and facilities to plan for disasters. The assessment surveys provide accurate, real time quantitative data on the range and cost of disaster impacts on the arts and cultural sector. This information is used to secure and focus recovery resources not only in the arts and cultural industry, but also to conduct assessments after hurricanes and through the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The project will create a fully staffed and operational training facility which can serve as an Emergency or Security Operations Center responding to disasters (pre, during, post) and improve training and communication channels for government and other local agencies. The project will additionally establish one of the most powerful cybersecurity training range in the southeast U.S.A., develop and scale a much needed talent skills pipeline focused on cybersecurity knowledge, awareness, and credentials, expand awareness related to cybersecurity threats including the ability to be proactive and reactive, increase protective measures solidifying cyber defense systems and attract grant funding to support public and private sectors.

ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

1.1 POSSIBLE PARTNERS

- Nonprofit Organizations
- Arts and Cultural Facilities
- Artist-Entrepreneurs
- Broward Cultural Affairs Division
- Florida Keys Council of the Arts
- State of Florida Division of Arts and Culture
- Entrepreneurs
- Academia
- Tech industry
- Government (city, county, state, federal)
- Funders and professional networks

1.1 SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES

- Government services are accessed through virtual services, facilitating a speedy recovery from a disaster.
- An established, tested, and ready Economic Response and Recovery Emergency program includes Intergovernmental and agency coordination to mobilize forces and resources systematically and cooperatively according to economic shock and needs.
- The government provides the public with disaster-related and recovery information, which is reliable, consistent, and easy to understand, resulting in a well-informed and knowledgeable public.
- Coordinate with existing networks and organizations to identify specific needs of businesses to prepare for continuity operations when responding to economic shocks and emergency planning.
- Government policies, procedures, and operations advance economic development, including recovery and resiliency strategies.

Focus Area 2

Business Attraction & Workforce Development

The region can withstand, prevent, and quickly recover from shocks to its underlying economic base, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, by engaging in activities and programs that develop a much-needed talent skills pipeline and support small businesses and residents of low-wealth communities.



GOAL 2

Business Attraction & Workforce Development

Prepare a skilled workforce that supports the business community through programs and tools that address education, training, and the attraction/retention of qualified workers.

***Objective 2.1:** Invest in apprenticeship, existing educational credentials, and work-based learning experience programs that align with industry needs and enhance the workforce.*

***Objective 2.2:** Strengthen business retention and expansion efforts to support business vitality and fortify the economy with new opportunities.*

2.2 STRATEGIES

- Strategy 2.1: Support qualified community-based organizations and local, state, and technical colleges in their efforts to assess and share information about the impacts of various programs on workforce preparation, training, and success.
- Strategy 2.2: Support career development services for “returning citizens”, individuals experiencing long-term dislocation in the hospitality and leisure sector, and high demand industries such as healthcare, technology, aviation, etc.
- Strategy 2.3: Align industry with innovation ecosystem to fortify businesses and workers and help navigate change.
- Strategy 2.4: Develop accessible job placement programs and support efforts to build an equitable and inclusive workplace environment.
- Strategy 2.5: Recruit top-notch faculty to higher education institutions and market the region to relocating firms.
- Strategy 2.6: Develop economic recovery and resiliency support services and tools for small businesses and entrepreneurs.

2.2 ALIGNED PROJECTS

1. **Health Sciences Curriculum Development** – Broward College
2. **Big Pine Key Facility** – The College of the Florida Keys (CFK)
3. **Top Notch Faculty** - Broward College

2.2 PROJECT OUTCOMES

- The development of an in-house Health Sciences Curriculum will reduce training costs for students, align students to the needs of the local labor market, provide a sustainable and more flexible model for workforce training (i.e., face to face, remote, hybrid, community-based, etc.), and provide completion of the development of five health science courses.
- The property will be used to expand the college’s successful Marine Environmental Technician Program and expand partnerships that encourage marine resource research, conservation, and restoration. The College expects to increase research and work-based learning experiences for students enrolled in the MET program. Identified as a training need within the community for CDL and BLE Vehicle Operations as well, the college expects at least sixty (60) CDL and fifty (50) BLE certificate holders and graduates per year.
- The program would establish a pool of top-notch faculty for hard to recruit staff in high-demand industries such as nursing, IT, and the marine industry.

