



DRAFT AGENDA

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2023

**SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL
1 Oakwood Boulevard, Suite 250
Hollywood, FL 33020**

This is an in-person/virtual meeting

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81768005536?pwd=ZzZTQnlzS29DVEY5QmViNiFYYiVIUT09>

Meeting ID: 817 6800 5536

Passcode: 023080

Find your local number: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/kcLHeXN0YP>

- I. Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call
- II. Approval of Council Agenda
- III. Action Items
 - A. Minutes of the Previous Meeting
 - B. Financial Report
 - C. Consent: Comprehensive Plan Amendment Reviews

Proposed

- Monroe County 23-02ACSC
- Monroe County 23-03ACSC
- City of Florida City 23-01ESR*
- City of Hialeah Gardens 23-03ESR*
- City of Marathon 23-03ACSC
- City of Sweetwater 23-01ESR
- City of West Miami 23-01ESR*

Public Hearing



Adopted

- City of Aventura 23-03ESR
- Town of Davie 23-01ESR
- City of North Miami Beach 22-01ESR*
- City of Oakland Park 23-01ER*
- City of Plantation 23-01ER*

Public Hearing

- D. Regional Issues: Comprehensive Plan Amendment Review – None
- E. Legal Counsel Annual Review / Contract
- F. Executive Director Annual Review / Contract
- G. FY 2022-23 Revised Operating Budget
- H. FY 2023-24 Operating Budget
- I. Joint Statement on Collaboration for Regional Economic Resilience

Public Comments

IV. Program Reports and Activities

- A. SFRPC Revolving Loan Funds Status Report
- B. SFRPC CARES Act RLF Status Report
- C. FY 22-23 Partial List of Accomplishments to Date
- D. Council Highlights

V. Discussion Items

- A. Executive Director’s Report
- B. Legal Counsel Report / Legal Opinions
- C. Council Members Report
- D. Ex-Officio Report

VI. Announcements and Attachments

- A. Attendance Form
- B. Correspondence and Articles
- C. Upcoming Meetings
 - 1) Monday, October 16, 2023, 10:30 a.m. (SFRPC – If needed)
 - 2) Friday, October 20, 2023, 10:00 a.m. SFRPC / TCRPC Joint Meeting
(Broward Center of the Performing Arts)
 - 3) Monday, November 20, 2023, 10:30 a.m. (SFRPC)
 - 4) December 2023, No meeting

VII. Adjournment

Pursuant to Chapter 286.0105, Florida Statutes, if a person decides to appeal any decision made by the Council with respect to any matter considered at such meeting or hearing, he may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is based.

Pursuant to the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act, any person requiring special accommodations to participate in this hearing is asked to advise the Agency at least 5 days before the hearing by contacting the South Florida Regional Planning Council at one of the following: (1) One Oakwood Boulevard, Suite 250, Hollywood, Florida 33020; (2) Phone 954-924-3653; (3) Fax 954-924-3654; or (4) sfadmin@sfrpc.com. If you are hearing or speech impaired, please contact the Agency using the Florida Relay Service, 1 (800) 955-8771 (TTY/VCO), 1 (800) 955-8770 (Voice), 1 (800) 955-8773 (Spanish).

Agenda packets for upcoming Council meetings will be available at the Council's website, <https://sfrpc.org/meeting-materials/> ten days prior to the meeting.

If you would like to be added to the e-mail list to receive the link to the agenda, please e-mail the Council at sfadmin@sfrpc.com.

**MINUTES OF THE
SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL**

July 31, 2023

The South Florida Regional Planning Council met virtually and in person on this date at the South Florida Regional Planning Council, 1 Oakwood Boulevard, Suite 250, Hollywood, FL 33020. Chair Geller welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 10:35 a.m. He reminded everyone of the meeting's procedures and asked Councilmember García to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

I. Pledge of Allegiance and Roll Call

Chair Steve Geller
Councilmember Mario J. Bailey*
Councilmember Frank Caplan*
Councilmember Craig Cates*
Councilmember Joseph Corradino*
Councilmember Beam Furr
Councilmember René García
Councilmember Oliver Gilbert, III**
Councilmember Cary Goldberg*
Councilmember Denise Horland*
Councilmember Samuel Kaufman
Councilmember Michelle Lincoln*
Councilmember Kionne McGhee**
Councilmember Greg Ross**
Councilmember Michael Udine*

* Virtually Present

** Absent

SFRPC Executive Director Isabel Cosio Carballo and Legal Counsel Sam Goren were present.

The following Ex-Officio Member was present:

Armando L. Vilaboy representing the South Florida Water Management District

The following Ex-Officio Member was virtually present:

Dat Huynh representing the Florida Department of Transportation, District VI

The following Ex-Officio Member was not present nor virtually present:

Jason Andreotta representing the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (SE District)

Sam Goren, Legal Counsel, stated for the record there is a quorum present for an Executive Committee Meeting.

II. Approval of Council Agenda

Chair Geller motioned to approve the Council Agenda. Councilmember Furr moved the motion and Councilmember García seconded the motion, which was carried by a unanimous vote.

Chair Geller congratulated SFRPC Councilmember Greg Ross as the incoming President of the Florida League of Cities and Councilmember Michelle Lincoln as the First Vice President of the Florida Association of Counties.

III. Audit Presentation (Time Certain: 11:00 AM)

- Tanya I. Davis, CPA, Partner, S. Davis & Associates, PA

South Florida Military Installation Resilience Review Update

- Christina Miskis, MURP, Principal Planner

IV. Action Items

A. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Chair Geller motioned to approve the Meeting Minutes for June 16, 2023. Councilmember García moved the motion and Councilmember Furr seconded the motion, which was carried by a unanimous vote.

B. Financial Report

Director of Finance and IT, Leo Braslavsky Soldi, presented the Financial Report in detail.

Chair Geller motioned to approve the Financial Report. Councilmember Udine moved the motion and Councilmember Furr seconded the motion. Roll was called and the item was carried by a unanimous vote.

C. Consent: Comprehensive Plan Amendment Reviews

Legal Counsel, Sam Goren, read the Comprehensive Plan Amendment Reviews, Proposed.

Proposed

- City of Aventura 23-01ESR
- City of Aventura 23-02ESR
- City of Aventura 23-03ESR
- Village of Biscayne Park 23-02ER
- City of Miami 23-04ESR

Public Hearing

Chair Geller opened the Public Hearing and asked if there were any comments or questions.

Public Comments

There were no comments or questions from the public via email or virtually.

Councilmember Furr motioned to approve the proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendments. Councilmember García seconded the motion. Roll was called and the item was carried by a unanimous vote.

Legal Counsel, Sam Goren, read the Comprehensive Plan Amendment Reviews, Adopted.

Adopted

- Village of Biscayne Park 23-01ESR*
- City of Fort Lauderdale 23-01ESR
- City of Key West 23-01ACSC
- City of Key West 23-02ACSC
- City of Layton 22-01ER
- City of Miami 23-01ESR
- City of Miami 23-03ESR
- City of Sunrise 22-01ESR*

* Property Rights Element

Public Hearing

Chair Geller opened the Public Hearing and asked if there were any comments or questions.

Public Comments

There were no comments or questions from the public via email or virtually.

Councilmember Furr motioned to approve the adopted Comprehensive Plan Amendments. Councilmember García seconded the motion. Roll was called and the item was carried by a unanimous vote.

Mr. Goren explained the SFRPC's history, role, and time constraints in reviewing the Local Government Comprehensive Plans from municipalities and counties.

E. FY 2023-2024 Membership Fees (moved up in the Agenda)

Mrs. Cosio Carballo explained that this is the fourth conversation on the SFRPC Membership Fees. This year the dues will be \$.2250. Detailed backup information is attached to the Agenda Item. She described the Highlights in today's packet featuring the various SFRPC activities.

Councilmember Furr motioned to approve the FY 2023-2024 Membership Fees. Councilmember García seconded the motion, which was carried by a unanimous vote.

D. Audit Presentation (Time Certain: 11:00 AM)

Mrs. Tanya Davis, CPA, and Partner for S. Davis & Associates, PA. gave a presentation explaining the FY 2022 Audit in detail. She introduced Joy Chambers-Nicholas who oversaw the compiling of the Audit information along with SFRPC staff. Mrs. Davis thanked management and staff for their cooperation throughout the process. She stated there were no issues or concerns throughout the process and that the Council is in compliance. Chair Geller stated he was pleased with the Audit results. Councilmember Udine agreed with Chair Geller. Mrs. Davis provided a report on the Engagement Letter and Audit and stated there were no outstanding issues identified. She noted that although Quick Books is sufficient for many of the state's regional planning councils, the Council has unique needs and programs that would be better served with a more robust accounting software program specifically designed for the Council and fund accounting. This does not fall on any person or personnel of the Council. She stated that the Council's current accounting system is not compatible with the Revolving Loan Program, which created extra staff time demands and delayed the Audit Process. The Audit can be found on the Council website: <https://sfregionalcouncil.org/portfolio-items/audits/>. Mrs. Cosio Carballo and Mr. Braslavsky Soldi explained the reason the Council changed to the existing accounting software, the months long research into a new system/software program for the near future, the financial costs involved, and the pending migration from the existing system to a more robust system. Councilmember Udine congratulated the Council on the Audit and remarked that it is rare to have a clean Audit.

Councilmember Udine motioned to approve the FY 2022 SFRPC Audit. Councilmember Furr seconded the motion, which was carried by a unanimous vote.

III. South Florida Military Installation Resilience Review Update (Presentations)

- Christina Miskis, MURP, Principal Planner

Christina Miskis, Principal Planner, updated the Councilmembers on the South Florida Military Installation Resilience Review (MIRR), consisting of Homestead Air Reserve Base (HARB), Miami-Dade County, United States Army Garrison-Miami (USAG-Miami), Miami-Dade County, USN Naval Surface War Center South Florida Ocean Measurement Facility (SFOMF), Broward County, United States Naval Air Station Key West (NASKW), Monroe County. She explained the Project's Purpose, Mission, Timeline, deliverables/funding, implementation, vulnerabilities, meetings/workshops, coordination with the communities outside the bases, etc. She noted that the MIRR team kept within the parameters of State and Federal Guidelines. For more detailed information, the presentation can be located on the Council website: <https://sfregionalcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/South-Florida-MIRR-Presentation.pdf>. Mrs. Cosio Carballo commended Ms. Miskis, the members of the South Florida Defense Alliance, and Suzie Torriente and the team at Jacobs Engineering. The Council requested a complete, final report and full presentation at a future Council Meeting once finalized. Chair Geller congratulated Ms. Miskis on a great job.

V. Program Reports and Activities

- A. South Florida Military Installation Resilience Review Update (Addressed in III.)
- B. SFRPC Revolving Loan Funds Status Report

C. SFRPC CARES Act RLF Status Report

Mr. Tart updated the Councilmembers on the CARES Act, which has provided more than \$7.17 million to 34 businesses, along with technical resources to help stabilize those businesses who were impacted by COVID. Mr. Tart conveyed that the traditional RLF continues to do well with total assets of \$5.5 million and serving approximately 30 borrowers. Goren, Cherof, Legal Counsel's office, continues to provide information on the borrowers in the legal collection with additional detailed information in the Council Packet. Mr. Goren summarized the Dawson Case Litigation and suggested the Councilmembers read the Agenda Item for more details. Mr. Tart stated that through the Affordable Housing Initiative, two (2) new single-family homes for first-time minority homebuyers were completed by Liberia Economic and Social Development Inc. in Hollywood, FL. The Affordable Housing Initiative is a successful partnership of the Southeast Florida Community Development Fund, Inc. (SFCDFI), the Urban League of Broward County/Central County Commission Development Corporation, the Housing Finance Authority of Broward County, and Broward County. To date, the SFCDFI has financed 23 single-family homes in the South Florida region with recent projects completed and/or started in West Park, Dania Beach, and West Palm Beach. Councilmember Furr requested the addresses of the affordable housing projects in his District. Mr. Tart thanked the Councilmembers for their support. Mr. Goren summarized the Dawson Case litigation and suggested the Councilmembers read the Agenda Item for more details.

Councilmember Furr motioned to approve the RLF Program Reports. Councilmember Lincoln seconded the motion, which was carried by a unanimous vote.

VI. Discussion Items

A. Executive Director's Report

Mrs. Cosio Carballo mentioned that Agenda Item 7.B. Correspondence and Articles has a new layout that outlines the articles for more convenience. She requested if the Councilmembers would like to share any news, please contact staff so that it can be included in this Agenda Item. Chair Geller suggested that the news articles reviewed by staff be sent out weekly to the Councilmembers. Mrs. Cosio Carballo stated that she was happy to do so but noted that she was cognizant of not overwhelming Councilmembers with emails. Chair Geller recapped the various major conferences and joint meetings, as well as other important meetings, such as Clean Cities. Mrs. Cosio Carballo summarized the logistics for the October 20th Joint Conference and the September 29th Mayors' Affordable Housing Discussion. Chair Geller stated that in February or March 2024, the SFRPC will have a Conference chaired by Councilmember García on the topic of housing for those with mental health issues. The subject matter for the Joint Conference with the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council (TCRPC) may be housing around Transit Oriented Development, property insurance/condo act, or solid waste/recycling. These topics will be discussed with the TCRPC before a decision is made. Discussion ensued on the Condominium Act regarding the insurance coverage for the individual, the condo associations, the rights of condo owners, reserve payments, the effect of the bill, etc.

Mrs. Cosio Carballo announced that Randy Deshazo has been hired as the new Deputy Director and summarized his work at the Tampa Bay RPC, where he was Chief of Staff. He will be starting in September.

She mentioned that there is still a need to hire an Administrative Assistant. Mrs. Cosio Carballo announced that Ian Hayden has been working as the Clean Cities Intern this summer and has contributed greatly to the Council's work.

Mrs. Cosio Carballo stated that Council staff has been in contact with Miami-Dade County's Olga Espinosa-Anderson from the Department of Solid Waste, and the Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources, to provide an update on Solid Waste Management issues including researching best practices, recycling, contamination, etc. Chair Geller thanked Councilmember García for bringing the Solid Waste Resolution before the Miami-Dade County Commission. The Resolution requests that Miami-Dade County work with the SFRPC on issues of importance following the Solid Waste Conference. Discussion followed on the importance of recycling despite the cost, the need for public education, reuse, etc.

Mrs. Cosio Carballo updated the Councilmembers on the City Park DRI and explained the Council's role in the DRI process.

B. Legal Counsel Report

Mr. Goren noted there were no new litigations to report, only those in the RLF Report. He thanked Jeff Tart and the professional staff for their help and coordination with his staff.

C. Council Members Report

Chair Geller announced that he is the Chair of the Florida Association of Counties Community and Urban Affairs Committee. Councilmember Furr stated that the 75% threshold of the municipal adoption of the Solid Waste Agreement was achieved with three cities not participating: Pompano Beach, Hallandale Beach, and possibly Pembroke Pines.

D. Ex-Officio Report

Dat Huynh, FDOT VI, stated that the DRI applicant reached out to the Department of Transportation (DOT) regarding the impacts of transportation and asked to meet with the DOT to discuss their findings. He informed the applicant that they would have to coordinate with the SFRPC to discuss anything further. Mrs. Cosio Carballo summarized the past meetings with various agencies and partners on methodology and other subject matters. She explained that the Applicant would like to use a different transportation methodology that was not approved by the commenting agencies in August 2022. The Council is willing to reschedule a meeting on the transportation methodology. A meeting scheduled for March 2023 on this topic was canceled by the Applicant. To proceed, the Council must receive direction from the Applicant's lead representative Mr. Bercow. To date, no request to reschedule this meeting has been received from Mr. Bercow. Chair Geller requested updated information on the Reef Study funding for \$20 million in the Southeast region from SFWMD representative Mr. Vilaboy. Mr. Vilaboy stated he would forward the information.

Randy Deshazo, virtually present, thanked everyone for the welcome.

VII. Announcements and Attachments

- A. Attendance Form
- B. Correspondence and Articles
- C. Upcoming Meetings

- 1) August, Summer Break, no scheduled meeting
- 2) Monday, September 18, 2023, 10:30 a.m. (SFRPC)
- 3) Monday, October 16, 2023, 10:30 a.m. (SFRPC, If needed)
- 4) Friday, October 27, 2023, Joint Conference (TBD) (Staff Note: Now October 20, 2023)
- 5) Monday, November 20, 2023, 10:30 am. (SFRPC)
- 6) December 2023, no meeting

VIII. Adjournment

Chair Geller adjourned the meeting at 12:04 p.m.

This signature is to attest that the undersigned is the Secretary of the SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL and that the information provided herein is the true and correct minutes for the July 31, 2023, meeting of the SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL adopted on the 18th day of September 2023.

Michelle Lincoln, Secretary
Monroe County Commissioner, District 2

Date



MEMORANDUM

AGENDA ITEM #III.B

DATE: SEPTEMBER 18, 2023
TO: COUNCIL MEMBERS
FROM: STAFF
SUBJECT: FINANCIAL REPORT

Attached is a Financial Report comparing the months of May through July 2023 for your review and approval.

Recommendation

Approve the Financial Report.



South Florida Regional Planning Council
1 Oakwood Boulevard, Suite 250, Hollywood, Florida 33020
954.924-3653 Phone, 954.924-3654 FAX
www.sfregionalcouncil.org

**SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL
COMPARATIVE BALANCE SHEET**

July 31, 2023
(unaudited)

| | May | June | July | Increase (Decrease) |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| <u>General Fund</u> | | | | |
| Assets: | | | | |
| Cash GF | 1,620,485 | 1,442,784 | 1,177,535 | (265,249) |
| SBA - Investment Account | 11,626 | 11,677 | 11,730 | 53 |
| Accounts Receivable | 166,902 | 236,130 | 227,426 | (8,703) |
| Due From Other Funds | 29,937 | 37,422 | 38,403 | 982 |
| Prepaid Expenses | 15,477 | 15,477 | 15,477 | - |
| Total Assets | 1,844,427 | 1,743,488 | 1,470,572 | (272,917) |
| Liabilities and Fund Balance: | | | | |
| Liabilities | (1,910) | (3,010) | (3,010) | - |
| Fund Balance | 1,846,337 | 1,746,498 | 1,473,582 | (272,917) |
| Total Liabilities and Fund Balance | 1,844,427 | 1,743,488 | 1,470,572 | (272,917) |
| <u>Federal, State & Local</u> | | | | |
| Assets: | | | | |
| Accounts Receivable | 158,868 | 229,554 | 222,323 | (7,231) |
| Total Assets | 158,868 | 229,554 | 222,323 | (7,231) |
| Liabilities and Fund Balance: | | | | |
| Liabilities | (489) | (538) | 1,693 | 2,231 |
| Due to General Fund | - | - | - | - |
| Fund Balance | 159,356 | 230,092 | 220,630 | (9,461) |
| Total Liabilities and Fund Balance | 158,868 | 229,554 | 222,323 | (7,231) |
| <u>Revolving Loan Funds</u> | | | | |
| Assets: | | | | |
| Cash RLF | 2,303,460 | 2,050,067 | 2,094,126 | 44,059 |
| Accounts Receivable | 10,863,207 | 11,123,541 | 11,088,006 | (35,535) |
| Allowance for Loan Losses | (1,088,554) | (1,088,554) | (1,088,722) | (167) |
| Total Assets | 12,078,113 | 12,085,054 | 12,093,410 | 8,357 |
| Liabilities and Fund Balance: | | | | |
| Liabilities | 24 | 24 | 298 | 274 |
| Due To Other Funds | 29,937 | 37,422 | 38,403 | 982 |
| Fund Balance | 12,048,152 | 12,047,608 | 12,054,709 | 7,101 |
| Total Liabilities and Fund Balance | 12,078,113 | 12,085,054 | 12,093,410 | 8,357 |
| <u>Southeast Florida Regional Prosperity Institute</u> | | | | |
| Assets: | | | | |
| Cash | 40,966 | 41,043 | 41,140 | 96 |
| Total Assets | 40,966 | 41,043 | 41,140 | 96 |
| Liabilities and Fund Balance: | | | | |
| Liabilities | - | - | - | - |
| Fund Balance | 40,966 | 41,043 | 41,140 | 96 |
| Total Liabilities and Fund Balance | 40,966 | 41,043 | 41,140 | 96 |

SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

July 31, 2023

(unaudited)

| <u>Description</u> | May | June | July | Fiscal to Date | % Realized | Annual Budget | % of Budget | Remaining Budget |
|---|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <u>REVENUE REPORT</u> | | | | | | | | |
| Membership Dues | \$ - | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 970,865 | 100% | \$ 970,866 | 29% | \$ 1 |
| Interest & Other Income | 9,215 | 8,576 | 4,609 | 30,372 | 2025% | 1,500 | 0% | (28,872) |
| Federal Funded Projects | 274,205 | 60,898 | 59,387 | 1,241,404 | 79% | 1,568,530 | 47% | 327,126 |
| State Funded Projects | - | 37,564 | - | 68,131 | 84% | 80,952 | 2% | 12,821 |
| Local Funded Projects | 1,247 | - | 64,916 | 254,037 | 123% | 207,000 | 6% | (47,037) |
| Trust Funds | 37,829 | 36,878 | 46,194 | 406,418 | 81% | 500,000 | 15% | 93,582 |
| TOTAL Revenues | 322,496 | 143,915 | 175,105 | 2,971,227 | 89% | 3,328,848 | 100% | 357,621 |
| <u>EXPENSE REPORT</u> | | | | | | | | |
| <u>Operating Expenses</u> | | | | | | | | |
| Staff Compensation | \$ 119,107 | \$ 170,768 | \$ 118,488 | \$ 1,248,677 | 71% | \$ 1,766,494 | 53% | \$ 517,817 |
| Occupancy | 8,415 | 8,415 | 8,415 | 86,661 | 91% | 95,000 | 3% | 8,339 |
| Utilities Electric/Sanitation | 429 | 483 | 574 | 4,228 | 70% | 6,000 | 0% | 1,772 |
| Janitorial Services | 750 | 750 | - | 6,750 | 74% | 9,180 | 0% | 2,430 |
| Repairs & Maintenance | - | - | - | 1,018 | 17% | 6,000 | 0% | 4,982 |
| Storage | 498 | 498 | 498 | 5,211 | 95% | 5,500 | 0% | 289 |
| Office Automation | 3,494 | 7,165 | 3,275 | 45,768 | 65% | 70,000 | 2% | 24,232 |
| Advertising, Notices, Supplies, Postage | 1,503 | 902 | 684 | 30,996 | 105% | 29,500 | 1% | (1,496) |
| Travel | 1,288 | 199 | 1,032 | 4,602 | 42% | 11,000 | 0% | 6,398 |
| Professional Development | 902 | 2,126 | 10,711 | 33,172 | 111% | 30,000 | 1% | (3,172) |
| Insurance | - | - | 8,478 | 28,782 | 92% | 31,320 | 1% | 2,538 |
| Miscellaneous Expenses | - | - | - | - | 0% | 5,500 | 0% | 5,500 |
| Legal Services (1) | 19,265 | 3,828 | 3,148 | 41,029 | 91% | 45,000 | 1% | 3,971 |
| Financial Services | 778 | 430 | 485 | 8,065 | 15% | 54,200 | 2% | 46,135 |
| Professional Consultants | - | - | 5,185 | 21,202 | 42% | 50,000 | 2% | 28,799 |
| Capital Expenditures | - | - | - | - | 0% | 25,000 | 1% | 25,000 |
| Subtotal Operating Expenses | 156,429 | 195,566 | 160,971 | 1,566,161 | 70% | 2,239,694 | 67% | 673,533 |
| <u>Pass Through Expenses:</u> | - | 25,666 | 25,666 | 852,552 | 69% | 1,227,410 | 36% | 374,858 |
| TOTAL Expenses | 156,429 | 221,232 | 186,637 | 2,418,713 | 70% | 3,467,104 | 103% | 1,048,391 |
| Excess (deficit) Revenues over Expenditures | \$ 166,067 | \$ (77,317) | \$ (11,532) | \$ 552,514 | | \$ (138,256) | -4% | |
| (1) Additional legal YTD expenses included in "pass-through Expenses" | | | | \$ 40,360 | | | | |
| Note: Percentage of Fiscal Year lapsed | | | | 83.33% | | | | |



MEMORANDUM

AGENDA ITEM #III.C

DATE: SEPTEMBER 18, 2023

TO: COUNCIL MEMBERS

FROM: STAFF

SUBJECT: LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PROPOSED AND ADOPTED AMENDMENT
CONSENT AGENDA

Pursuant to the 1974 Interlocal Agreement creating the South Florida Regional Planning Council (Council), the Council is directed by its member counties to “assure the orderly, economic, and balanced growth and development of the Region, consistent with the protection of natural resources and environment of the Region and to protect the health, safety, welfare, and quality of life of the residents of the Region.”

In fulfillment of the Interlocal Agreement directive and its duties under State law, the Council reviews local government Comprehensive Plan amendments for consistency with the *Strategic Regional Policy Plan for South Florida (SRPP)*. Pursuant to Section 163.3184, Florida Statutes as presently in effect, Council review of comprehensive plan amendments is limited to 1) adverse effects on regional resources and facilities identified in the SRPP and 2) extra-jurisdictional impacts that would be inconsistent with the comprehensive plan of any affected local government within the Region. The Council’s review of amendments is conducted in two stages: (1) proposed or transmittal and (2) adoption. Council staff reviews the contents of the amendment package once the Department of Economic Opportunity certifies its completeness.

A written report of the Council’s evaluation pursuant to Section 163.3184, Florida Statutes, is to be provided to the local government and the State Land Planning Agency within 30 calendar days of receipt of the amendment.

Recommendation

Find the proposed and adopted plan amendments from the local governments listed as not causing adverse impact to state or regional resources/facilities and without extra-jurisdictional impacts that would be inconsistent with the comprehensive plan of any affected local government within the Region.

Approve this report for transmittal to the local governments with a copy to the State Land Planning Agency.



South Florida Regional Planning Council
1 Oakwood Boulevard, Suite 250, Hollywood, Florida 33020
954-924-3653 Phone, 954-924-3654 FAX
www.sfregionalcouncil.org

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

- **Monroe County 23-02ACSC**
Updating the introduction, background, and glossary to the Monroe County 2030 Comprehensive Plan.
- **Monroe County 23-03ACSC**
Establishing Goals, Objectives, and Policy to create site-specific development standards, deviations, and exemptions for Ocean Reef Club.
- **City of Florida City 23-01ESR***
 - 1) Property Rights Element.
 - 2) Increasing maximum density from 36 to 75 units per net acre for the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) areas located within 1000 ft of three existing and planned transit stations in the FLUE. It also eliminates the 5-acre parcel size requirement for TOD sites.
- **City of Hialeah Gardens 23-03ESR***
Property Rights Element.
- **City of Marathon 23-03ACSC**
Amending the Future Land Use Map from Residential Medium to Mixed Use Commercial for Property described as Gulfstream Shores.
- **City of Sweetwater 23-01ESR**
Text Amendment to the Future Land Use Element to meet the housing needs of the elderly, active-duty military and/or veterans, and workforce population.
- **City of West Miami 23-01ESR***
Property Rights Element.

ADOPTED AMENDMENTS

- **City of Aventura 23-03ESR**
Amending the text to the Future Land Use Element designation of approximately 4.3 acres of property in the center of the City. The amendment will allow a maximum residential density of 70 dwelling units per acre, in the Town Center future land use designated properties, related to "Aventura 2999 LLC".
- **Town of Davie 23-01ESR**
Revisions to the Transit Oriented Corridor residential density.
- **City of North Miami Beach 22-01ESR***
Property Rights Element.
- **City of Oakland Park 23-01ER***
Property Rights Element.
- **City of Plantation 23-01ER***
Amendments related to the Evaluation and Appraisal Report updating the Property Rights, Capital Improvement, and Public School Facilities Elements

*Property Rights Amendment

Staff Note: No concerns or technical assistance comments reflecting potential adverse regional or extra-jurisdictional impacts were received from local governments or partner agencies.



MEMORANDUM

AGENDA ITEM #III.E

DATE: SEPTEMBER 18, 2023

TO: COUNCIL MEMBERS

FROM: STAFF

SUBJECT: LEGAL COUNSEL ANNUAL REVIEW / CONTRACT

Legal Counsel is customarily reviewed by the Executive Committee prior to the September Council Meeting where his contract renewal is considered. This year the Annual Review will be held at an Executive Committee meeting at 9:45 a.m. held immediately prior to the regular Council meeting. The review form is provided herewith for your information. All Council Members are welcome to attend.

Attached for your information is the Independent Contractor Professional Services Employment Contract between Legal Counsel and the South Florida Regional Planning Council. Paragraph 2.0 on page 1 stipulates that this contract shall commence on October 1, 2023, and terminate on September 30, 2024.

As full payment and compensation for Attorneys and for legal services, the Council shall pay the following rates: Partners - \$275.00 per hour; Associates - \$250.00 per hour; and Paralegals - \$ 150.00 per hour. This represents a slight increase from last year.

Recommendations

- Receive the report from the Executive Committee.
- Renew Legal Counsel's contract for 2023-2024.



South Florida Regional Planning Council
1 Oakwood Boulevard, Suite 250, Hollywood Florida 33020
954-924-3653 Phone, 954-924-3654 FAX
www.sfregionalcouncil.org

SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

MEMORANDUM

TO: Senator – Chair Steve Geller
Isabel Cosio Carballo, Executive Director

CC: Kathe Ann Lerch, Director of Administration

FROM: Samuel S. Goren, General Counsel *SSG*

DATE: August 11, 2023

RE: South Florida Regional Planning Council (“Council”) / Independent Contractor
Professional Services Employment Contract FY 2023/24

Attached for placement on the September agenda, please find the proposed 2023-2024 Independent Contractor Professional Services Employment Contract as General Counsel for FY 2023/24.

Please note I have included an increase in the hourly rate adjustment for authorized hourly billed legal work and which is subject to the Council Members approval at the September meeting.

Please contact our office if there is any additional information that we can provide.

SSG:kml
Enclosure

**INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR PROFESSIONAL
SERVICES EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT**

THIS INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT is made and entered into in duplicate in Broward County, Florida, this ____ day of September, 2023 by and between the SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL, a body corporate and politic and an agency of the State of Florida, hereinafter referred to as "SFRPC", being party of the first part, and SAMUEL S. GOREN, as a member of the law firm of Goren, Cherof, Doody & Ezrol, P.A., hereinafter referred to as "ATTORNEY", party of the second part.

IN CONSIDERATION of the mutual covenants and promises herein contained and the mutual exchange of other good and valuable consideration, the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, it is mutually agreed, promises and covenanted as follows:

1.0 SFRPC does hereby agree to employ and accordingly does employ ATTORNEY, and ATTORNEY does hereby agree to accept and does accordingly accept employment by the SFRPC in the capacity of "General Counsel" of the SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL, all in accordance with the terms and conditions and provisions of said employment as set forth hereinbelow.

2.0 The term of employment of ATTORNEY under this Contract, hence the term of this Independent Contractor Professional Services Employment Contract, shall commence on October 1, 2023 and terminate on September 30, 2024 the term of employment of ATTORNEY hereunder shall be for a period of twelve (12) months, unless the term of employment of ATTORNEY is earlier reduced or terminated pursuant to the early termination provision as set forth herein in numbered Paragraph 3 hereof.

3.0 This Independent Contractor Professional Services Employment Contract is terminable by either SFRPC or ATTORNEY at any time on thirty (30) days written notice to the other party. However, at ATTORNEY'S option, and if so requested by SFRPC, ATTORNEY may continue to provide the professional services contemplated herein pending the appointment/employment of his successor if such appointment/employment requires more than thirty (30) days, and provided that SFRPC exerts reasonable efforts during said thirty (30) days to seek and select his said successor.

In addition, the parties may terminate this Employment Contract at any time and on any agreed basis by mutual consent of all parties, the same reduced to writing and properly executed by all parties hereto. Likewise, the term of this Agreement may be extended at any time by mutual consent of all parties hereto, the terms of such extension being reduced to writing and executed by all parties hereto.

4.0 ATTORNEY, or a member of the law firm, agrees to personally attend all regular and special meetings of the SFRPC Council and to attend any meeting of any official SFRPC board,

committee or commission when specifically requested to attend and to perform any and all legal services, of whatever kind or nature, including office practice and litigation, required, in the opinion of the Attorney or requested of ATTORNEY by SFRPC for the SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL and the agents, servants and/or employees thereof (when same are acting in their official capacity(s) on behalf of the SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL) during the term of this Employment Contract, subject only to the following. All legal services to be performed by ATTORNEY hereunder shall be rendered at the request or direction of the majority of the SFRPC (meaning majority of Council sitting at the time that any vote is taken on a direction to request service from ATTORNEY) and/or the Executive Director; otherwise, ATTORNEY shall not be required to perform legal services for SFRPC except on his own initiative and at his own expense. Other legal fees and expenses that may be incurred are as follows:

4.1 Any litigation in which the SFRPC is a party plaintiff or a party defendant in either the Broward County Court, the Broward Circuit Court, or the United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida or any other administrative matter, or trial or appellate Court into which the SFRPC is summoned or petitions;

4.2 Any administrative hearings before any governmental/administrative bodies;

4.3 Co-Counsel activities with insurance counsel assigned by the SFRPC's insurance carrier when necessary and appropriate.

4.4 Real estate and related loan transactions.

For purposes of clarification and emphasis: This Independent Contractor Professional Services Employment Contract is, and is intended to be, a party specific agreement and shall be construed accordingly. The individual attorney with whom SFRPC contracts hereby shall be the sole and exclusive party to render services for, to and on behalf of the SFRPC pursuant to the terms hereof. Except with the specific concurrence and approval of the SFRPC Council, no substitution of counsel for ATTORNEY shall be permitted, except as expressly provided for herein.

The parties specifically recognize and understand that the ATTORNEY is a member of the law firm of Goren, Cherof, Doody & Ezrol, P.A., Fort Lauderdale, Broward County, Florida (the "Firm") and that several members of the Firm possess the requisite skill, competence and exposure in administrative/governmental practice. Specifically, therefore, and notwithstanding any of the foregoing, the rendition of services hereunder by an attorney from the Firm other than the specific attorney contracted with hereunder shall not be prohibited and shall be deemed to be in accordance with the provisions of Section 112.313, Florida Statutes, as amended from time to time, including, litigation and support services otherwise described and permitted by the aforesaid Statute.

5.0 As full payment and compensation for ATTORNEYS and for all legal services hereunder, SFRPC shall pay to ATTORNEY and ATTORNEY agrees to accept from SFRPC rates as follows:

| | |
|------------|---------------|
| Partners | \$275.00/hour |
| Associates | \$250.00/hour |
| Paralegals | \$150.00/hour |

In the event of early termination pursuant to the terms hereof, ATTORNEY shall be entitled to accrued and unbilled/billed and unpaid compensation as shall have accrued to the date of said early termination.