GOAL 2 - CONTINUED

Business Attraction & Workforce Development

2.2 STRATEGIES

- Strategy 2.1: Support qualified community-based organizations and local, state, and technical colleges in their efforts to assess and share information about the impacts of various programs on workforce preparation, training, and success.
- Strategy 2.2: Support career development services for “returning citizens”, individuals experiencing long-term dislocation in the hospitality and leisure sector, and high demand industries such as healthcare, technology, aviation, etc.
- Strategy 2.3: Align industry with innovation ecosystem to fortify businesses and workers and help navigate change.
- Strategy 2.4: Develop accessible job placement programs and support efforts to build an equitable and inclusive workplace environment.
- Strategy 2.5: Recruit top-notch faculty to higher education institutions and market the region to relocating firms.
- Strategy 2.6: Develop economic recovery and resiliency support services and tools for small businesses and entrepreneurs.

2.2 ALIGNED PROJECTS

4. **Disaster Preparedness, Alerts and Assessment Surveys** – Miami – Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs.
5. **Cybersecurity Training Range** – Alan B. Levan NSU Broward Center of Innovation (Levan Center).
6. **Workforce Academy** – OIC South Florida
7. **Social Enterprise Workforce/ Self-Sufficiency Initiative** – OIC South Florida
8. **Small Business Technical Assistance Program** – Catalyst Miami

2.2 PROJECT OUTCOMES

- The program would increase not only earnings for the youth and their families, but their knowledge of employability, soft skills, and money management. The program would provide youth with summer jobs and give employers an opportunity to mentor them.
- The program would increase the skills and wages of job seekers through certifications and employers will get a trained workforce based on their requirements.
- Informed by labor market needs, the project will provide certification offerings and soft skills training for career advancement. The program will serve the unemployed & underemployed citizens in underserved communities that have the highest unemployment and lowest educational attainment in the region.
- Provide transitional and experiential workforce development opportunities, including wrap around case management services to the unemployed and under employed individuals.
- The program will build a local ecosystem that supports cooperative development through free educational sessions, community meetings, and collaborations with partner organizations. It will help residents of low-wealth communities launch sustainable businesses that build generational and community-based wealth and become engaged leaders in community economic development efforts. And it will serve as another counter to structural poverty and help equalize economic opportunity.

GOAL 2 - CONTINUED

Business Attraction & Workforce Development

2.2 STRATEGIES

- Strategy 2.1: Support qualified community-based organizations and local, state, and technical colleges in their efforts to assess and share information about the impacts of various programs on workforce preparation, training, and success.
- Strategy 2.2: Support career development services for “returning citizens”, individuals experiencing long-term dislocation in the hospitality and leisure sector, and high demand industries such as healthcare, technology, aviation, etc.
- Strategy 2.3: Align industry with innovation ecosystem to fortify businesses and workers and help navigate change.
- Strategy 2.4: Develop accessible job placement programs and support efforts to build an equitable and inclusive workplace environment.
- Strategy 2.5: Recruit top-notch faculty to higher education institutions and market the region to relocating firms.
- Strategy 2.6: Develop economic recovery and resiliency support services and tools for small businesses and entrepreneurs.

2.2 ALIGNED PROJECTS

9. **National Dislocated Worker Grant Funding for clean-up, humanitarian assistance and other Disaster Relief** – Career Source Broward
10. **Occupational Skills Training – WIOA (Adults and Dislocated Workers)** – Career Source Broward

2.2 PROJECT OUTCOMES

- The program would provide temporary work to adversely affected individuals from the disaster and placing them at governmental and non-profit worksites throughout Broward County to aid the recovery; or to provide them occupational training in-demand careers that lead to unsubsidized employment.
- The program would create and develop a talent pipeline by upskilling Broward County residents who are economically disadvantaged and have barriers to employment. The program would also help to address emerging occupational workforce needs, create upward mobility for greater economic independence, and assist employers maintain their competitive position.

ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

2.2 POSSIBLE ACTION PARTNERS

- Broward College
- Broward College's Talent and Culture Department
- Broward County
- Broward County Public Schools (CTACE)
- Broward Health
- CareerSource Broward
- Chambers of Commerce
- Children's Services Council
- Cities/Municipalities
- City of Key West
- Cleveland Clinic
- Community-based Organizations
- Florida Department of Education
- Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority
- Holy Cross Hospital
- Industry Associations
- Keys Energy Services
- Memorial Healthcare Systems
- Miami-Dade College
- Monroe County Emergency Management Services
- Monroe County Sheriff's Office
- Mote Marine Laboratory
- Regional Employers
- Youth Services
- FIU SBDC
- Prospera
- Community Fund of North Miami Dade (OLCDC)
- Miami Bayside Foundation
- SCORE
- South Florida Anchor Alliance
- Staffing Agencies

2.2 SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES

- Diversity training and programs will be provided.
- Employers have access to new training programs that focus on their needs.
- Allow small businesses and individuals to receive assistance evaluating their business for adapting or pursuing ideas for establishing a new business or reinventing a current business.
- Increase the availability of innovation skills for dislocated workers with key elements of future job skills.
- Workforce training programs are aligned with business and industry needs and are developed, funded, and provided through close collaboration between businesses, educators, and government.
- Out-of-state trained, certified, and licensed workers, including skilled workers and professionals, move to the region, augmenting an already large pool of well-trained workers.
- Training in the trades is consistent across the region.

Focus Area 3

Infrastructure, Mobility, and Access

Infrastructure systems, including communications, healthcare, transportation, electricity, and water and sanitation services, constitute the core of a resilient community and economy in times of economic shocks. Resilient infrastructure can also reduce the impact of these shocks on an area or help a community even avoid the effects of a major threat.



GOAL 3

Infrastructure, Mobility, and Access

To promote a high quality of life and ensure a sustainable community offering an array of affordable housing, transportation, quality education and health care systems.

***Objective 3.1:** Create a connected vibrant region that is supported by a robust multimodal mobility network.*

***Objective 3.2:** Advance technology and connectivity by planning and supporting technologies that advance innovation and promote economic development.*

3.3 STRATEGIES

- Strategy 3.1: Provide access to affordable, safe, and accessible transportation options.
- Strategy 3.2: Ensure that the transportation network, including public transit, supports the emergency needs of the region, including evacuation or public health.
- Strategy 3.3: Educate local governments on the importance of effective land use planning, zoning code updates, incentive programs, and the development of disaster-specific structure design to better prepare for likely shocks.
- Strategy 3.4: Support and promote technology and innovation throughout every sector of the economy.
- Strategy 3.5: Support equitable access to the internet, devices, and technical assistance to underserved populations.
- Strategy 3.6: Support placemaking investments in diverse communities throughout the region to meet the needs of residents.

3.3 ALIGNED PROJECTS

1. **Flagler Village Complete Streets Improvements** – Fort Lauderdale DDA
2. **Reimagining Huizenga Park** – Fort Lauderdale DDA
3. **Riverwalk Seawall Improvements** – Fort Lauderdale DDA
4. **Smart Cities Artificial Intelligence (AI) Labs** – Levan Center NSU

3.3 PROJECT OUTCOMES

- The project will provide multimodal connectivity to the Brightline Station to a future regional commuter rail system with Downtown Fort Lauderdale and Flagler Village at the geographic center.
- With a multi-generational appeal, the park will incorporate core themes centered around art, resilience, and wellness. Cities need engaging and activated parks and outdoor spaces to support health and wellness, improve environmental resiliency, and enhance social and creative connections.
- As sea levels rise, improving the seawall along the Riverwalk Linear Park is essential to preserving a regional public space of significance and notable cultural amenities.
- The project will localize smart cities technology currently only available in California. The project will also create new opportunities to develop and implement new programs (i.e., degrees, certifications, short-courses, seminars, workshops) with the focus on AI smart cities planning leading to company formation, recruitment of new companies, retaining of skilled talent.

ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

3.3 POSSIBLE ACTION PARTNERS

- City of Fort Lauderdale
- Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization
- Brightline
- Riverwalk Fort Lauderdale
- NSU Art Museum
- Broward College
- Florida Atlantic University
- Broward County

3.3 SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES

- Provide multimodal connectivity.
- Create an interconnected system of transit and transportation opportunities that are easily accessible to all residents.
- Increased working relationships with transportation agencies and local governments.
- Coordinate economic development efforts with regional current and proposed infrastructure projects.
- Coordinate economic development efforts with regional current and proposed infrastructure projects.