6.0 In addition to the compensation for professional services as last set forth, ATTORNEY shall be permitted to submit to the SFRPC on a monthly basis for payment by SFRPC to ATTORNEY an invoice for all reasonable and necessary legal expenses incurred on behalf of the SFRPC, such as court costs and filing fees, in addition to long distance toll charges, messenger service, computerized legal research, photo-copying and facsimile costs not performed by the SFRPC. The foregoing constitutes reimbursement of legal expenses to ATTORNEY and not legal fees for services as contemplated hereunder. ATTORNEY may also request these costs be paid directly by SFRPC to the billing party, agency or vendor upon their original invoice or billing statement rather than on a reimbursement basis including reimbursement for library books and supplements owned by the SFRPC and in possession of the Attorney, if any.

7.0 This Independent Contractor Professional Services Employment Contract sets forth the entire agreement between the parties hereto. Any prior conversations or writing are merged herein and extinguished. No subsequent amendment to this Contract shall be binding upon any of the parties hereto unless reduced to writing and properly signed and executed.

[INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK]

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have caused this Independent Contractor Professional Services Employment Contract to be executed this ____ day of _____, 2023.

WITNESSES AS TO ALL PARTIES:

SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

BY: _____
STEVE GELLER, CHAIR

BY: _____
MICHELLE LINCOLN, SECRETARY

ATTORNEY

SAMUEL S. GOREN, as a
Member of the law firm of
Goren, Cherof, Doody & Ezrol, P.A.

ATTACHMENT "A"
FOR PRIVATE ATTORNEY SERVICES

A. SCOPE OF SERVICE:

The ATTORNEY, or a member of his law firm, shall attend all regular and special meetings of the SFRPC Council and to attend any meeting of any official SFRPC board, committee or commission when specifically requested to attend and to **perform any and all legal services, of whatever kind or nature, including office practice and litigation,** required or requested of ATTORNEY by SFRPC for the SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL and the agents, servants and/or employees thereof (when same are acting in their official capacity(s) on behalf of the SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL) during the term of this Employment Contract, subject only to the following. All legal services to be performed by ATTORNEY hereunder shall be rendered at the request or direction of the majority of the SFRPC (meaning majority of Council sitting at the time that any vote is taken on a direction to request service from ATTORNEY) and/or the Executive Director; otherwise, ATTORNEY shall not be required to perform legal services for SFRPC except on his own initiative and at his own expense.

For purposes of clarification and emphasis: This Independent Contractor Professional Services Employment Contract is, and is intended to be, a party specific agreement and shall be construed accordingly. The individual attorney with whom SFRPC contracts hereby shall be the sole and exclusive party to render services for, to and on behalf of the SFRPC pursuant to the terms hereof. Except with the specific concurrence and approval of the SFRPC Council, no substitution of counsel for ATTORNEY shall be permitted, except as expressly provided for herein.

The parties specifically recognize and understand that the ATTORNEY is a member of the law firm of, Goren, Cherof, Doody & Ezrol, P.A., Fort Lauderdale, Broward County, Florida (the "Firm") and that several members of the Firm possess the requisite skill, competence and exposure in administrative/governmental practice. Specifically, therefore, and notwithstanding any of the foregoing, the rendition of services hereunder by an attorney from the Firm other than the specific attorney contracted with hereunder shall not be prohibited and shall be deemed to be in accordance with the provisions of Section 112.313, Florida Statutes, as amended including, litigation and support services otherwise described and permitted by the aforesaid Statute.

2. ATTORNEY shall review and analyze SFRPC files, data, documents and other materials and advise on a recommended legal course. Further, ATTORNEY shall attend and participate in meetings, conference calls, inspections or the like and report on the status of the legal matters.

3. ATTORNEY shall prepare and file pleadings, motions, or briefs, initiate and conduct discovery, as required and represent SFRPC in any related litigation and otherwise represent SFRPC at trial or on appeal.

B. COMPENSATION/FEES:

1. *SFRPC shall be billed in accordance with Exhibit "1".*
2. *Billable hours for hourly billed activities shall be measured in six (6) minute increments. Compensation of attorney hours will be for actual time spent providing attorney services to the SFRPC.*
3. *Premium rates will not be paid for overtime work.*
4. *Attorney time while traveling is neither billed nor compensable.*

C. COMPENSATION/COSTS:

1. *Reimbursement of costs for third-party vendor bills, including but not limited to, exhibits, transcripts, and witness fees, filing fees and court costs require prior written authorization by SFRPC and shall be reimbursed based upon presentation by ATTORNEY of an appropriate Statement for Costs. The SFRPC shall not pay for firm surcharges added to Third Party Vendor bills.*
2. *Routine expenses such as long distance toll charges, messenger service, photocopying, postage, printed library materials and facsimile costs are compensable by the SFRPC upon presentation by ATTORNEY on its monthly Statements.*
3. *Non-routine office overhead expenses such as long distance phone calls, long distance facsimile transmissions, long distance courier services, bulk mailings, bulk third party copying, blueprints, x-rays, photographs and computer-assisted legal research services must be justified to the AGENCY and shall be reimbursed based on documented third party vendor charges. If these charges exceed subject to annual budget, as amended from time to time, prior written approval from the AGENCY must be obtained. In-house bulk mailings and bulk copying expenses must be supported by usage logs or similar documentation. Firm surcharges are not reimbursable.*
4. *ATTORNEY shall, if applicable, only bill SFRPC for its proportionate share of the cost of legal research, attending hearings or engaging in client representation of any type, which is applicable to other clients.*
5. *Incurred reimbursable costs described herein shall not exceed ONE THOUSAND AND NO/100 (\$1,000.00) DOLLARS per fiscal year. ATTORNEY shall notify SFRPC in writing when costs reach \$1,000.00. Said notification shall be made as soon as it is practicable and prior to the next monthly invoice.*

D. FORMATION FOR INVOICES:

1. Within thirty (30) days of service provision, each statement for fees and costs shall be submitted in original (white) and one (gold) copy, in a format that includes the following information:

- A. Case name and number, if applicable, or other legal matter reference;
- B. Invoice Number for the particular bill;
- C. **DELETED**
- D. ATTORNEY and SFRPC contract administrators' names;
- E. Inclusive dates of the month covered by the Invoice;
- F. **DELETED**
- G. **DELETED;**
- H. **DELETED;**
- I. **DELETED ;**
- J. Any other information as may be requested by SFRPC'S contract administrator.

E. ADMINISTRATION OF AGREEMENT:

- 1. The SFRPC contract administrator is ISABEL COSIO CARBALLO.
- 2. The ATTORNEY contract administrator is SAMUEL S. GOREN.
- 3. All written approvals must be obtained from the parties' contract administrators or their designees. All notices must be given to the parties' contract administrators.
- 4. This contract shall be governed by and construed under the laws of Florida.

F. OTHER AVAILABLE SERVICES:

Upon receipting approval from SFRPC, the ATTORNEY shall use existing SFRPC agreements, when available and cost effective, to acquire services (e.g, computer-assisted legal research) and the assistance of professionals (e.g., court reporters, expert witnesses) at reduced rates.

G. PUBLIC RECORDS:

All documents prepared pursuant to the Agreement are subject to Florida's Public Records Law, unless specifically so stated. Refusal of the ATTORNEY to allow public access to such records, as required by such law, shall constitute grounds for unilateral cancellation of this AGREEMENT.

H. PUBLIC CONDITIONS:

1. The ATTORNEY will make affirmative efforts to achieve cost effectiveness by consolidating court hearings, limiting travel, streamlining case processing, using printed forms, using the appropriate level of attorney or staff experience required by task, and taking other actions to improve efficiency.

2. *Multiple staffing at meetings, hearings, depositions, trials, etc., by the ATTORNEY will not be compensated without prior written approval from SFRPC.*

3. *ATTORNEY agrees that all documents shall be promptly returned at the termination of the ATTORNEY'S involvement in the case or matter at hand.*

4. *SFRPC in-house staff shall be used in the legal matter to the maximum extent possible.*

5. *The ATTORNEY will provide immediate notice by facsimile transmission or telephone regarding significant case developments, which will likely result in media inquiries.*

6. *The ATTORNEY shall provide SFRPC immediate notice of any representation undertaken by ATTORNEY in matters where the client is suing or being sued by the State or State entities in any civil or adversarial administrative action.*

7. *A contingency fee contract must be commercially reasonable. "Commercially reasonable" means the fees shall be no more than the amount permissible pursuant to Rule 4-1.5 of the rules regulating The Florida Bar and case law interpreting that rule. If the amount of the fee is in dispute, the counsel retained by the state shall participate in mandatory binding arbitration. Payment of all attorney's fees is subject to appropriation. Attorney's fees shall be forfeited if, during the pendency of the case, the counsel retained by the state takes a public position that is adverse to the state's litigation or settlement posture.*

8. *Each private attorney who is under contract to provide attorney services for the state or a state agency shall, from the inception of the contractual relationship until at least 4 years after the contract expires or terminates, maintain detailed current records, including documentation of all expenses, disbursements, charges, credits, underlying receipts and invoices, and other financial transactions that concern the provision of such attorney services. The private attorney shall make all such records available for inspection and copying upon request in accordance with Chapter 119, Florida Statutes.*

9. *The AGENCY's general counsel must approve and sign the contract as to form and legality. The Contract must be signed by the AGENCY head, who shall also maintain custody of the contract.*

EXHIBIT 1 – FEE SCHEDULE

1. HOURLY BILLING SCHEDULE:

ATTORNEYS and its paralegal staff to be used under this contract include the following individuals at the hourly rates indicated:

| | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| <i>SAMUEL S. GOREN</i> | <i>\$275.00/HOUR</i> |
| <i>DONALD J. DOODY</i> | <i>\$275.00/HOUR</i> |
| <i>KERRY L. EZROL</i> | <i>\$275.00/HOUR</i> |
| <i>MICHAEL D. CIRULLO</i> | <i>\$275.00/HOUR</i> |
| <i>JULIE F. KLAHR</i> | <i>\$275.00/HOUR</i> |
| <i>JACOB G. HOROWITZ</i> | <i>\$275.00/HOUR</i> |
| <i>SHANA H. BRIDGEMAN</i> | <i>\$275.00/HOUR</i> |
| <i>BRIAN J. SHERMAN</i> | <i>\$275.00/HOUR</i> |
| <i>QUENTIN E. MORGAN</i> | <i>\$275.00/HOUR</i> |
| <i>SEAN M. SWARTZ</i> | <i>\$250.00/HOUR</i> |
| <i>HEATHER NEEDELMAN</i> | <i>\$250.00/HOUR</i> |
| <i>PAUL B. HERNANDEZ</i> | <i>\$250.00/HOUR</i> |
| <i>ADAM G. LEVINE</i> | <i>\$250.00/HOUR</i> |
| <i>AYLIN M. RUIZ</i> | <i>\$250.00/HOUR</i> |
| <i>CERTIFIED PARALEGALS</i> | <i>\$150.00/HOUR</i> |

The above rates may be adjusted if both parties agree, and shall be documented in writing by amendment to this Agreement.

**SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL (“Council”)
GENERAL COUNSEL PERFORMANCE REVIEW
RATING SHEET**

Rate each item from 1 (low) to 5 (high) based on your opinion of the Council’s General Counsel’s performance. Mark N/A if you do not have enough information to rate.

I. LEGAL CONSULTATION

- _____ A. Has legal advice provided by the General Counsel proven to be accurate and technically correct?
- _____ B. Does the General Counsel provide his best and honest recommendations given all existing legal issues and ramifications?
- _____ C. Does the General Counsel possess and provide an efficient and effective knowledge of the state law, the rules, policies and procedures of the Council?
- _____ D. Does the General Counsel possess and provide an efficient and effective knowledge of other government regulations and case law regarding the Council and issues facing the Council?
- _____ E. Does advice provided by the General Counsel regularly take into account and balance the overall goals and objectives of the Council?
- _____ F. Does the General Counsel regularly provide the scope of legal expertise necessary to meet the Council’s needs on issues that arise, either from himself, within his firm or other available resources?
- _____ G. Does the General Counsel proactively identify potential issues when he is aware of them to avoid problems from occurring?
- _____ H. Are alternatives and innovative solutions provided rather than just raising problems?
- _____ I. Is the General Counsel able to maintain the Council and staffs confidence while informing them of the different legal risks that proposed actions might generate?

II. LEGAL REPRESENTATION

- _____ A. Does the General Counsel aggressively represent the interests of the Council as directed by the Council Members?

- _____ B. Is the General Counsel's approach effective in achieving the best possible legal outcomes for the Council's interests given the issues that arise?
- _____ C. Does the General Counsel represent the Council in a professional and ethical manner?
- _____ D. Is the General Counsel impartial and objective in his duties and responsibilities?
- _____ E. Are the General Counsel's estimates of legal impacts reasonably accurate on a regular basis?

III. STAFF WORK

- _____ A. Does the General Counsel prepare contracts and other legal work accurately and consistent with the direction and objectives communicated by the Council Members, Executive Director and/or staff?
- _____ B. Does the General Counsel maintain good working relationships and serve as an effective member of the management team?
- _____ C. Does the General Counsel accurately identify and address all legal issues within documents and items that he reviews?
- _____ D. Are staff and the Council Members advised of key changes in governmental and administrative law as it pertains to the Council's activities?
- _____ E. Does the General Counsel display a positive attitude in carrying out his responsibilities and responding to requests?
- _____ F. Has the General Counsel been successful in accomplishing objectives previously established?

IV. COST/FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND CONTROL

- _____ A. Are regular legal activities achieved within budgetary goals and limits?
- _____ B. Has the General Counsel been effective in minimizing legal costs by limiting tasks to those regarding legal issues and utilizing Council's in-house staff when possible to perform administrative and other functions?
- _____ C. Are standard forms developed and used where possible to minimize preparation of legal documentation?
- _____ D. Are legal tasks performed with appropriate authorization according to established procedures and contract requirements?

- _____ E. Do invoices accurately identify tasks and expenses in sufficient detail to provide accountability and cost control?
- _____ F. Does the General Counsel display the ability and knowledge to research issues in a minimum amount of time?
- _____ G. Have legal costs been effectively managed and controlled given the issues, assignments and requests made to the General Counsel?

V. RESPONSIVENESS/TIMELINESS OF ACTIONS

- _____ A. Are requested legal work and assignments completed in a timely manner within established time frames?
- _____ B. Is the General Counsel accessible when needed to respond to requests for legal information and assistance?
- _____ C. Are legal review and requests for information completed in time to avoid delays to Council projects, programs and other tasks?
- _____ D. Does the General Counsel follow-up effectively to requests that are made?
- _____ E. Does the General Counsel accurately interpret and clarify Council Members and Executive Director direction?

VI. COMMUNICATIONS

- _____ A. Does the General Counsel communicate effectively with the Council Members, staff and the community?
- _____ B. Are answers provided in a timely and in an understandable manner?
- _____ C. Are timelines for follow-up to requests clearly communicated?
- _____ D. Does the General Counsel maintain confidentiality with regard to all matters discussed with the Council Members and/or Executive Director and staff?
- _____ E. Does the General Counsel effectively report to the Council Members and/or Executive Director communications by project attorneys of a substantive nature regarding significant or sensitive matters?



MEMORANDUM

AGENDA ITEM #III.F

DATE: SEPTEMBER 18, 2023

TO: COUNCIL MEMBERS

FROM: STAFF

SUBJECT: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ANNUAL REVIEW / CONTRACT

Section 1.9.3 of the agreement between the Council and the Executive Director states that the Governing Body of the Council, or an Executive Committee with the delegated function, shall perform an annual evaluation and review of the Executive Director. This year the Annual Review will be held at an Executive Committee meeting at 9:45 a.m. prior to the regular Council meeting. The Evaluation Form and Second Amended and Restated Employment Agreement is provided herewith for your review and information.

This Employment Agreement terminates on September 30, 2026, subject to annual review and approval by the Executive Committee and Council. All Council Members are welcome to attend the Executive Committee meeting.

Recommendation

- Receive the report from the Executive Committee
- Renew the Executive Director's contract for 2023-2024



**SECOND AMENDED AND RESTATED EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE
SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL
AND
ISABEL COSIO CARBALLO
PROVIDING FOR EMPLOYMENT
AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

THIS IS AN AGREEMENT, made and entered into this 18th day of September, 2023 with an effective date of October 1 2023, (“Effective Date”) by and between the SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL, a body corporate and politic and an agency of the State of Florida, hereinafter referred to as “SFRPC” and ISABEL COSIO CARBALLO, hereinafter referred to a “EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR”.

W I T N E S S E T H:

WHEREAS, the SFRPC was created by interlocal agreement pursuant to Section 163.01, Florida Statutes, as amended, known as the “Florida Interlocal Cooperation Act of 1969” and supported by all applicable Florida Statutes, including but not limited to Section 186.501, Florida Statutes, as amended, and known as the “Florida Regional Planning Council Act”, and

WHEREAS, Section 186.505, Florida Statutes, provides that the SFRPC may employ and compensate such personnel, consultants and technical and professional assistants as it deems necessary to exercise the powers and perform the duties set forth in accordance with Chapter 186, Florida Statutes; and

WHEREAS, the SFRPC has indicated its interest in entering into this Agreement for the purposes of establishing the basis, framework and context for the relationship which shall exist between the SFRPC and ISABEL COSIO CARBALLO as EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR; and

WHEREAS, this Agreement is the culmination of discussions, negotiations and agreements as to the employment by the SFRPC of ISABEL COSIO CARBALLO in conformity with the Florida Regional Planning Council Act; and

WHEREAS, the governing body of the SFRPC has, by majority vote, delegated the power and authority of recommending to the Council the hiring, firing and evaluating the Executive Director to the Executive Committee of the SFRPC, and therefore, the terms "SFRPC" shall be defined and interpreted to mean the Executive Committee in this Agreement unless later modified by form action of the SFRPC subsequent hereto;

WHEREAS, upon the Effective Date, this Agreement shall supersede the prior Agreement between the South Florida Regional Planning Council and Isabel Cosio Carballo dated September 27, 2021 providing for Employment as Executive Director ("Prior Employment Agreement"), and the Prior Employment Agreement shall be of no force and effect.

WHEREAS, in keeping with the Council's traditional practice, unless specifically addressed in this Agreement, the Council's Personnel Policy and Procedures are understood to generally apply to the Executive Director; and

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of the promises, the mutual covenants, conditions, provisions and undertakings herein contained, and for other good and valuable considerations, the parties do mutually covenant and agree with each other as follows:

ARTICLE I

TERMS AND CONDITIONS - THE SFRPC

1.0 The SFRPC agrees as follows:

1.1 To employ ISABEL COSIO CARBALLO as the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR of the SFRPC for the term hereinafter referred to, consistent with the terms, conditions and covenants of the Florida Regional Planning Council Act and other applicable, professional and ethical requirements imposed upon the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR by existing SFRPC Rules or existing agreements as they may be amended from time to time.

1.2 To pay and to compensate the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR the sum of ONE HUNDRED SIXTY THOUSAND DOLLARS AND 00/100 (\$160,000) per annum as modified in accordance with Section 1.9.1, hereinafter for the remainder of the term of this Employment Agreement, payable in

accordance with the regularly scheduled method of compensation for other SFRPC employees, in addition to such other fringe benefits, including but not limited to, health and medical insurance, retirement payments and other accoutrements of employment as more specifically set forth herein.

1.3 To provide EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR with an automobile allowance in the amount of SEVEN HUNDRED FIFTY DOLLARS AND 00/100 (\$750) per month as and for the reimbursement for the reimbursable mileage and automobile expenses of the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR for performing services in and on behalf of the SFRPC within the South Florida region. For travel outside the region, the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR will be compensated at the rate of regular staff.

1.4 To provide the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR with the equivalent of the full and complete health, medical and related insurance which are otherwise provided to regularly employed SFRPC employees, for her and her dependents. In the event the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR does not require health insurance coverage because coverage is provided through a plan provided by the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S spouse, the Council agrees to pay as additional compensation the financial equivalent of the cost the Council would have had to pay for full and complete health care coverage for her and her dependents.

1.5 To provide the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR with sick leave and personal leave accrual as applicable to other SFRPC employees and based upon policies existing from time to time and adopted by the governing body of the SFRPC.

1.6 To provide EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR with an SFRPC-issued cellular telephone, which shall be used solely for SFRPC business.

1.7 Effective October 1, 2023, and each subsequent fiscal year start date thereafter, the Executive Director's annual leave account will be credited with two hundred forty (240) hours, exclusive of paid holidays. No annual leave hours may be carried over from September 30th. However, the SFRPC shall reimburse the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR up to fifty (50%) percent of the unused portion of the annual leave account per year. No additional payments will be made for any unused vacation, however, in the event of termination, the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR will be

entitled to the same vacation accrual policy that is in place for all regular employees of the SFRPC at the time of said termination. This provision shall not act to prohibit the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR from receiving any reimbursement or conversion for sick leave, as may otherwise be authorized under the SFRPC's Personnel Policy and Procedures.

1.8 The SFRPC will contribute an amount comparable to the employee contribution in the State of Florida, Department of Administration, Florida Retirement System ("FRS") for the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, subject to FRS guidelines.

1.9 To provide increases in compensation to the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR on the following basis:

1.9.1 Merit Increases: In addition to the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR's Base Salary as defined in Section 1.2, it is understood that pursuant to SFRPC action at its September 19, 2022 Council Meeting, the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR received a four (4%) merit increase. At the option of the Executive Committee of the SFRPC, the Council may provide a merit increase to the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR on an annual basis coinciding with the annual adoption of the budget from the date of employment hereof, subject to a vote of the Governing Body of the SFRPC of not less than a majority of the members present at a regular meeting or a special meeting called for that purpose.

1.9.2 Cost of Living Increases: In addition to the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR's Base Salary as defined in Section 1.2, it is understood that pursuant to SFRPC action at its September 27, 2022 Council Meeting, the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR received a three (3%) cost of living increase. At the option of the Executive Committee of the SFRPC of the SFRPC, the Council may annually adjust the existing salary based upon cost of living increases if otherwise provided to State of Florida employees, subject to a vote of the Governing Body of the SFRPC of not less than a majority of the members present at a regular meeting or a special meeting called for that purpose.

- 1.9.3 To annually review and evaluate the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR based upon performance standards, attached hereto as Exhibit "A" and incorporated herein, and as may be amended from time to time by the Governing Body of the SFRPC or the Executive Committee of the SFRPC with the delegated function of performing such evaluation and review, subject to a vote of the Governing Body of the SFRPC of not less than a majority of the members present at a regular meeting or a special meeting called for that purpose.
- 1.10 Subject to the approval of the Executive Committee, to pay for and on behalf of the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR professional dues, seminars, fees and charges incurred by the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR as a professional and a member of such organizations which have a specific relationship with the SFRPC and the job duties and functions set forth herein.
- 1.11 To honor and to conform in all ways possible with the terms, conditions and provisions of the Florida Regional Planning Council Act, and other applicable rules and regulations affecting State of Florida employees as the same may not apply or as may be applicable in the future, as amended, as well as the ethical considerations imposed upon the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.
- 1.12 That in the event the SFRPC chooses to remove ISABEL COSIO CARBALLO as the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, it shall follow the provisions set forth hereinafter under the heading "Termination".

ARTICLE II

TERMS AND CONDITIONS - THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

- 2.0 ISABEL COSIO CARBALLO agrees as follows:
- 2.1 To become the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR of the SFRPC in accordance with the terms, conditions and provisions contained in the Florida Regional Planning Council Act as set forth in Chapter 186, Florida Statutes.
- 2.2 To fulfill the obligations and responsibilities provided for in the Florida Regional Planning Council Act and to perform all functions as the Chief Administrative Official of

the SFRPC in a professional and respectable fashion and with the full decorum required and demanded of such officials generally in the South Florida Region, and elsewhere in the State of Florida as well as those impositions and requirements, both ethical and practical, as may be applicable to professional planners in the State of Florida.

2.3 To hire and to designate such other qualified professional staff, as may be necessary and proper in connection with the discharge of her functions as the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR of the SFRPC.

2.4 That the position of EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR is not and cannot be an hourly type employment. It is a "Job-Basis" form of employment. Hence, the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR shall do any and all things necessary and required to be available to the SFRPC, its agents, servants and employees during the course of this Agreement consistent with good and respectable management, requirements and as otherwise dictated and provided by the Florida Regional Planning Council Act and the Code of Professional Responsibility for certified planners, as well as such other rules, regulations and ethical considerations imposed upon State of Florida employees.

2.5 To act as an exempt, non-civil service employee of the SFRPC and to be an employee at will.

2.6 That EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR shall not engage in any other concurrent employment during the term of this Agreement, or use the executive director position to solicit any independent clients for any private entity.

ARTICLE III

TERM

3.0 This Agreement shall commence upon full execution of both parties (the "Commencement Date") and shall terminate on the 30th of September 2026. However, the parties hereto further agree that this Agreement may be renewed upon mutual written consent of

the parties, subject to confirmation by the full SFRPC Board, as Florida Statute may permit at its natural termination.

3.1 In the event the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR elects to voluntarily terminate this Employment Agreement, she shall provide the SFRPC with not less than thirty (30) days written notice to the Chairman of the Governing Body of the SFRPC indicating her intention to discontinue employment as the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, consistent with the Florida Regional Planning Council Act.

3.2 In the event the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR voluntarily resigns her position with the SFRPC, she shall be compensated for all earnings and compensation to the date of voluntary termination, in addition to any and all other health, medical and related insurance and governmental benefits otherwise provided as stated in the SFRPC personnel policies at the execution hereof or as may, from time to time, be later amended.

3.3 In the event the SFRPC elects to terminate this Employment Agreement prior to the expiration hereof, the SFRPC shall comply with the terms, conditions and provisions contained herein for termination which sets forth the specific procedures and benefits payable to the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.

3.4 Notwithstanding the foregoing, in the event the SFRPC terminates the employment of the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR as provided for hereinafter, the SFRPC shall continue to pay to the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR all compensation earned to the date of termination as well as all severance payments required under Section 4.4.1, however, any such payments shall be in accordance with Section 215.425, F.S., as may be amended.

ARTICLE IV

TERMINATION

4.0 The parties hereto mutually covenant and agree as follows:

4.1 That the employment of the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR shall be at the will of the Governing Body of the SFRPC, and that no civil service status, tenure or related

accoutrement shall be applicable to this type and kind of employment set forth in this Agreement.

4.2 By virtue of this acknowledgement, the parties have voluntarily and knowingly entered into and executed this Agreement on the basis of complying solely with the terms, conditions and provisions of this Employment Agreement.

4.3 This agreement may be terminated by either party for convenience. If EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR seeks to terminate this Agreement for convenience, she shall provide SFRPC with thirty (30) days prior written notice of her intention to terminate. If SFRPC seeks to terminate this Agreement for convenience, it shall provide EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR with thirty (30) days prior written notice of its intention to terminate, subject to Section 4.4. The notice provision herein shall not apply to termination for cause as outlined in subsection 4.5 herein.

4.4 If it be the will and pleasure of the Governing Body of the SFRPC to terminate the employment of the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, the SFRPC shall, by not less than a majority vote, adopt a motion or resolution terminating the services of the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR based upon this Agreement. Upon approval of such motion or resolution, Executive Director shall be entitled to severance pay as follows:

4.4.1 As otherwise in accordance with Section 215.425, F.S., the SFRPC shall provide the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR with a lump sum severance payment in the pro rata amount equivalent to three (3) months of EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR's annual compensation as set forth in Article 1 of this Agreement. This payment shall include the three (3) month equivalent of EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR's annual salary, annual car allowance, annual health insurance and annual retirement contributions for the period covered by the severance pay. This provision shall not apply to any termination in accordance with Section 443.036(29), F.S.

4.5 The EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR may be terminated immediately for cause or because of her conviction of any criminal act. In the event the EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR is terminated pursuant to this sub-section, SFRPC shall have no obligation to pay the aggregate severance benefit designated in this section. For purposes of this Agreement, "cause" shall include, but shall not be limited to, malfeasance, misfeasance, gross negligence, and gross mismanagement of the SFRPC's funds or operations, as may be determined by a majority of the SFRPC Board.

4.6 The Parties agree that a material negative change in the SFRPC budget, as determined by the SFRPC's governing board, shall not constitute a constructive termination pursuant to this Section. In the event of such a change which results in a reduction of compensation for all SFRPC employees, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR agrees to have her compensation, as set forth in Section 1.2 of this Agreement, reduced proportionally in accordance with all other SFRPC employees.

ARTICLE V

MISCELLANEOUS

5.0 It is understood and agreed that this document incorporates and includes all prior negotiations, correspondence, conversations, agreement or understandings applicable to the matters contained herein and that the parties agree that there are no commitments, agreements, or understandings concerning the subject matter of this Agreement that are not contained in this document. Accordingly, it is agreed that no deviation from the terms hereof shall be predicated upon any prior representations or agreements whether oral or written.

5.1 It is further agreed that no modification, amendment or alteration in the terms or conditions contained herein shall be effective unless contained in a written document executed with the same formality and with equal dignity herewith.

5.2 This document shall be executed in at least three (3) counterparts each of which shall be deemed to be a duplicate original.

5.3 This Agreement is executed and is to be performed in the State of Florida, and shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Florida.

5.4 In connection with any litigation arising out of this Agreement, including any administration, trial level, or appellate proceedings, the prevailing party shall be entitled to recover all costs incurred, including a reasonable attorneys' fee.

5.5 If any clause, section or other part or application of this Agreement shall be held by any Court of competent jurisdiction to be unconstitutional or invalid, such unconstitutional or invalid part or application shall be considered as eliminated and so not affecting the validity of the remaining portions or applications remaining in full force and effect.

THE REST OF THIS PAGE HAS BEEN INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have made and executed this Employment Agreement on the respective dates under each signature: THE SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL, through its Governing Body, signing by and through its Chairman and Secretary, authorized to execute same by SFRPC action on 18th _____ day of _____, 2023 and ISABEL COSIO CARBALLO.

SFRPC:

ATTEST:

SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

BY: _____
STEVE GELLER, Chair

MICHELLE LINCOLN, Secretary

Approved as to legal form by General Counsel for the SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

SAMUEL S. GOREN, ESQUIRE
GOREN, CHEROF, DOODY & EZROL, P.A.
3099 E. Commercial Boulevard, Suite 200
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33308

ATTEST:

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

BY: _____
ISABEL COSIO CARBALLO

STATE OF FLORIDA

COUNTY OF BROWARD

BEFORE ME, ____ personally appeared or ____ via online notarization, STEVE GELLER, Chair of the South Florida Regional Planning Council, to me well known to be the person described in and who executed the foregoing instrument and acknowledged to and before me that she executed said Agreement for the purposes therein expressed on behalf of the SFRPC.

WITNESS my hand and official seal, this ____ day of September 18, 2023.

BY: _____
Notary Public

My Commission Expires:

STATE OF FLORIDA

COUNTY OF BROWARD

BEFORE ME, ____ personally appeared or ____ via online notarization, ISABEL COSIO CARBALLO, to me well known to be the person described in and who executed the foregoing instrument, and acknowledged to and before me that she executed said Agreement for the purposes therein expressed.

WITNESS my hand and official seal, this ____ day of September 18, 2023.

BY: _____
Notary Public

My Commission Expires:

EXHIBIT "A"

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS - EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

General Responsibilities: Direct the activities of the South Florida Regional Planning Council staff. Establish the Council work program and complete the work program in a timely manner. Manage the operation of the agency.

Objectives of the position:

1. Anticipate emerging issues within the region and articulate an agency mission statement which reflects these emerging issues.
2. Set long and short-term agency objectives that are responsive to the agency mission.
3. Assure that the organization is staffed and structured for effective mission accomplishment.
4. Maintain effective communication with all Council Members and member unit local governments.
5. Implement an objective performance agreement system by which Regional Planning Council staff will be assessed.
6. Ensure the statutory responsibilities of the agency are carried out in a timely and complete manner.
7. Develop and maintain good organizational relationships with other relevant organizations.
8. Assist all Council officers in performing their duties.
9. Prepare an adequate annual budget and operate the agency within that budget.

An agency work program will be prepared. At the end of the appraisal period, the record of progress will provide a measure of whether the Director met, failed to meet or exceeded expectations.

South Florida Regional Planning Council Executive Director Annual Performance Review

Executive Director: Isabel Cosio Carballo, MPA

Evaluation Period: October 1, 2022 – September 18, 2023

Evaluation Date: September 18, 2023

Ratings on Job Performance

- 5 = Exceeds Job Requirements
- 4 = Above Average Performance
- 3 = Satisfactory Performance
- 2 = Needs to Take Action to Improve
- 1 = Performance Does not Meet Job Requirements

| | Executive Director | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Represents the Council in a positive, professional manner | | | | | |
| 2. | Accurately represents the goals and policies of the Council | | | | | |
| 3. | Maintains a positive image and relationships with local, state, and federal agencies | | | | | |
| 4. | Promotes the Council and its services | | | | | |
| 5. | Makes clear and concise recommendations to the Council | | | | | |
| 6. | Deals honestly and fairly with all parties | | | | | |
| 7. | Exercises sound judgment in business transactions | | | | | |
| 8. | Is respected by peers and leaders in the region | | | | | |
| 9. | Is knowledgeable about regional issues | | | | | |
| 10. | Provides good overall leadership for the Council | | | | | |

Additional Comments: _____

Signature

Date



MEMORANDUM

AGENDA ITEM #III.G

DATE: SEPTEMBER 18, 2023
TO: COUNCIL MEMBERS
FROM: STAFF
SUBJECT: FY 2022-23 REVISED OPERATING BUDGET

Please find herewith the revised Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2022-23 for your review and approval. The Council's revenue budget for Fiscal Year 2022-23 was reduced by \$183,561, from \$3,329,648 to \$3,146,087 in the current fiscal year. The abovementioned reduction is explained by the extension of the DOD/MIRR contract which reallocates deliverables and billing to FY 23-24, and a reduction in staffing levels by the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office who the Council supports with employee administrative services as part of the Regional Domestic Security Task Force Program.

The Council's revised expense budget for Fiscal Year 2022-23 amounts to \$3,146,087 as compared to the approved budget of \$3,329,648 for the current year. The decrease of \$183,561 is primarily associated with a reduction in expenses directly related to uncovered staff positions, uncovered positions in the Palm Beach Sheriff's Office staff, and a contribution to the Council Reserve Fund.