Focus Area 4

Economic Diversification

Economic diversity increases regional resiliency and stability. A diverse region is more able to withstand shock, be it economic downtime or a natural disaster. Approaches to economic diversification include but are not limited to the: identification of growing and declining industries to support positive trends and minimize risks; the creation of an ecosystem of support for entrepreneurs which will increase the likelihood that new companies will emerge; maximization of available assets in collaboration with counties and small cities to focus on potential new industries; and the development and promotion of target industries that match the strengths of the community.



GOAL 4

Economic Diversification

To support international trade assets such as airports, seaports and programs and strategies, which assist in economic diversification, creation of high paying jobs, the retention, expansion, and the attraction of businesses, and improve the capacity of small businesses to participate fully in South Florida's economic activities.

***Objective 4.1:** Invest in small business training, incubators, and support.*

4.4 STRATEGIES

- Strategy 4.1: Support grant and other investment opportunities, such as CDFIs, and the development of venture capital.
- Strategy 4.2: Develop partnerships with local banks to provide low- or no-interest loans; with chambers, SCORE, SBDC, SFRPC, and nonprofits.
- Strategy 4.3: Engage in community outreach to catalogue existing business development efforts, incentives, and identify opportunities for regional alignment and collaboration.
- Strategy 4.4: Support minority and women-owned small businesses.
- Strategy 4.5: Promote an entrepreneurial culture that fosters new business opportunities offering higher paying jobs.

4.4 ALIGNED PROJECTS

1. **Levan Center** | NSU Broward Center of Innovation
2. **Smart Cities Artificial Intelligence (AI) Labs** – Levan Center NSU
3. **Volumetric Motion Capture Studio** – Levan Center NSU
4. **Worker Owned Enterprises Academy and Incubator** – Catalyst Miami
5. **Small Business Technical Assistance Program** – Catalyst Miami

4.4 PROJECT OUTCOMES

- Breakthrough ideation, creation of new technologies, talent skills pipeline (emerging technology sectors), company formation, job creation, scaling of early-stage and young startup companies.
- Establishment of the first AI Smart Cities Lab in the southeast region of the U.S.A. Homegrown talent skills pipeline leading to retaining of such talent in South Florida. New company formation. Attraction of new industries and companies.
- South Florida could be designated as a Center of Excellence in Spatial Computing. The studio could be utilized as a valuable resource for simulation of events (i.e., emergency response, disaster planning) by creating real life scenarios.
- The program is an academy and incubator. Academy: Participants receive comprehensive knowledge about worker cooperatives and the business, management, and financial skills needed to launch one. Incubator: Catalyst provides the business, financial, and legal help they need to launch their ventures. The program has graduated nearly fifty learners, launched one cooperative, and is supporting four cooperatives in various stages of incubation.
- Served 110 SBs with business counseling, incorporation, organization, brand development, assistance in applying for federal, state, local financial relief programs, capacity building, and various administrative support.

ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

4.4 POSSIBLE ACTION PARTNERS

- City Entrepreneurs
- Academia
- Industry
- Government (city, county, state, federal)
- Funders
- Professional and social networks
- Wraparound service providers
- Project Equity
- Seed Commons
- Community Fund of North Miami Dade
- Legal Services of Greater Miami (in progress)
- Miami Workers Center
- Neighborhood Housing Services of South Florida
- FIU SBDC
- Prospera
- Community Fund of North Miami Dade (OLCDC)
- Miami Bayside Foundation
- SCORE
- South Florida Anchor Alliance

4.4 SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES

- Provide innovative solutions and digital technologies that will help resource constrained governments and regulators address capacity challenges and improve regulatory capacity, service delivery, and crisis management.
- Augment and enhance support services in the areas of job training, childcare, success coaching, education, social services, and assist with work-related needs to transition low income, structurally unemployed individuals to living wage jobs and career pathways.
- Advance equity by assisting resident entrepreneurs from low-wealth communities in launching sustainable businesses that will generate and build generational and community-based wealth.
- Create new technologies, recruit new companies, generate scaling of early stage and young startup companies that will bring job creation.