Recommendation

Approve the Fiscal Year 22-23 Revised Operating Budget.



| REVENUES | | FY 2022-23 Approved Budget | FY 2022-23 Revised Budget |
|------------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| GENERAL FUND | | | |
| Membership Fees | | \$ 970,866 | \$ 970,866 |
| Interest & Other Income | | 1,500 | 35,000 |
| Local Funded Projects | | | |
| | Miami Dade TPO UPWP 20-21 | 25,000 | 22,000 |
| | SFRTA - Land Use Transportation | 100,000 | 100,000 |
| | FDOT District 6 Prof Services | 50,000 | 50,000 |
| | Southeast Florida Community Development Fund, Inc. | 32,000 | 33,185 |
| | Economic Forecasting Partnership | - | - |
| | Southeast Florida Regional Prosperity Institute | - | - |
| | TOTAL GENERAL FUND | 1,179,366 | 1,211,051 |
| SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS | | | |
| Federal Funded Projects | | 1,568,530 | 1,417,160 |
| | EDA/EDD- Econ Dev South Dade District | - | - |
| | EDA/EDD CEDS | 76,363 | 76,363 |
| | EDA/EDD CARES Act | - | - |
| | DHS/SHSGP Metadata | 113,000 | 113,000 |
| | DHS/SHSGP Analysts | 110,000 | 87,360 |
| | DHS/UASI Analysts | 587,500 | 196,705 |
| | DHS/UASI Metadata | 25,000 | 7,500 |
| | FDEM/HMEP - Planning, Oct-Sept | 20,000 | 20,000 |
| | FDEM/HMEP - Training, Oct-Sept | 70,000 | 90,000 |
| | FDEM/NEFRC/SRESP Behavior | - | - |
| | DOD/Resiliency Planning | 476,667 | 786,232 |
| | DOE- Clean Cities | 90,000 | 40,000 |
| | EPA Coalition Assesment Grant | - | - |
| | State Funded Projects | 81,752 | 81,400 |
| | FDEM/LEPC Staff | 80,000 | 80,000 |
| | FDEM-Hazards Analysis Monroe | 1,752 | 1,400 |
| Trust Funds | | 500,000 | 436,476 |
| | EDA-Consolidated RLF | 237,000 | 189,659 |
| | EDA-RLF CARES Act | 219,000 | 196,746 |
| | BROWNFIELDS RLF | 44,000 | 50,071 |
| | TOTAL SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS | 2,150,282 | 1,935,036 |
| TOTAL Revenues | | \$ 3,329,648 | \$ 3,146,087 |

| EXPENDITURES | | FY 2022-23 Approved Budget | FY 2022-23 Revised Budget |
|---|--|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Capital Expenditures: | | | |
| | Equipment | \$ 15,000 | \$ - |
| | Leasehold Improvement- Soft costs | 10,000 | - |
| | Leasehold Improvement- Hard costs (net of landlord credit) | - | - |
| | Subtotal | 25,000 | - |
| Core Operating Expenses (Allocated): | | | |
| | Salary | 1,071,241 | 916,434 |
| | Leave | 241,452 | 169,412 |
| | Fringe Benefits | 453,801 | 412,569 |
| | Janitorial Services | 9,180 | 9,000 |
| | Legal Services | 45,000 | 45,000 |
| | Financial Services | 54,200 | 50,200 |
| | Professional Consultants | 50,000 | 25,000 |
| | Travel | 11,000 | 6,000 |
| | Miscellaneous Expenses | 5,500 | - |
| | Printing, Advertising, Notices | 3,500 | 31,000 |
| | Supplies | 11,000 | 13,500 |
| | Professional Development | 30,000 | 35,000 |
| | Occupancy | 100,000 | 100,000 |
| | Utilities- electric/ Sanitation | 6,000 | 6,000 |
| | Repairs & Maintenance | 6,000 | 2,000 |
| | Council Reserve Fund | (145,256) | 110,352 |
| | Storage | 7,000 | 7,000 |
| | Office Automation | 70,000 | 55,000 |
| | Communication, Postage | 15,000 | 6,000 |
| | Insurance | 31,320 | 31,000 |
| | Subtotal | 2,075,938 | 2,030,467 |
| Pass-through Expenses | | | |
| | Legal Services | 48,000 | 43,852 |
| | Financial Services | 1,200 | 800 |
| | Professional Consultants | 398,771 | 652,000 |
| | PBSO Analyst Salary & Fringe | 759,545 | 367,786 |
| | Travel | 12,242 | 35,995 |
| | Miscellaneous Expenses | 421 | - |
| | Printing, Advertising, Notices | 996 | 4,350 |
| | Supplies | 4,635 | 5,314 |
| | Professional Development | 1,500 | 4,123 |
| | Office Automation | - | - |
| | Communication, Postage | 100 | 100 |
| | Insurance | 1,300 | 1,300 |
| | Reimbursement from Borrower | - | - |
| | Subtotal | 1,228,710 | 1,115,620 |
| | | | |
| | TOTAL EXPENDITURES | 3,329,648 | 3,146,087 |
| | | | |
| | Increase in Fund Balance Reserve | \$ - | \$ - |



MEMORANDUM

AGENDA ITEM #III.H

DATE: SEPTEMBER 18, 2023

TO: COUNCIL MEMBERS

FROM: STAFF

SUBJECT: FY 2023-24 PROPOSED OPERATING BUDGET

Please find herewith the proposed Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2023-24 for your review and approval. The Council's revenue budget for Fiscal Year 2023-24 amounts to \$3,063,637 up from \$3,146,087 in the current year. The reduction of \$82,450 is mainly explained by the DOD/MIRR program's funding coming to an end.

The Council's expense budget for Fiscal Year 2023-24 amounts to \$3,063,637 as compared to \$3,146,087 in the current year. The decrease of \$82,450 is primarily associated with expenses directly related to the DOD/MIRR coming to an end.

Recommendation

Approve the Fiscal Year 2023-24 Operating Budget.



South Florida Regional Planning Council
1 Oakwood Boulevard, Suite 250, Hollywood, Florida 33020
954.924-3653 Phone, 954.924-3654 FAX
www.sfregionalcouncil.org

| South Florida Regional Planning Council Budget for 2023-24 | | 2023 | 2024 |
|---|--|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| REVENUES | | FY 2022-23 Revised Budget | FY 2023-24 Proposed Budget |
| GENERAL FUND | | | |
| Membership Fees | | \$ 970,866 | \$ 1,099,870 |
| Interest & Other Income | | 35,000 | 50,000 |
| Local Funded Projects | | | |
| | Miami Dade TPO UPWP 20-21 | 22,000 | 50,000 |
| | SFRTA - Land Use Transportation | 100,000 | 100,000 |
| | FDOT District 6 Prof Services | 50,000 | 50,000 |
| | Southeast Florida Community Development Fund, Inc. | 33,185 | 62,000 |
| | Economic Forecasting Partnership | - | - |
| | Southeast Florida Regional Prosperity Institute | - | - |
| | | | |
| | TOTAL GENERAL FUND | 1,211,051 | 1,411,870 |
| SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS | | | |
| Federal Funded Projects | | 1,417,160 | 691,746 |
| | | | |
| | EDA/EDD CEDS | 76,363 | 52,500 |
| | DHS/SHSGP Analysts | 87,360 | 87,360 |
| | DHS/UASI Analysts | 196,705 | 196,705 |
| | DHS/UASI Metadata | 7,500 | 7,500 |
| | FDEM/HMEP - Planning, Oct-Sept | 20,000 | 20,000 |
| | FDEM/HMEP - Training, Oct-Sept | 90,000 | 64,480 |
| | DOD/Resiliency Planning | 786,232 | 166,201 |
| | DOE- Clean Cities | 40,000 | 97,000 |
| | | | |
| | State Funded Projects | 81,400 | 78,021 |
| | | | |
| | FDEM/LEPC Staff | 80,000 | 77,000 |
| | FDEM-Hazards Analysis Monroe | 1,400 | 1,021 |
| | | | |
| | Trust Funds | 436,476 | 882,000 |
| | EDA-Consolidated RLF | 189,659 | 191,000 |
| | EDA-RLF CARES Act | 196,746 | 217,000 |
| | BROWNFIELDS RLF | 50,071 | 74,000 |
| | EPA BROWNFIELDS HOMESTEAD | | 350,000 |
| | EPA BROWNFIELDS RLF II | | 50,000 |
| | TOTAL SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS | 1,935,036 | 1,651,767 |
| | | | |
| TOTAL Revenues | | \$ 3,146,087 | \$ 3,063,637 |

| South Florida Regional Planning Council Budget for 2023-24 | | 2023 | 2024 |
|---|--|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| EXPENDITURES | | FY 2022-23 Revised Budget | FY 2023-24 Proposed Budget |
| Capital Expenditures: | | | |
| | Equipment | \$ - | \$ 15,000 |
| | Leasehold Improvement- Soft costs | - | 10,000 |
| | Leasehold Improvement- Hard costs (net of landlord credit) | - | - |
| | Subtotal | - | 25,000 |
| Core Operating Expenses (Allocated): | | | |
| | Salary | 916,434 | 1,188,011 |
| | Leave | 169,412 | 220,782 |
| | Fringe Benefits | 412,569 | 618,546 |
| | Janitorial Services | 9,000 | 9,000 |
| | Legal Services | 45,000 | 45,000 |
| | Financial Services | 50,200 | 62,500 |
| | Professional Consultants | 25,000 | 25,000 |
| | Travel | 6,000 | 10,000 |
| | Miscellaneous Expenses | - | 1,000 |
| | Printing, Advertising, Notices | 31,000 | 31,000 |
| | Supplies | 13,500 | 13,500 |
| | Professional Development | 35,000 | 35,000 |
| | Occupancy | 100,000 | 100,000 |
| | Utilities- electric/ Sanitation | 6,000 | 6,000 |
| | Repairs & Maintenance | 2,000 | 6,000 |
| | Council Reserve Fund | 110,352 | (249,015) |
| | Storage | 7,000 | 7,000 |
| | Office Automation | 55,000 | 55,000 |
| | Communication, Postage | 6,000 | 6,000 |
| | Insurance | 31,000 | 42,000 |
| | Subtotal | 2,030,467 | 2,232,324 |
| Pass-through Expenses | | | |
| | Legal Services | 43,852 | 43,851 |
| | Financial Services | 800 | 800 |
| | Professional Consultants | 652,000 | 445,178 |
| | PBSO Analyst Salary & Fringe | 367,786 | 265,058 |
| | Travel | 35,995 | 38,309 |
| | Printing, Advertising, Notices | 4,350 | 300 |
| | Supplies | 5,314 | 8,017 |
| | Professional Development | 4,123 | 3,400 |
| | Communication, Postage | 100 | 100 |
| | Insurance | 1,300 | 1,300 |
| | Reimbursement from Borrower | - | - |
| | Subtotal | 1,115,620 | 806,313 |
| | TOTAL EXPENDITURES | 3,146,087 | 3,063,637 |
| | Increase in Fund Balance | \$ - | \$ - |



MEMORANDUM

AGENDA ITEM #III.I

DATE: SEPTEMBER 18, 2023

TO: COUNCIL MEMBERS

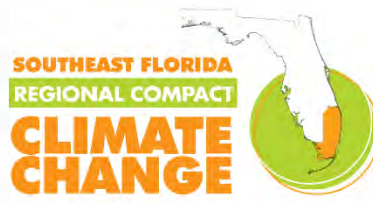
FROM: STAFF

SUBJECT: JOINT STATEMENT ON COLLABORATION FOR REGIONAL ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

In advance of the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact's 15th Annual [Southeast Florida Climate Leadership Summit](#) on November 16 – 17, 2023 at the Miami Beach Convention Center, the Compact has requested the Council's adoption of the attached Statement of Collaboration for Regional Economic Resilience.

Recommendation

Approve the Joint Statement on Collaboration.



September 2023

**Joint Statement on Collaboration for Regional Economic Resilience
in Southeast Florida between the South Florida Regional Planning Council
and the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact**

Purpose

This statement builds upon the initial partnership forged in 2017, among the four counties of the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact (Compact) and the South Florida Regional Planning Council (SFRPC) to cooperate on building regional economic resilience by focusing on the considerable benefits of public and private collaboration. The purpose of this statement is to reinforce the shared agenda for collaboration among the parties to secure the future prosperity for all who live, work, and play within Southeast Florida.

Background

Since its creation in 2009 by forward-thinking elected officials in Southeast Florida, the Compact has emerged as one of the preeminent regional climate change collaboration models nationally and globally. The collaboration and coordination across cities and counties and among national, state, and local government agencies has advanced Southeast Florida toward greater climate resilience.

Created in 1974, The South Florida Regional Planning Council (SFRPC) is a planning and public policy agency with a Council Board composed of 19 voting members, including county and municipal elected officials from Miami-Dade, Broward, and Monroe counties together with Governor's appointees. The mission of the Council is to identify the long-term challenges and opportunities facing the Southeast Florida region and to 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.

Throughout its existence the South Florida Regional Planning Council has labored to build regional economic and community prosperity. This critical role was recognized and formalized in 1994 by the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration's designation

of the SFRPC as the Economic Development District for South Florida. In this role, the SFRPC works with the region's public, private, and non-profit organizations, including the Compact Counties, economic development organizations, research institutions, and municipalities to proactively advance Southeast Florida as a compelling place from which to engage in global commerce. In 2022, the SFRPC, in partnership with public, private, and nonprofit partners, developed the 2022 – 2027 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for South Florida (South Florida CEDS) which among other issues, elevates climate resilience and infrastructure investments as key factors in ensuring South Florida's future economic resilience.

Together, the SFRPC and the Compact Counties recognize that our respective efforts to foster greater regional resilience can only be achieved by working together. In forging a greater public-private partnership, the SFRPC and Compact Counties have sought to bolster our respective efforts to build resilience within Southeast Florida's shared infrastructure, built environment, economy, natural systems and within communities as the viable path forward in securing future regional prosperity.

Accordingly, in 2017 the Compact partners undertook an update of the Regional Climate Action Plan (RCAP 2.0) with the active participation of the SFRPC and a focus on economic resilience. Subsequently, during the last five years, the collaboration between the SFRPC and Compact Counties has broadened and deepened, encompassing joint efforts and advocacy in furtherance of the economic resilience recommendations detailed in the RCAP 2.0., with noted advancements in areas of flood risk mitigation, resilience standards, federal and state engagement, economic opportunity, and regional resilience communications.

As a result, Southeast Florida has continued to establish its position as a model for public-private collaboration and as the epicenter of climate resilience, with signature outcomes including development of the South Florida CEDS, the Business Case for Resilience, federal authorization and funding for the Central and Southern Florida Flood Risk Management Study, and on-going collaboration leading to update and expansion of economic resilience recommendations as part of the 2022 update of the Regional Climate Action Plan (RCAP 3.0). The RCAP 3.0 document is substantially responsive to the recommendations identified in the South Florida CEDS and the wide-ranging effects of climate change, that extend beyond the borders of any one community, and the understanding that effective implementation will require the sustained engagement and collaboration of public and private sector partners.

Partnership Agenda

The SFRPC and related partners agree to the following partnership actions in furthering economic resilience recommendations (ER 1-9) of RCAP 3.0:

- I. We will continue to work together to expand education related to community and economic resilience.
 - a. We will work together to promote proactive action to secure continuity of operations in the face of extreme weather and climate events.
 - b. We will work together to build the regional policy agenda for proactive investment in infrastructure necessary to protect commerce and Southeast Florida's communities.
 - c. We will work together to develop common sense public policy that better aligns public and private sector investment in the regional built environment with the shared goal of securing future regional prosperity.
 - d. We will seek collaborative opportunities to commercialize resilience innovations flowing from joint efforts to create new economic opportunities for the region.

- II. We will work together to identify and advocate for the state and federal investments needed for regional resilience in Southeast Florida.
 - a. We will work together to advocate for federal and state government investments in the infrastructure assets that they each respectively own, operate and have a responsibility for maintaining within Southeast Florida.
 - b. We will work together to seek appropriate recognition by the state and federal governments of the vital contributions made by Southeast Florida to the State of Florida and the United States.

- III. We will work together to communicate that Southeast Florida is leading the way in taking proactive, responsible, and informed measures, serving as a pioneer and model for resilience.
 - a. We will collaborate in developing communications for audiences within the region regarding the importance of proactive resilience investments.
 - b. We will collaborate in developing communications for national and global audiences that underscore that Southeast Florida fully understands the risks we face, that we are taking proactive, responsible measures to address these risks, and that we are working together to protect and expand our highly productive regional economy.

- IV. We will encourage the broader participation of regional stakeholders to engage in this effort.

Adopted this day, September 23, 2023, by the South Florida Regional Planning Council.

Steve Geller, SFRPC Chairman

Broward County Commissioner, District 5
Former State Senator, District 31

DRAFT



MEMORANDUM

AGENDA ITEM # IV.A

DATE: SEPTEMBER 18, 2023

TO: COUNCIL MEMBERS

FROM: STAFF

SUBJECT: SFRPC REVOLVING LOAN FUNDS STATUS REPORT

The South Florida Regional Planning Council Revolving Loan Program has historically served the needs of businesses that are not entirely served by conventional lenders, with an emphasis on applicants who have been denied credit by a conventional lender. As such, the Council's RLF loans are considered riskier than conventional loans. The Loan Administration Board may charge a higher interest rate to a particular borrower depending on the risk factors of that loan. In addition, most loan payments are due on the first day of each month until maturity.

Attached for your review is the Revolving Loan Fund Status Report. In reviewing the attached status report, please note that the borrowers' loan agreements provide a fifteen (15) day grace period in which they can make their payments without a five percent late charge penalty. This status report is generated fifteen (15) days prior to the end of the month. Council staff routinely makes phone calls and sends past due notices to past due accounts after ten (10) and fifteen (15) days.

The Council policy on loan amounts and the structure of the loans for each loan program is:

"Loan amounts may range from \$25,000 to \$500,000. Borrowers seeking more than one loan may not exceed \$500,000 in aggregate. Loans may be used for funding up to 100 percent of a project, provided that bank or conventional financing is unavailable, and that equity is nonexistent or is otherwise needed for cash flow. In cases where limited financing from a private/traditional source is available, loans can be used as supplemental or "second mortgage" funds. Second positions on collateral may be acceptable so long as the prior lien holder is a lending institution."

Please find attached Legal Counsel's South Florida Regional Planning Council ("SFRPC") / Revolving Loan Fund report on legal action that has been taken to collect on delinquent accounts.