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

The Evaluation Framework for the CARES Act program is based on two primary components:

1. *Argonne and FEMA County High-Level Economic Recovery and Resilience Index (CHERRI)* – The CHERRI assessment tool provides a quick snapshot of counties that are particularly vulnerable to COVID-19 induced economic impacts through use of qualitative evaluation of quantitative data. This information is used as a performance measure to inform recovery planning and resource allocation decision-making. The results for the tri-county area show how each may face higher vulnerabilities which could affect economic recovery.
2. *Outcomes of Successful Projects* – As described previously, the SFRPC requested the CEDS Strategy Committee and workgroup members to identify projects which build economic resilience both countywide and in specific communities. The outcomes of each project are used as performance measures on how they currently are or will impact the South Florida region in making it more economically resilient.

Argonne and FEMA County High-Level Economic Recovery and Resilience Index (CHERRI)

Argonne and FEMA created the County High-Level Economic Recovery and Resilience Index (CHERRI) to assist governments and other service providers with identifying and prioritizing support for communities that are especially vulnerable to the economic impacts of COVID-19.

The CHERRI is an assessment tool that is designed to:

- Provide a quick snapshot of counties that are particularly vulnerable to COVID-19 induced economic impacts using qualitative evaluation of quantitative data. This information can be used to inform recovery planning and resource allocation decision-making.
- Leverage existing COVID-19 economic impact analyses, which incorporate data related to employment, consumption, and housing factors to estimate the effects on households, businesses, and local government finances.
- Consider baseline social vulnerability by integrating CDC Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) factors, which assess socioeconomic and demographic factors at the county level.

The CHERRI is built on an existing body of research and is comprised of six indices. Three indices are metrics derived from the CDC's Social Vulnerability Index. These indicators provide insight into the demographic, social, and economic profiles of a community. The other three indices are developed by Argonne National Laboratory and quantify current economic impacts, housing stability, and impacts to state and local revenue due to COVID-19.

This index will be incorporated into the CEDS Economic Resilience Evaluation Framework by using existing county-level data as a baseline and updated every year to track progress. The CHERRI data for 2021 is presented in Figure 1. According to the index, Broward County has an elevated overall community risk rating, Miami-Dade County is high, and Monroe County is moderate.

The county-level data from each of these six indices were transformed to a 0 to 1 scale and combined using equal weighting to produce an overall risk index. The six individual indices and the combined index

were then binned into quintiles within each individual state from lowest to highest risk/vulnerability as seen in Figure 6. Results are displayed in a scorecard format.

Overall Community Risk Rating, Level	Percentile
Low	80-100
Moderate	60-80
Elevated	40-60
High	20-40
Very High	0-20

Figure 2: CHERRI Index Scorecard Ratings

CONCLUSION

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant effect on South Florida's economy. It changed the labor market, caused the disparate impact of economic sectors with the leisure and hospitality sector losing the largest number of jobs since March 2020, and impacted demographic groups differently. Likewise, due to the heavy reliance on tourism to fuel local economic activity, small businesses directly and indirectly related to the leisure and hospitality industry closed. The COVID-19 pandemic dramatically exposed the region's economic inequality and the underlying weaknesses of the economy.

The report highlights long-term goals, objectives, and strategies for South Florida that would help in making the economy more resilient to any future economic shocks or pandemics. The work of the CEDS Strategy Committee and the working groups concentrated on four critical focus areas for the region that were Economic Diversification, Business Attraction & Workforce Development, Mobility & Access, and Environment & Resilient Infrastructure. The focus groups identified the highest priority issues in each category, set goals and

objectives, and identified priority projects to address identified needs, goals, and objectives.

To have a resilient economy, the South Florida region needs to provide opportunities for the area to develop a much-needed talent skills pipeline, support residents of low-wealth communities, invest in innovative new business models and technologies, and provide multimodal connectivity and create an interconnected system that is easily accessed for all residents. The more able government and stakeholder organizations are to share essential information, the more quickly the region can respond in times of crisis.

As the impacts of COVID-19 begin to subside for the meantime, the goals outlined in this strategy are still relevant to economic development and resilience in the region to be able to quickly respond to, withstand, and recover from future economic shocks. These future shocks may take the form of COVID-19 re-emergence, another virus outbreak, or any other disaster.