South Florida Regional Planning Council
1 Oakwood Boulevard, Suite 250, Hollywood, Florida 33020
954.924.3653 Phone, 954.924-3654 FAX
www.sfrationalcouncil.org

Payment Status Report

Traditional RLF Payment Status Report

| Loan | Company /Borrower | Amount | Disbursed | Pmts | Rate | Last Activity | Last Balance | Paid Thru | Days Late | Last Activity | Next Pay Due | Loan Date | Maturity Date | Board Action |
|------|-------------------|------------|------------|------|------|---------------|--------------|-----------|-----------|---------------|--------------|-----------|---------------|------------------------------|
| 1008 | | 110,000.00 | 110,000.00 | 120 | 6.0 | 1,823.36 | 3,466.05 | 08/01/23 | 0 | 08/15/23 | 09/01/23 | 03/22/02 | 11/09/25 | performing |
| 1022 | | 300,000.00 | 300,000.00 | 240 | 7.0 | 3,343.55 | 287,108.88 | 08/01/23 | 0 | 08/18/23 | 09/01/23 | 01/08/04 | 09/01/39 | performing |
| 1023 | | 301,586.50 | 301,586.50 | 120 | 5.0 | 350.00 | 161,715.88 | 08/01/23 | 0 | 08/01/23 | 09/01/23 | 07/19/06 | 03/01/29 | performing |
| 1034 | | 300,000.00 | 300,000.00 | 120 | 5.0 | 250.00 | 260,365.24 | 08/01/23 | 0 | 08/16/23 | 09/01/23 | 12/21/06 | 11/15/28 | performing |
| 1039 | | 125,000.00 | 125,000.00 | 84 | 5.0 | 500.00 | 120,082.53 | 08/01/23 | 0 | 08/28/23 | 09/01/23 | 11/24/08 | 12/31/15 | performing |
| 1040 | | 200,000.00 | 200,000.00 | 84 | 5.0 | 1,472.32 | 67,209.99 | 08/01/23 | 0 | 08/01/23 | 09/01/23 | 02/02/09 | 08/01/28 | performing |
| 3024 | | 189,043.88 | 189,043.88 | 144 | 0.0 | 500.00 | 99,533.29 | 07/01/23 | 30 | 07/03/23 | 08/01/23 | 07/26/99 | 12/01/16 | Default Final Judgment |
| 4008 | | 300,000.00 | 300,000.00 | 0 | 5.0 | 2,250.00 | 160,430.50 | 08/12/23 | 0 | 08/16/23 | 09/12/23 | 07/31/09 | 03/31/39 | performing |
| 4018 | | 150,000.00 | 150,000.00 | 84 | 6.0 | 0.00 | 144,598.41 | 12/01/15 | 2799 | 10/22/20 | 01/01/16 | 07/12/13 | 08/01/20 | In Litigation - Mediation |
| 4024 | | 235,000.00 | 235,000.00 | 240 | 5.0 | 1,600.00 | 159,680.97 | 08/01/23 | 0 | 08/28/23 | 09/01/23 | 04/16/14 | 05/01/26 | performing |
| 4027 | | 149,500.00 | 149,500.00 | 120 | 5.0 | 1,590.98 | 56,164.87 | 07/01/23 | 30 | 07/05/23 | 08/01/23 | 12/15/15 | 12/15//25 | performing |
| 4028 | | 75,000.00 | 75,000.00 | 1 | 0.0 | 0.00 | 74,994.72 | 04/01/19 | 1583 | 04/12/19 | 05/01/19 | 11/17/16 | 09/30/19 | Default - collateral workout |
| 4029 | | 75,000.00 | 75,000.00 | 1 | 0.0 | 0.00 | 75,000.00 | 04/01/19 | 1583 | 04/12/19 | 05/01/19 | 12/14/16 | 09/30/19 | Default - collateral workout |
| 4031 | | 332,972.82 | 332,972.82 | 111 | 6.5 | 2,000.00 | 321,849.33 | 08/01/23 | 0 | 08/01/23 | 09/01/23 | 09/28/17 | 08/01/28 | performing |
| 4032 | | 300,000.55 | 300,000.55 | 120 | 7.0 | 3,577.27 | 198,782.04 | 08/01/23 | 0 | 08/01/23 | 09/01/23 | 10/24/18 | 11/01/28 | performing |
| 4033 | | 254,999.57 | 254,999.57 | 84 | 7.0 | 250.00 | 188,332.65 | 08/15/23 | 0 | 08/17/23 | 09/15/23 | 10/25/18 | 10/25/25 | performing |

| Loan | Company /Borrower | Amount | Disbursed | Pmts | Rate | Last Activity | Last Balance | Paid Thru | Days Late | Last Activity | Next Pay Due | Loan Date | Maturity Date | Board Action |
|---------------|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------|------|------|------------------|---------------------|-----------|-----------|---------------|--------------|-----------|---------------|--------------------------------------|
| 4034 | | 84,506.66 | 84,506.66 | 84 | 7.0 | 0.00 | 71,412.80 | 08/01/22 | 364 | 08/01/22 | 09/01/22 | 01/03/19 | 01/03/26 | Payment Default- Legal Notice Issued |
| 4035 | | 248,684.03 | 248,684.03 | 84 | 7.0 | 0.00 | 148,142.77 | 01/01/23 | 211 | 01/03/23 | 02/01/23 | 03/05/19 | 04/01/26 | In Legal - Notice of Assignment |
| 4036 | | 549,223.30 | 549,223.30 | 84 | 7.0 | 0.00 | 484,719.60 | 01/01/23 | 211 | 01/03/23 | 02/01/23 | 03/05/19 | 04/01/26 | In Legal - Notice of Assignment |
| 4037 | | 173,904.64 | 173,904.64 | 84 | 5.0 | 1,750.00 | 130,373.37 | 08/01/23 | 0 | 08/01/23 | 09/01/23 | 03/28/19 | 03/28/26 | performing |
| 4038 | | 99,885.78 | 99,885.78 | 60 | 7.0 | 1,500.00 | 55,472.54 | 08/01/23 | 0 | 08/01/23 | 09/01/23 | 03/28/19 | 04/01/24 | performing |
| 4039 | | 200,000.00 | 200,000.00 | 84 | 7.0 | 300.00 | 196,815.27 | 08/01/22 | 364 | 08/01/22 | 09/01/22 | 03/12/20 | 04/01/27 | Payment Default- Legal Notice Issued |
| 4040 | | 400,000.00 | 400,000.00 | 84 | 7.0 | 250.00 | 389,882.46 | 08/15/23 | 0 | 08/17/23 | 09/15/23 | 09/23/19 | 09/23/26 | performing |
| 4043 | | 200,000.00 | 200,000.00 | 120 | 4.5 | 2,322.17 | 155,981.74 | 08/01/23 | 0 | 08/01/23 | 09/01/23 | 04/22/21 | 04/01/31 | performing |
| 4044 | | 130,000.00 | 130,000.00 | 120 | 4.5 | 1,347.30 | 103,611.14 | 08/01/23 | 0 | 08/01/23 | 09/01/23 | 03/22/21 | 03/01/31 | performing |
| 4046 | | 100,000.00 | 100,000.00 | 60 | 5.0 | 1,887.12 | 85,027.84 | 08/01/23 | 0 | 08/01/23 | 09/01/23 | 10/06/22 | 10/01/27 | performing |
| 4047 | | 250,000.00 | 250,000.00 | 60 | 4.5 | 906.25 | 250,000.00 | 08/01/23 | 0 | 08/01/23 | 09/01/23 | 01/04/23 | 01/01/28 | performing |
| 4048 | | 349,497.00 | 68,898.75 | 60 | 4.5 | 247.61 | 63,898.75 | 08/01/23 | 0 | 08/01/23 | 09/01/23 | 02/23/23 | 03/01/28 | performing |
| 4049 | | 331,700.00 | 51,001.75 | 60 | 4.5 | 197.63 | 51,001.75 | 08/01/23 | 0 | 08/01/23 | 09/01/23 | 02/23/23 | 03/01/28 | performing |
| 4050 | | 331,700.00 | 49,001.75 | 60 | 4.5 | 189.88 | 49,001.75 | 08/01/23 | 0 | 08/01/23 | 09/01/23 | 02/23/23 | 03/01/28 | performing |
| Totals | | 6,847,204.73 | 6,003,209.98 | | | 30,405.44 | 4,614,657.13 | | | | | | | |

LIST OF COMMITTED TRADITIONAL RLF FUNDS
August 31, 2023

| Loan # | Company Name | Committed | Commitment Date | Disbursed | Disbursement Date | Disbursed | Disbursement Date | Disbursed | Disbursement Date | Remaining Commitment |
|--------------|--|--------------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| 4048 | Minority Builders 829 SW 6th Street, Homestead, FL | 336,600 | 11/15/2021 | 13,668 | 3/2/2023 | 4,943.75 | 5/23/2023 | 32,390 | 8/1/2023 | \$ 285,598.25 |
| 4049 | Minority Builders 813 SW 6th Street, Homestead, FL | 331,700 | 11/15/2021 | 13,668 | 3/2/2023 | 4,943.75 | 5/23/2023 | 32,390 | 8/1/2023 | \$ 280,698.25 |
| 4050 | Minority Builders 705 SW 6th Street, Homestead, FL | 331,700 | 11/15/2021 | 13,668 | 3/2/2023 | 4,943.75 | 5/23/2023 | 30,390 | 8/1/2023 | \$ 282,698.25 |
| TOTAL | | \$1,000,000 | | \$ 41,004 | | \$14,831.25 | | \$ 95,170.00 | | \$ 848,994.75 |

*Committed Funds will be disbursed over a 12-month period

| Cash Available to Lend | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|-----------------------|
| Bank Balance as of | 8/31/2023 | | | | | | | | | \$ 842,978.43 |
| Committed Funds | | | | | | | | | | |
| Unfunded Loan Commitments | \$ 848,995 | | | | | | | | | |
| Administrative Fees | 10,919.25 | | | | | | | | | |
| Total Committed Funds | | | | | | | | | | \$ 859,914.00 |
| Total Uncommitted Funds | | | | | | | | | | \$ (16,935.57) |

Portfolio Analysis

Funds: (30400)
Status: All
City: All
County: All
Loan Officer: All
Loan# From 0002 to 53005

Cutoff Date: 8/31/2023
Run Date: 09/01/2023
Run Time: 1:29:18 pm
Page 1 of 1

| | Number | Balance | Percent% |
|------------------------|-----------|---------------------|----------------|
| All Outstanding Loans | | | |
| Current Accounts | 21 | 3,263,275.40 | 70.72% |
| Past due 1-30 days | 2 | 155,698.16 | 3.37% |
| Past due 31-60 days | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| Past due 61-90 days | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| Past due 91-120 days | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| Past due 121-150 days | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| Past due 151-180 days | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| Greater than 180 days | 7 | 1,195,683.57 | 25.91% |
| Total Portfolio | 30 | 4,614,657.13 | 100.00% |

Contaminated Portfolio 7 1,195,683.57 25.91%

Loans identified as being delinquent by 30 or more days and having a balance greater than zero as of the cutoff date.

Delinquent Loans 3 410,359.96 8.89%

Loans identified by delinquent status in Loan Master, and having a balance greater than zero as of the cutoff date.

Default Loans 5 1,045,688.85 22.66%

Loans identified by default status in Loan Master, and having a balance greater than zero as of the cutoff date.

Write-off Loans 0 0.00 0.00%

Loans identified by write-off status in Loan Master, and having a balance greater than zero as of the cutoff date.

Kerry L. Ezrol
KEzrol@GorenCherof.com



**GOREN CHEROF
DOODY & EZROL P.A.**
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

September 5, 2023

VIA E-MAIL (isabelc@sfrpc.com)

Isabel Cosio Carballo, MPA, Executive Director
South Florida Regional Planning Council
Oakwood business Center
One Oakwood Boulevard, Suite 250
Hollywood, FL 33320

Re: South Florida Regional Planning Council ("SFRPC") / Revolving Loan Fund Status Report

Dear Ms. Carballo:

Below please find the status of the Revolving Loan Fund cases which have been brought on behalf of the SFRPC. This shall confirm that once a judgment is obtained and recorded, our office has been instructed to take no further action, other than to re-record specified judgments, as requested, in a timely fashion. We have therefore removed all of the "Closed Cases" from this list. In the future, once a judgment is obtained and recorded relative to cases appearing on this list, they will be removed from this list.

**1. SFRPC (SFRPC Account #4018 and #1042) v. Angela Dawson, P.A.
(Our File No. 9940547)**

Complaint filed with the Court on May 7, 2018. Dawson filed a motion to recuse (remove) the judge, so litigation was delayed. Dawson filed an Answer and Counterclaim, which SFRPC moved to strike. Order entered approving our Motion to Strike Dawson's Affirmative Defenses and our Motion to Dismiss Dawson's Counterclaim. Dawson's Amended Counterclaim and Amended Answers and Affirmative Defenses were due on April 26, 2019. Dawson failed to file the pleadings by the deadline, and SFRPC filed a Motion for Summary Judgment. The hearing on the Motion for Summary Judgment was scheduled, and then reset at Dawson's request for October 23, 2019. A Motion for Judicial Default against Dawson was filed on October 25, 2019.

SFRPC requested an Amended Complaint to add a foreclosure count. A Motion to Amend Complaint was filed and there were two (2) initial hearings on the motion. Both times, the Court

{00578609.2 2383-8200982 }

3099 E. Commercial Blvd, Suite 200, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33308
T 954-771-4500 : F 954-771-4923
www.GorenCherof.com

delayed a ruling on the motions, pending mediation. Ultimately, SFRPC set the hearing on the Motion to Amend Complaint six separate times, and each time the hearing was continued either due to the Judge ordering mediation or due to Dawson' requests for a continuance. The seventh time the Motion to Amend was set for a hearing, the Court granted SFRPC's motion and allowed SFRPC to Amend the Complaint to add the foreclosure count.

A Motion to Strike Defendants First Amended Affirmative Defenses was filed on November 13, 2019. A Motion to Dismiss Dawson's Counterclaim was filed on December 19, 2019. On June 15, 2020 a hearing was set for the court to hear SFRPC's Motion for Judicial Default, Motion for Leave to File Amended Complaint, Motion to Strike Defendants' First Amended Affirmative Defenses and Motion to Dismiss Counterclaim. Dawson filed a new Counterclaim and new Answer and Affirmative Defenses just prior to the hearing, which the court accepted in place of the defective pleadings. SFRPC's motions were denied due to the court accepting the replacement pleadings. Dawson filed various additional pleadings, including an Affidavit of Excusable Neglect and an Affidavit from Ed McGann. Dawson filed a Request for Production on June 8, 2020, requesting a significant volume of documents which are unrelated to the pending litigation. SFRPC's objection to the discovery request was filed on July 8, 2020.

Litigation of this matter has been extended and complicated by the volume of pleadings filed by Ms. Dawson; each pleading requires a response from SFRPC. Mediation occurred on October 29, 2020 before Judge Lynch. The parties were not able to reach a settlement at mediation.

Since the Court was encouraging the parties to mediate, SFRPC staff focused on attempting to settle with Dawson and to manage the costs of litigation by bringing this matter to a conclusion through settlement. With that intent, SFRPC made multiple offers and counter-offers to Ms. Dawson. As a follow-up to mediation, on November 3, 2020 and January 27, 2021, SFRPC sent a written settlement offer to Dawson and her attorney. SFRPC followed up again with written settlement offer to Dawson and her attorney on March 8, 2021. SFRPC made significant concessions and reductions of the late fees in a good faith attempt to settle the matter without further litigation. Despite SFRPC's multiple concessions, Ms. Dawson would not agree to any of the SFRPC's settlement proposals. Dawson submitted a Counteroffer which was transmitted to SFRPC on March 12, 2021. Per RLF Committee, the decision was made to proceed with the litigation.

The hearing on SFRPC's Motion to Amend the Complaint was set for June 24, 2021. At that hearing, the Court continued the hearing to September 2, 2021. SFRPC's Motion to Amend Complaint was granted and the Defendants had 20 days to file a response to the Amended Complaint. On September 3, 2021, the Court also entered an Order granting Dawson's request to file an Amended Counterclaim in response to SFRPC's Amended Complaint. On September 22, 2021, Defendants, Angela L. Dawson, P.A. and Angela Dawson filed their Answer to Plaintiff's Amended Complaint dated June 23, 2021. On October 1, 2021, SFRPC filed a Motion to Strike

Dawson's Second Amended Affirmative Defenses. On October 15, 2021, a hearing on the Motion to Strike was scheduled for January 26, 2022. On January 26, 2022, the court ordered a Mandatory Case Management Conference to be held on March 28, 2022.

On February 2, 2022, the Court entered an order on the Motion to Strike as follows: Defendants' first affirmative defense of in pari delicto is stricken without prejudice; Defendants' second affirmative defense of bad faith is stricken with leave to amend within twenty (20) days of the date of this Order; Defendants' fourth affirmative defense of fraudulent inducement is stricken with prejudice; Defendants' fifth affirmative defense of fraudulent misrepresentation is stricken with prejudice; Defendants' seventh affirmative defense of unjust enrichment is stricken with prejudice; Defendants' eleventh affirmative defense of ratification is stricken with leave to amend within twenty (20) days of the date of the Order. Plaintiff's Motion to Strike Defendants' Amended Affirmative Defenses was hereby denied as to the following affirmative defenses: Defendants' third affirmative defense of unclean hands; Defendants' sixth affirmative defense of promissory estoppel; Defendants' eighth affirmative defense of modification; Defendants' ninth affirmative defense of equitable estoppel; and Defendants' tenth affirmative defense of waiver.