APPENDIX

COVID-19 REMI Analysis of Employment Change

TBRPC analyzed the direct and indirect job loss impacts from Covid-19 and projected the future recovery of jobs in Broward, Miami-Dade, and Monroe counties using the REMI Model. TBRPC used a pre-Covid-19 baseline forecast as a control. The Pre-Covid-19 Baseline is not an official REMI forecast but could be used as a reasonable baseline, assuming COVID-19 never happened. To account for Covid-19, the TBRPC used the March RSQE updated national forecast. The March RSQE Forecast is based on the 2019-2020 historical data from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis released on January 28, 2021. The U.S. Economic Outlook for 2020-2022 from the University of Michigan's RSQE, released on February 19, 2021, and The Budget and Economic Outlook: 2021 to 2031, from CBO released in January and February 2021.

The March RSQE Update represents the economic impacts across the nation caused by Covid-19 and the forecasted recovery. This scenario indicates that Covid-19 reduced 208,875 jobs (-7%) in South Florida in 2020, which decreased GDP by about \$4 billion (-2%). Since vaccinations and reopening continue to happen throughout 2021, South Florida counties will recover 112,395 jobs (4%) in 2021, which are estimated to increase the region's GDP by \$19 billion (7%) in 2021. Although the South Florida economy is recovering, Covid-19 stunted the growth of the region.

Tables 5 and 6 present the differences between the March RSQE forecasted results and the pre-Covid-19 forecasted results. In other words, the differences show how much Covid-19 slowed economic growth. Covid-19 reduced total employment by 262,581 (-8%) less in 2020 than was expected before Covid-19, which resulted in the GDP being \$15 billion (-5%) below the forecasted GDP before Covid-19.

Job loss has a compounded impact on the economy because as individuals lose jobs, individuals lose income and cannot consume and contribute to the GDP. When individuals no longer have the income to spend, demand for goods decreases, and more jobs are lost. Although South Florida's counties will recover 112,395 jobs (4%) in 2021, the REMI Model estimated that total employment is still 194,579 jobs (-6%) below what employment levels were supposed to reach before the pandemic. The compounded impacts seen in 2020 will cause South Florida's GDP to be 9 billion (-3%) less in 2021 than was expected before Covid-19. A summary of the actual economic impacts in 2020 and REMI forecasted 2021 economic impacts can be found on the next page.

Figure 3: Summary of Employment Loss in 2020

Category	Units	Counties							
		Broward		Miami-Dade		Monroe		Total	
Total Employment*	Individual (Jobs)	-102,928	-8%	-150,530	-8%	-9,123	15%	-262,581	-8%
Labor Force*	Individual (Jobs)	-8,310	-1%	-13,413	-1%	-1,726	-4%	-23,449	-1%
Gross Domestic Product	Millions of Current Dollars	-\$5,666	-5%	-\$8,574	-5%	-\$702	-12%	-\$14,922	-5%
Personal Income	Millions of Current Dollars	\$2,892	3%	\$4,990	3%	-\$310	-4%	\$7,573	3%

Source: TBRPC REMI PI+ (2021) *Currency Figures in current \$

Figure 4: Summary of Forecasted Employment Loss in 2021

Category	Units	Counties							
		Broward		Miami-Dade		Monroe		Total	
Total Employment	Individual (Jobs)	-79,330	-6%	-106,825	-0.1%	-8,424	-13%	-194,579	6%
Labor Force*	Individual (Jobs)	-10,978	-1%	-16,780	-0.01%	-2,492	-6%	-30,249	-1%
Gross Domestic Product	Millions of Current Dollars	-\$3,584	-3%	-\$4,629	-0.02%	-\$703	-12%	-\$8,904	-3%
Personal Income	Millions of Current Dollars	\$1,789	2%	\$4,749	0.03%	-\$419	-6%	\$6,118	2%

Source: TBRPC REMI PI+ (2020) *Currency Figures in current \$

*The number of people in the labor force, i.e., employed or seeking work; calculated with participation rates by age cohort

Opportunity Zones

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated ongoing economic inequities in the region along with the nation, influencing local economic recovery responses as well as the federal level. For example, EDA has adjusted its investment priorities, with one notable change of replacing Opportunity Zones with Equity and elevating it to the top of the priority list. In response to EDA's new investment priorities, the SFRPC has realigned its specific focus on Opportunity Zones as a tool in the broader Equity toolbox, an integrated equity as a focus in all economic development activities. Encouraging new businesses, job creation, and investment within Opportunity Zones is key to reversing negative trends and creating equity and opportunity and a more positive future for Opportunity Zone residents.

The South Florida region contains 98 Qualified Opportunity Zones, with 30 in Broward County, 67 in Miami-Dade County, and 1 in Monroe County. Investors can defer tax payment on any prior gains invested in a Qualified Opportunity Fund (QOF) until the earlier of the date on which the investment in a QOF is sold or exchanged or until December 31, 2026.

The following tables summarize the updated economic and demographic conditions of the residents of Qualified Opportunity Zones in the region, all regional residents, and the state.

Poverty in South Florida Opportunity Zones is significantly higher than the Region and the State as a whole, but poverty improved across all geographies year over year	
Geography	Percent below the poverty level for whom poverty status is determined
OZs in Region	22.2%
SF Region	15.4%
State of Florida	12.7%

Figure 5: Poverty in South Florida Opportunity Zones. Source: ACS 2019 5-year data

Workers in South Florida Opportunity Zones are significantly more dependent on transit than the Region and State as a whole						
	Drove alone	Carpooled	Public transportation	Other Means	Walked	Worked at home
OZs in Region	72.1%	11.0%	8.4%	3.0%	1.9%	2.4%
SF Region	77.63 %	8.90%	3.76%	1.72%	1.87%	5.39%
State of Florida	79.1%	9.2%	1.8%	2.3%	1.4%	6.2%

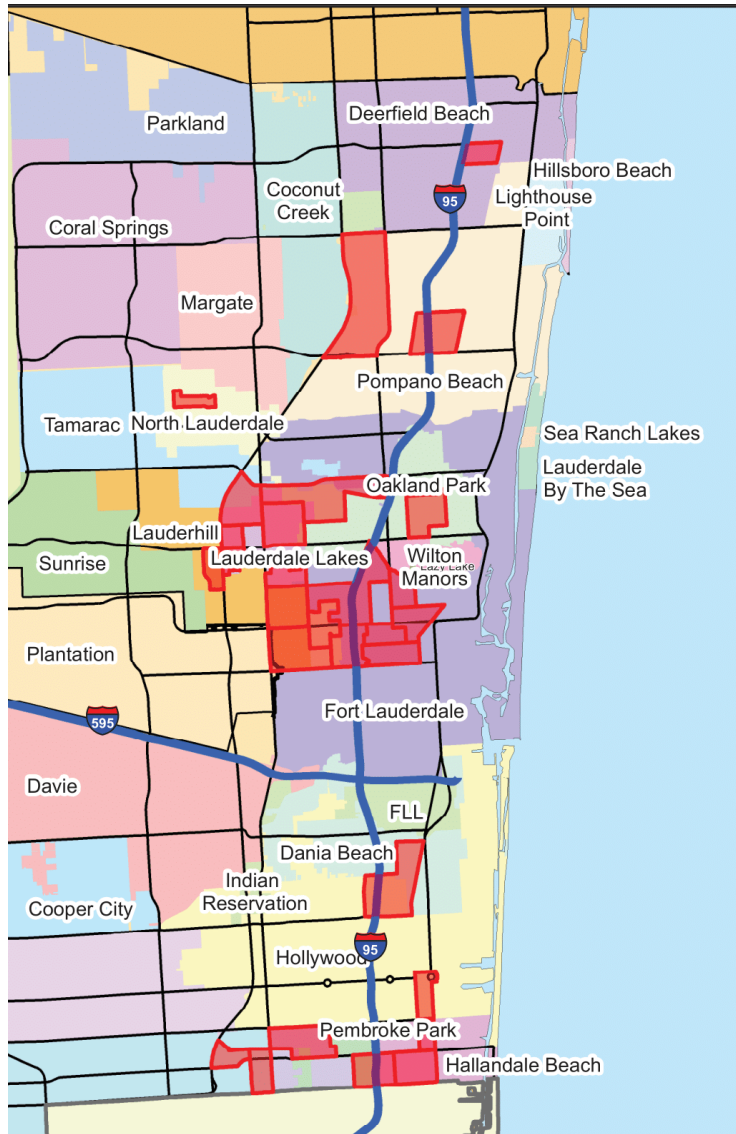
Figure 6: Means of Transportation for residents in South Florida Opportunity Zones.