Our Motion to dismiss the Defendants' amended counterclaim was set for hearing on May 4, 2022 at 9:30 am. On February 9, 2022, Plaintiff filed a reply to Defendants' affirmative defenses. On February 15, 2022, Defendants filed amended affirmative defenses. On February 22, 2022, Plaintiff filed a reply to the amended affirmative defenses.

On March 25, 2022, SFRPC responded to Dawson's request for a settlement offer, renewed the prior settlement dated November 30, 2020, and left it open for ninety (90) days. As of June 23, 2022, the settlement offer expired. On August 22, 2022, the SFRPC settlement offer was once again offered to Ms. Dawson with an expiration date of December 1, 2022. The settlement offer expired.

On May 4, 2022, the Court entered an Order for Uniform Case Management to be held August 22, 2022. On May 4, 2022, Judge Bidwell granted SFRPC's Motion to Dismiss Dawson's Counterclaim as to all counts. However, the Judge provided Dawson twenty (20) days to amend her complaint.

On May 23, 2022, Defendant served pre-suit notice on the Council and the Florida Department of Financial Services. On May 24, 2022, Defendant filed a Third Amended Counterclaim which was later deemed abandoned by the Clerk's office. On May 31, 2022, without permission of the Court, Defendant filed a Fourth Amended Counterclaim. On June 3, 2022, SFRPC filed a Motion to Dismiss Dawson's Third and Fourth Amended Counterclaims with Prejudice. A hearing on the SFRPC's Motion to Dismiss was scheduled for Friday, December 2, 2022. On June 30, 2022, Dawson filed an emergency motion with the Court asking the Court to require SFRPC to release its mortgage cross collateralized against 2748 NW 8th St. Fort Lauderdale. On July 6, 2022, SFRPC

filed a response to the Emergency Motion. On July 7, 2022, Dawson filed a Notice of Production from Non-party for Old Republic National Title Insurance Company and Alfred Andreu. On July 7, 2022, SFRPC filed a request for copies of records for Alfred Andreu and Old Republic National Title Insurance Company. On July 8, 2022, Ms. Dawson submitted a Public Records request to SFRPC. SFRPC has responded to Ms. Dawson. Ms. Dawson had until July 13, 2022 to send SFRPC the requested deposit of \$600.00 in order for SFRPC to start retrieving and reviewing documents. As of today's date, Ms. Dawson has not paid the deposit.

On August 22, 2022, the Court held a Case Management Conference. Ms. Dawson and her Co-counsel were not present. On October 10, 2022, another mandatory Case Management Conference was held. Ms. Dawson informed the court that she would be filing a motion for leave to amend based on new information from Benworth Capital. Copies have been requested through a filing, as of today's date, nothing has been received.

On November 29, 2022, the Defendant filed a Motion to Join Indispensable Parties and a Motion for Leave to Amend Complaint to Add Parties. On November 30, 2022, the Defendant filed a Notice of Filing Proposed Fifth Amended Counter Claim as Exhibit for Motion for Leave to Amend Complaint to Add Alfred F. Andreu P.A., Benworth Capital Partners LLC, and Old Republic National Title Insurance Company. Shortly before the hearing on the SFRPC's Motion to Dismiss on December 2, 2022, Ms. Dawson called our office and the Judge's office informing she was in the hospital. The hearing did not proceed and the Court scheduled another Case Management Conference on December 8, 2022. On December 7, 2022, SFRPC filed its Response in Objection to Defendants Motions to Join Indispensable Parties and for Leave to Amend Counterclaim. On December 8, 2022, pursuant to the Court's direction at the Case Management Conference, a Notice of Hearing was filed, scheduling the pending motions for December 20, 2022. On December 9, 2022, SFRPC filed its Response to Defendant's Motion for Disqualification. On December 18, 2022, Dawson filed a Motion to Withdraw Counter Plaintiff's Third Amended Counter Claims dated May 24, 2022.

At the December 20, 2022 Special Set Hearing, the Court again requested that the matter be scheduled for a Case Management Conference on January 30, 2023. The Court denied Defendants Motion to Join Benworth as an indispensable party and denied Defendants Motion to amend complaint to add Benworth and Old Republic Title Co. The Court also directed both parties to prepare and submit proposed orders for the Court to review for determination on SFRPC's Motion to Dismiss Dawson's Fourth Amended Counterclaim. On December 21, 2022, SFRPC filed its Proposed Order granting SFRPC's Motion. On January 29, 2023, the Court entered an Order denying Ms. Dawson's Motion to Join Indispensable Parties and Motion to Amend Complaint. At the January 30, 2023 Case Management Conference, the Judge informed the Parties that he is working on his order on SFRPC's Motion to Dismiss Dawson's Fourth Counterclaim with prejudice.

SFRPC served Ms. Dawson its First Set of Interrogatories, Request for Production and Request for Admissions. Ms. Dawson responded and we are currently reviewing her responses. Also, we are drafting SFRPC's motion for summary judgment. On May 29, 2023, the Court entered its Order regarding SFRPC's Motion to Dismiss Dawson's Fourth Amended Counterclaim as follows: Granting in part with prejudice as to Count 1, Breach of Contract; Count 2, Detrimental Reliance; Count 3, Promissory Estoppel; Count 9, Unjust Enrichment; Count 10, Equitable Estoppel; and Count 11, Modification and Count 12, Retaliation; and denying in part as to Count 4, Negligent Supervision; Count 5, Negligence Retention; Count 6, Negligence; Count 7, Fraudulent Inducement; Count 8, Fraudulent Misrepresentation; and Count 13, Slander of Title. SFRPC's answer to the remaining counts of the Fourth Amended counterclaim is due within 20 days. On May 30, 2023, the Court entered a Uniform Case Management Order which is scheduled for August 21, 2023. On June 16, 2023, we filed SPRPC's Answer and Affirmative Defenses. On August 10, 2023, we filed SFRPC's Motion for Final Summary Judgment . On August 20, 2023, Dawson filed a Motion to Transfer and Consolidate and a Motion to Strike Counter Defendant's Affirmative Defenses to Fourth Amended Counterclaim and Memorandum of Law. Ms. Dawson is seeking to consolidate the Equity Partners 102 case (below) with this case. SFRPC's Hearing for its Motion for Final Summary Judgment is scheduled for February 9, 2024. Also, Dawson's Hearing is scheduled for September 29, 2023. On August 25, 2023, we filed SFRPC's Response and Amended Response in Objection to Dawson's Motion to Strike Affirmative Defenses. On August 25, 2023, we filed SFRPC's Response in Objection to Ms. Dawson's Motion to Transfer and Consolidate cases.

**2. SFRPC adv. Philip J. Van Kahle, Assignee (J. Stephens Construction, LLC)
(Our File No. 9940631)**

On February 16, 2023, a Petition for Assignment for the Benefit of Creditors was filed, SFRPC was listed as a Secured Creditor. SFRPC's Proof of Claim is due by June 16, 2023. A Hearing for Motions to Approve Public Sale of Assets and Reject Lease of Non-Residential Real Property was scheduled for March 8, 2023. On March 13, 2023, the Court enter an Order approving the Public Sale of Assets "which shall conclude on or around August 25, 2022" [sic]. On March 15, 2023 the Court amended its Order and scheduled the sale for March 24, 2023. SFRPC's Proof of Claim was sent by certified mail on March 21, 2023. Confirmation of receipt was received on March 29, 2023 and assigned claim No. 6. The Assignee shall file a report of the results of the Auction with the Court within 30 days of the completion of the Auction. As of today's day, this report has yet to be filed. A Notice of Default and Demand for Payment Letter was sent to the guarantors on May 18, 2023, demanding payment within 10 days. A Second Notice of Default and Demand for Payment Letter was sent on June 2, 2023. At this time, all letters have been forwarded back to our office as "undeliverable." A Hearing is schedule on June 28, 2023 for the Second Notice of Intent to Conduct the Business of the Assignors for RCT Industries, LLC. On July 5, 2023, another Notice of Default was sent to the collateral property and a signed return receipt was received. On July 7, 2023, the Court entered an Order approving the Second Notice and authorized the

Assignor to operate the business through September 30, 2023. We are in discussions with Mr. Stephens for a proposed payment plan.

3. SFRPC adv. PHI Technologies Corp and Andre McAden
(Our File No. 9940629)

Complaint was filed with the Court on April 18, 2023. Verified Return of Service was filed on May 25, 2023 for PHI Technologies Corp. and Andre Mcaden. On June 15, 2023, we filed SFRPC's Motion for Clerk's Default for failure to file or serve any paper on the matter. On June 15, 2023, the Clerk entered the Default against PHI Technologies Corp and Andre McAden. On August 15, 2023, we filed SFRPC's Motion for Default Final Judgment. The Hearing is scheduled for October 3, 2023.

4. SFRPC adv. Equity Partners 102, LLC
(Our File No. 9940633)

Equity Partners 102 foreclosure complaint was filed with the Court on July 13, 2023. On July 24, 2023, SFRPC filed an Answer and did not assert affirmative defenses. Equity Partners seeks to foreclose its first mortgage against Ms. Dawson's real property located at 2748 NW 8th St. Fort Lauderdale, FL. We will monitor the case in the event that surplus funds become available. On September 5, 2023, a hearing on Plaintiff Equity Partners' Motion for Order to Show Cause is scheduled. The Court deferred ruling on the entry of the foreclosure judgment.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ Kerry L. Ezrol

Kerry L. Ezrol

KLE:jc

cc: Samuel S. Goren, General Counsel (via e-mail & hard copy)
Alisha Lopez (via e-mail)
Steve Foreman (via e-mail)
Jeffrey Tart (via e-mail)
Kathe Lerch (via e-mail)

SOUTHEAST FLORIDA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FUND, INC.

Affordable Housing Initiative



BROWARD COUNTY LAUDERHILL CRA

Lauderhill, FL (8)

5801 NW 27th Court
5811 NW 27th Court
5821 NW 27th Court
5831 NW 27th Court
5731 NW 28th Court
5741 NW 28th Court
5801 NW 28th Court
5821 NW 28th Court

HOUSING FOUNDATION OF AMERICA

West Park, FL (3)**

Lot 22, Block 66
Lot 23, Block 66
Lot 6, Block 53

LIBERIA ECONOMIC & SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Fort Lauderdale, FL (3)

2861 NW 10th Court
2791 NW 11th Place
375 NW 28th Avenue

LIBERIA ECONOMIC & SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Hollywood, FL (2)

2351 Raleigh Street
2361 Raleigh Street

TURN TWO CONSTRUCTION

Dania Beach, FL (2)**

509 NW 3rd Terrace
511 NW 3rd Terrace

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY MINORITY BUILDERS COALITION

Homestead, FL (4)**

704 SW 7th Street
705 SW 6th Street
813 SW 6th Street
829 SW 6th Street

PALM BEACH COUNTY COMMUNITY PARTNERS OF SOUTH FLORIDA

West Palm Beach, FL (1)**

905 39th Street



MEMORANDUM

AGENDA ITEM # IV.B

DATE: SEPTEMBER 18, 2023

TO: COUNCIL MEMBERS

FROM: STAFF

SUBJECT: SFRPC CARES ACT RLF STATUS REPORT

The U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration is partnering with the South Florida Regional Planning Council (SFRPC) to oversee and administer a new \$5.90 million CARES ACT Business Revolving Loan Fund program that will alleviate sudden and severe economic dislocation caused by the coronavirus in Monroe, Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach counties. Designated a U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development District in 1994, the SFRPC welcomes this new program into its lending portfolio as it continues to expand its economic development activities.

The initiative/focus is to initially conduct financial assessments of vital and essential South Florida small businesses to evaluate financial and resiliency capacity with the focus on maintaining ongoing operations. Once assessed, the SFRPC along with its coalition partners will determine an applicable loan program to meet the financial needs of the small business in order to maintain its vital operations. This supplemental financial assistance award will help support critical small business operations for the long-term within industries that are essential in South Florida.

Since the program was launched on August 5, 2020, the SFRPC has received approximately 350 prospects inquiring into the loan program from Palm Beach, Broward, Miami-Dade and Monroe counties. Initial loan program funding is available for up to 2 years or until all loan funds are disbursed. As the program is revolving in nature, after all initial funds are deployed, new businesses will have an opportunity to seek financial support as loan proceeds are repaid from former borrowers.

In November 2022, the EDA completed their RLF Risk Analysis and conveyed the South Florida Regional Planning Council earned a current annual risk rating of an "A" for the fiscal year ending 9/30/2022.

To date, loan administration has approved thirty-four (34) new CARES ACT RLF loans totaling \$7,170,000 and saved and/or created 249 related jobs.



South Florida Regional Planning Council
1 Oakwood Boulevard, Suite 250, Hollywood, Florida 33020
954.924.3653 Phone, 954.924-3654 FAX
www.sfregionalcouncil.org

**CARES ACT REVOLVING LOAN FUND
PAYMENT STATUS REPORT - SEPTEMBER 2023**

| Loan | Company /Borrower | Amount | Disbursed | Pmts | Rate | Pay/Yr | Normal Pay | Last Activity | Last Balance | Paid Thru | Days Late | Last Activity | Next Pay Due | Loan Date | Maturity Date | Board Action |
|---------------|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------|------|--------|--------|------------------|------------------|---------------------|-----------|-----------|---------------|--------------|-----------|---------------|--------------|
| 5100 | | 25,000.00 | 25,000.00 | 60 | 3.5000 | 12 | 454.79 | 454.79 | 10,927.59 | 09/01/23 | 0 | 09/01/23 | 10/01/23 | 10/20/20 | 11/01/25 | performing |
| 5102 | | 500,000.00 | 500,000.00 | 60 | 3.5000 | 12 | 1,506.80 | 1,506.80 | 499,951.40 | 09/01/23 | 0 | 09/01/23 | 10/01/23 | 11/11/20 | 01/01/31 | performing |
| 5107 | | 300,000.00 | 300,000.00 | 120 | 3.5000 | 12 | 2,966.58 | 2,966.58 | 225,154.41 | 09/01/23 | 0 | 09/01/23 | 10/01/23 | 11/20/20 | 11/01/30 | performing |
| 5110 | | 500,000.00 | 515,000.00 | 120 | 3.5000 | 12 | 4,934.78 | 4,934.78 | 441,123.22 | 09/01/23 | 0 | 09/01/23 | 10/01/23 | 01/13/21 | 01/01/31 | performing |
| 5111 | | 210,000.00 | 210,000.00 | 120 | 3.5000 | 12 | 2,076.60 | 2,076.60 | 161,258.23 | 09/01/23 | 0 | 09/01/23 | 10/01/23 | 12/31/20 | 01/01/31 | performing |
| 5112 | | 500,000.00 | 500,000.00 | 120 | 3.5000 | 12 | 4,944.29 | 4,944.29 | 384,054.54 | 09/01/23 | 0 | 09/01/23 | 10/01/23 | 12/28/20 | 01/01/31 | performing |
| 5113 | | 50,000.00 | 50,000.00 | 60 | 3.5000 | 12 | 909.59 | 909.59 | 26,958.48 | 09/01/23 | 0 | 09/01/23 | 10/01/23 | 02/25/21 | 03/01/26 | performing |
| 5114 | | 150,000.00 | 150,000.00 | 120 | 3.5000 | 12 | 1,483.29 | 1,483.29 | 117,552.32 | 09/01/23 | 0 | 09/01/23 | 10/01/23 | 02/24/21 | 02/01/31 | performing |
| 5115 | | 100,000.00 | 100,000.00 | 60 | 3.5000 | 12 | 1,594.07 | 250.00 | 77,374.31 | 08/01/23 | 0 | 08/11/23 | 09/01/23 | 02/02/21 | 02/01/26 | performing |
| 5116 | | 306,041.60 | 306,041.60 | 120 | 3.7760 | 12 | 2,173.69 | 2,173.69 | 274,525.09 | 09/01/23 | 0 | 09/01/23 | 10/01/23 | 05/14/21 | 04/01/31 | performing |
| 5117 | | 394,000.00 | 394,000.00 | 240 | 3.5000 | 12 | 2,285.04 | 2,285.04 | 360,914.92 | 09/01/23 | 0 | 09/01/23 | 10/01/23 | 05/13/21 | 05/01/31 | performing |
| 5118 | | 500,000.00 | 500,000.00 | 180 | 3.5000 | 12 | 3,493.33 | 3,493.33 | 453,258.32 | 09/01/23 | 0 | 09/01/23 | 10/01/23 | 06/15/21 | 07/01/36 | performing |
| 5119 | | 150,000.00 | 150,000.00 | 120 | 3.5000 | 12 | 1,441.59 | 1,441.59 | 127,942.24 | 09/01/23 | 0 | 09/01/23 | 10/01/23 | 08/12/21 | 08/01/31 | performing |
| 5120 | | 180,000.00 | 180,000.00 | 120 | 3.5000 | 12 | 1,695.46 | 1,695.46 | 159,192.42 | 09/01/23 | 0 | 09/01/23 | 10/01/23 | 08/09/21 | 08/01/31 | performing |
| 5121 | | 175,000.00 | 175,000.00 | 120 | 3.5000 | 12 | 1,730.50 | 1,730.50 | 143,164.78 | 09/01/23 | 0 | 09/01/23 | 10/01/23 | 08/24/21 | 08/01/31 | performing |
| 5122 | | 500,000.00 | 500,000.00 | 120 | 3.5000 | 12 | 2,899.80 | 2,899.80 | 461,957.77 | 09/01/23 | 0 | 09/01/23 | 10/01/23 | 08/25/21 | 08/01/31 | performing |
| 5123 | | 250,000.00 | 250,000.00 | 120 | 3.5000 | 12 | 2,390.96 | 2,390.96 | 217,077.81 | 09/01/23 | 0 | 09/01/23 | 10/01/23 | 10/15/21 | 10/01/31 | performing |
| 5125 | | 500,000.00 | 500,000.00 | 180 | 4.5000 | 12 | 3,824.97 | 3,824.97 | 459,269.88 | 09/01/23 | 0 | 09/01/23 | 10/01/23 | 01/13/21 | 10/01/31 | performing |
| 5126 | | 128,000.00 | 128,000.00 | 60 | 4.0000 | 12 | 2,357.31 | 2,357.31 | 92,469.34 | 09/01/23 | 0 | 09/01/23 | 10/01/23 | 02/15/22 | 02/01/27 | performing |
| 5127 | | 200,000.00 | 200,000.00 | 120 | 4.5000 | 12 | 2,072.77 | 2,072.77 | 179,643.76 | 09/01/23 | 0 | 09/01/23 | 10/01/23 | 06/09/22 | 06/01/32 | performing |
| 5128 | | 437,136.20 | 172,029.60 | 36 | 5.0000 | 12 | 740.68 | 740.68 | 172,029.60 | 09/01/23 | 0 | 09/01/23 | 10/01/23 | 10/20/22 | 11/01/25 | performing |
| 5129 | | 250,000.00 | 250,000.00 | 180 | 6.0000 | 12 | 2,109.64 | 2,109.64 | 248,527.35 | 09/01/23 | 0 | 09/01/23 | 10/01/23 | 06/22/23 | 07/01/38 | performing |
| Totals | | 6,305,177.80 | 6,055,071.20 | | | | 50,086.53 | 48,742.46 | 5,294,327.78 | | | | | | | |

Portfolio Analysis

Funds: (37000)
Status: All
City: All
County: All
Loan Officer: All
Loan# From 0002 to 53005

Cutoff Date: 9/1/2023
Run Date: 09/01/2023
Run Time: 1:28:04 pm
Page 1 of 1

| | Number | Balance | Percent% |
|-----------------------|--------|--------------|----------|
| All Outstanding Loans | | | |
| Current Accounts | 22 | 5,294,327.78 | 100.00% |
| Past due 1-30 days | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| Past due 31-60 days | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| Past due 61-90 days | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| Past due 91-120 days | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| Past due 121-150 days | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| Past due 151-180 days | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| Greater than 180 days | 0 | 0.00 | 0.00% |
| Total Portfolio | 22 | 5,294,327.78 | 100.00% |

Contaminated Portfolio 0 0.00 0.00%

Loans identified as being delinquent by 30 or more days and having a balance greater than zero as of the cutoff date.