Compared to the 2018 estimates, Educational Attainment figures remained nearly the same statewide, regionally, and within South Florida Opportunity Zones. However, poverty rates improved, particularly statewide and in South Florida Opportunity Zones.

Educational Attainment in South Florida Opportunity Zones is significantly lower than the Region and the State as a whole					
	9th to 12th grade, no diploma	High school graduate	Associate's degree	Bachelor's degree	Graduate or professional degree
OZs in Region	14.9%	33.7%	11.6%	10.1%	4.2%
SF Region	11%	28%	28%	18%	10%
State of Florida	7%	28.4%	29.3%	19.3%	11.4%

Figure 7: Educational Attainment in South Florida Opportunity Zones, 2019. Source: ACS 2019 5-year data

Broward County



Miami-Dade County

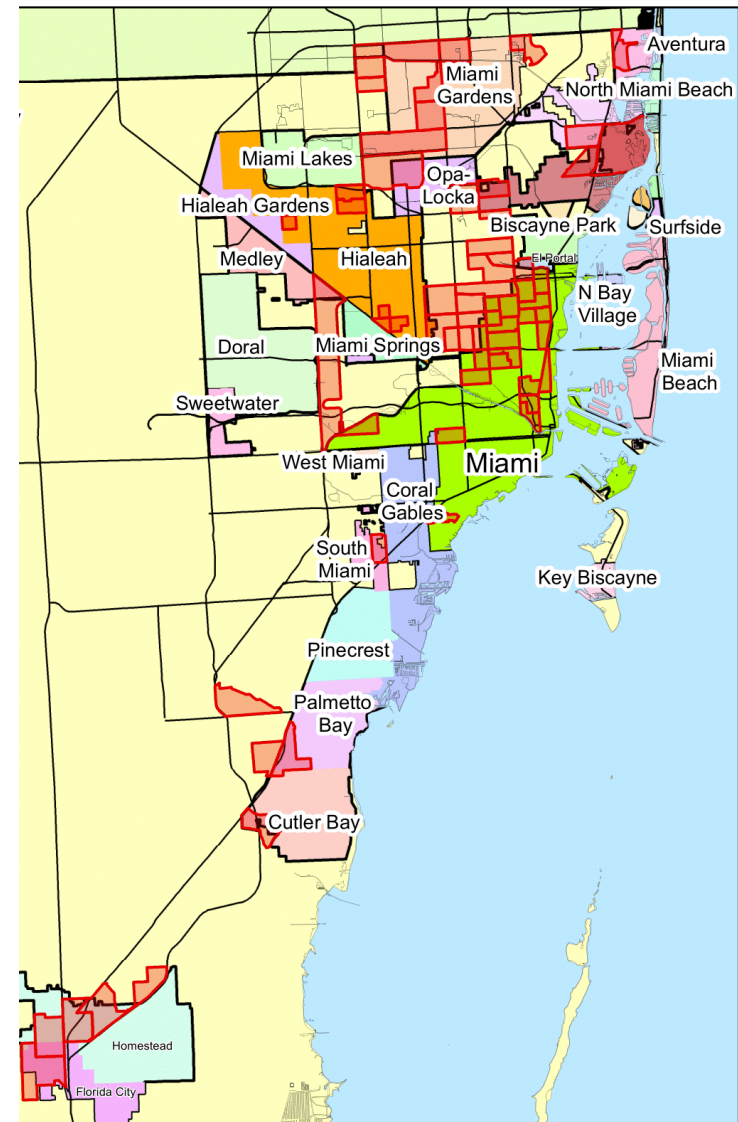


Figure 8: Maps of South Florida Opportunity Zones (Broward and Miami-Dade).

There is one Opportunity Zone located in Monroe County, designated by the boundaries of Census Tract 9711 in the City of Marathon. The boundaries of this Opportunity Zone span from the Florida Keys/Marathon International Airport in the southwest reaching northwest until Key Vaca Cut.

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