Delinquent Loans 0 0.00 0.00%

Loans identified by delinquent status in Loan Master, and having a balance greater than zero as of the cutoff date.

Default Loans 0 0.00 0.00%

Loans identified by default status in Loan Master, and having a balance greater than zero as of the cutoff date.

Write-off Loans 0 0.00 0.00%

Loans identified by write-off status in Loan Master, and having a balance greater than zero as of the cutoff date.

CARES ACT RLF FUNDING UPDATE

AS OF: 09/01/2023

| Loan # | LOAN AMOUNT | COUNTY | CITY |
|--------|--------------|-------------|-----------------|
| 1 | \$25,000.00 | Monroe | Key Largo |
| 2 | \$30,000.00 | Monroe | Islamorada |
| 3 | \$500,000.00 | Broward | Pompano Beach |
| 4 | \$85,000.00 | Palm Beach | Palm Springs |
| 5 | \$300,000.00 | Miami- Dade | Miami |
| 6 | \$35,000.00 | Broward | Hollywood |
| 7 | \$210,000.00 | Broward | Miramar |
| 8 | \$150,000.00 | Monroe | Key West |
| 9 | \$500,000.00 | Monroe | Key West |
| 10 | \$500,000.00 | Miami- Dade | Miami Beach |
| 11 | \$50,000.00 | Broward | Hollywood |
| 12 | \$150,000.00 | Broward | Davie |
| 13 | \$50,000.00 | Broward | Lauderhill |
| 14 | \$243,000.00 | Broward | Sunrise |
| 15 | \$394,000.00 | Palm Beach | Boca Raton |
| 16 | \$300,000.00 | Broward | Plantation |
| 17 | \$75,000.00 | Broward | Fort Lauderdale |
| 18 | \$80,000.00 | Miami- Dade | Miami |
| 19 | \$175,000.00 | Palm Beach | West Palm Beach |
| 20 | \$500,000.00 | Miami- Dade | Miami |
| 21 | \$150,000.00 | Broward | Plantation |
| 22 | \$250,000.00 | Miami- Dade | Miami Beach |
| 23 | \$500,000.00 | Broward | Coconut Creek |
| 24 | \$128,000.00 | Broward | Hollywood |
| 25 | \$365,000.00 | Monroe | Key West |
| 26 | \$200,000.00 | Broward | Plantation |
| 27 | \$75,000.00 | Broward | Fort Lauderdale |
| 28 | \$200,000.00 | Broward | Fort Lauderdale |
| 29 | \$100,000.00 | Broward | Plantation |
| 30 | \$50,000.00 | Broward | Lauderhill |
| 31 | \$400,000.00 | Palm Beach | Riviera Beach |
| 32 | \$100,000.00 | Miami- Dade | Miami |
| 33 | \$50,000.00 | Broward | Sunrise |
| 34 | \$250,000.00 | Broward | Sunrise |

TOTAL FUNDED: \$7,170,000.00



MEMORANDUM

AGENDA ITEM #IV.C

DATE: SEPTEMBER 18, 2023

TO: COUNCIL MEMBERS

FROM: STAFF

SUBJECT: FY 22-23 PARTIAL LIST OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO DATE

Please find attached a partial list of the Council's activities and accomplishments during FY 22-23.

Recommendation

Information only

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



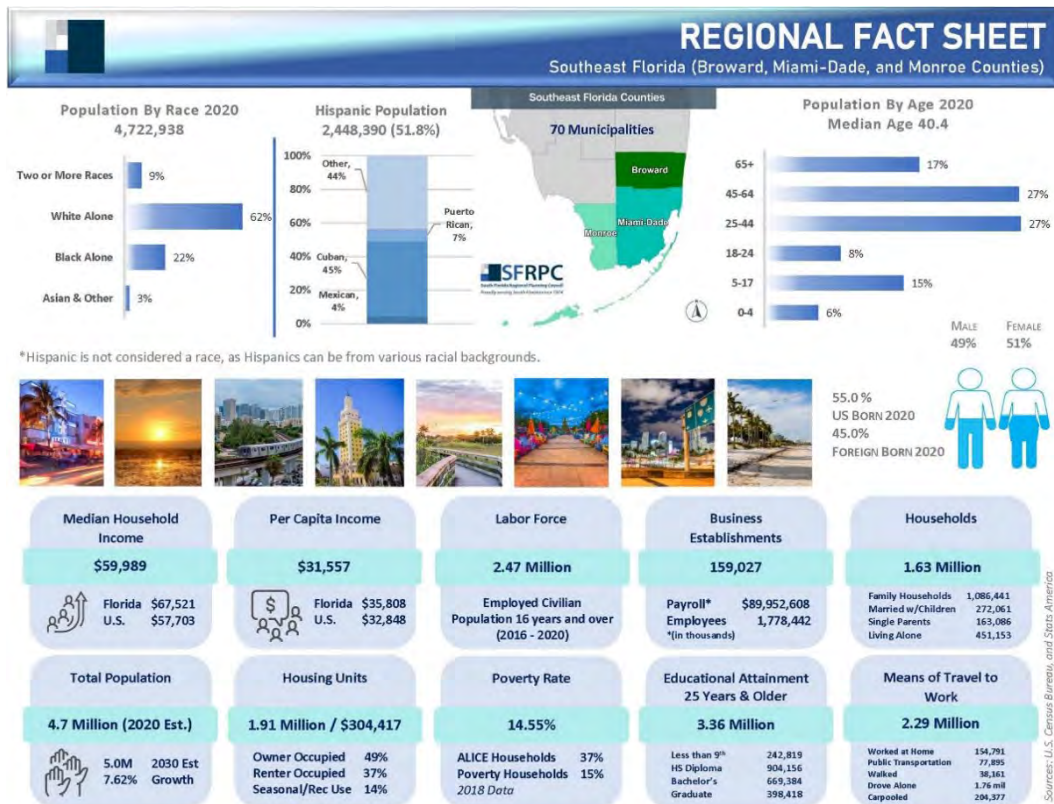
SFRPC
South Florida Regional Planning Council
Proudly serving South Florida since 1974
2022 - 2027 South Florida
Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy



2022-2027 SOUTH FLORIDA COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The [2022-2027 South Florida Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy](#) (CEDS) was completed after more than a year and a half of hard work by regional leaders and stakeholders. The CEDS identifies and analyzes key economic challenges and opportunities facing Miami-Dade, Broward, and Monroe counties and its population of 4.7 million residents. The report highlights the key issues and strategic direction the region’s leaders should pursue to advance economic development, equitable access to opportunity, and prosperity in South Florida.

Chaired by SFRPC Chair Senator Steve Geller, the CEDS Strategy Committee Membership includes multiple University and College Presidents, top CEOs / Business Leaders, the Presidents, CEOs, and Directors of the region’s Economic Development Organizations and County Economic Development Offices, Job/Workforce Training Organizations, the top Leadership of Water Management & Regional Transit Agencies, Elected and Appointed Government leaders, etc. The CEDS Committee met both in person and electronically with more than 15 meetings over the course of a year.



SFRPC CONVENES REGIONAL STAKEHOLDERS TO DEVELOP SOUTH FLORIDA TECH HUB PROGRAM PROPOSAL



The U.S. EDA Tech Hubs Program is an economic development initiative designed to drive regional technology- and innovation-centric growth by strengthening a region's capacity to manufacture, commercialize, and deploy critical technologies. The SFRPC, working in its capacity as the U.S. EDA South Florida Economic Development District, has been instrumental in bringing together approximately one hundred stakeholders, spanning from Palm Beach to Monroe County. These stakeholders represent the region's Economic Development Organizations, counties, municipalities, universities, technology, and business leaders. This collaborative effort aims to craft an economic development proposal centered on the EDA Tech Hubs program. The proposal will highlight the region's assets and resources, including its strong research and development community, its diverse workforce, and its strategic location. The proposal, due in August 2023, will also outline a plan for how the region will use the EDA funding to strengthen its innovation ecosystem and create good jobs.

TRANSPORTATION / TOD PLANNING



SFRPC PARTNERING WITH MIAMI-DADE TPO TO STUDY THE NEXUS BETWEEN AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND TRANSIT

The SFRPC's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for South Florida (CEDS) identified affordable and workforce housing as a critical issue. The CEDS implementation phase is supportive of ensuring that affordable housing options are strategically developed around transit hubs, creating sustainable and inclusive communities. This summer, the SFRPC and the Miami-Dade Transportation Planning Organization have partnered to study the nexus between affordable housing and transit hubs.



The study will examine the following:

- Existing policies on the nexus between affordable housing and transportation;
- Existing and projected affordable housing demand and supply in proximity to SMART Program hubs and corridors;
- Two station areas case studies to analyze projected affordable housing availability in the future (to include proposed developments);
- A fact sheet comparing Miami-Dade County's affordable housing policies with other areas locally and nationally; and
- A Resource Library for special issues that affect the nexus, such as climate.



The study is expected to be completed by September 2023 and will provide a number of benefits, including:



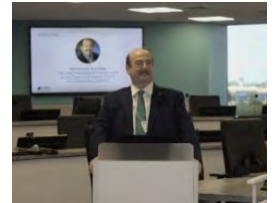
- A better understanding of the relationship between affordable housing and transportation.
- A more comprehensive approach to planning for transportation and affordable housing.
- Improved coordination between transportation and affordable housing agencies.
- Increased access to affordable housing for all residents.

SFRPC staff convened an Advisory Group with subject matter experts to collect input and provide updated guidance. The study is being conducted in preparation for the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan and will help to inform the Miami-Dade Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and ensure that the region's transportation system is efficient and accessible.



STRIDING FORWARD: FIRST & LAST MILE INNOVATION IN THE REGION

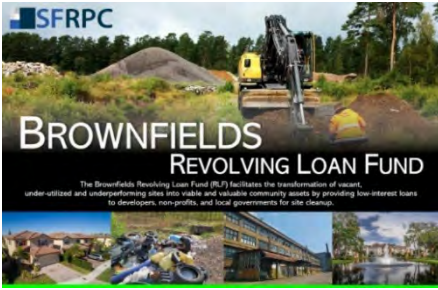
The SFRPC hosted the “Striding Forward: First & Last Mile Innovation in the Region” event where more than 100 participants registered to learn about the economic and community benefits of improved first and last mile connectivity. Topics of discussion included what types of densities and land use policies support first and last mile connectivity, the interrelationship of affordable housing and mobility, and an overview of South Florida’s regional vision for mobility. With transportation being the second highest expense in the region’s high cost of living environment, the consensus among speakers was that transit is key to a thriving economy with opportunity for all, and Transit-Oriented Development and Transit-Oriented Communities create “Live – Work – Play” communities that increase access to affordable housing, education, employment, and recreational opportunities.



IMPROVING CONNECTIONS TO REGIONAL TRANSIT WITH THE SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY (SFRTA)

The SFRPC continues to work in partnership with the SFRTA, operators of Tri-Rail, to improve the connection between regional transit and surrounding communities, improving the mobility and livability of South Florida. The SFRPC supports improved access to Tri-Rail stations by advocating for land use and zoning that is supportive of transit-oriented communities (TOCs); safe pedestrian and bicycle access on the roadway network; and multi modal options such as micro transit, and shared rides. Assigned tasks include supporting the facilitation of Transit Oriented Development (TOD) within the study areas. The SFRPC also provides Geographic Information Systems (GIS) analysis for the Tri-Rail shared rider program, which supports transit riders’ access to and from Tri-Rail stations and their origin or destination.

BROWNFIELDS & REVOLVING LOAN FUNDS PROGRAMS



EPA AWARDS THE SFRPC \$1 MILLION FOR BROWNFIELDS RLF GRANT AND \$500K FOR THE BROWNFIELDS ASSESSMENT GRANT

The SFRPC has also been selected for a **\$1,000,000 Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Grant** that will be funded by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. The grant will be used to capitalize a revolving loan fund from which the SFRPC will provide at least three loans and one subgrant to support cleanup activities. Grant funds also will be used to market the RLF program and conduct community engagement activities. RLF activities will focus on central Miami, an area east of 12th Avenue. Priority sites include the 2-acre former Orkin Site, the 20-acre Poinciana Industrial Center assemblage property, and the 4.3-acre Northside Transit-Oriented Development property.

In addition, the SFRPC has been selected for a **\$500,000 Brownfields Assessment Grant**. Community-wide grant funds will be used to conduct eight Phase I and six Phase II environmental site assessments. Grant funds will also be used to develop a site inventory, prepare seven cleanup and five reuse plans, and conduct community outreach activities. The target area for this grant is the City of Homestead's southwest neighborhood, which was developed in the 1930s to serve African American agricultural workers. Priority sites include the 3-acre Triangle property, which is the gateway to the southwest neighborhood, a 0.9-acre former storage yard for railroad ties, and a 4.2-acre former residential community that was leveled by Hurricane Andrew.



SFRPC RECOGNIZED AT THE 40TH ANNUAL MEDWEEK GALA TO CELEBRATE MINORITY ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT WEEK

The South Florida Regional Planning Council was recognized by M. Gill & Associates, Inc. at Florida's 40th Annual MEDWeek Gala to celebrate minority enterprise development week. The SFRPC's CARES ACT Revolving Loan Fund was honored as a leading capital assistance program for minority business owners in South Florida that had been impacted by COVID.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING



SFRPC COMMITS \$1,000,000 TO REMEDIATE FORMER CONTAMINATED SITE INTO AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR THE MIAMI HEALTH DISTRICT

The SFRPC committed \$1,000,000 from its EPA Brownfields Clean-Up Revolving Loan Fund to help remediate and redevelop a 2.08-acre property located at 1960 and 1970 NW 27th Avenue in Miami, Florida. This regional project is a

collaborative effort between the SFRPC, Goldstein Kite Environmental, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Miami-Dade County Department of Environmental Resources Management, and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.



SFRPC EXPANDS AFFORDABLE HOUSING INITIATIVE WITH \$1,000,000 COMMITMENT TO CONSTRUCT SINGLE FAMILY HOMES IN HOMESTEAD, MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA

The SFRPC continues to expand its affordable housing initiative with a \$1,000,000 commitment from its Revolving Loan Fund, to help construct four (4) new single-family homes for first time homebuyers in the City of Homestead, FL. The project is a collaborative effort between the SFRPC, Homestead Community Redevelopment Agency, and the Minority Builders Coalition. The homes will be located at 705 SW 6th Street, 813 SW 6th Street, 829 SW 6th Street, and 704 SW 7th Street and reside in the Homestead CRA.



MAKING HOMEBUYING AFFORDABLE ONE FAMILY AT A TIME

Liberia Economic and Social Development Inc. successfully completed the development of two (2) affordable single-family residential homes for first-time minority homebuyers. Financing for the construction of the homes was provided by a partnership of the Southeast Florida Community Development Fund, Inc., and the Urban League of Broward County/Central County Commission Development Corporation. We congratulate the homebuyers of 2351 and 2361 Raleigh Street, Hollywood, FL.

The Southeast Florida Community Development Fund, Inc. (SFCDFI) was created in 2014 by the SFRPC to promote community and economic development, provide access to capital for small businesses, and incent job creation for low- and moderate-income individuals. A primary activity of the SFCDFI is working with minority builders to create affordable housing opportunities.

CLEAN CITIES



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE SOUTHEAST FLORIDA CLEAN CITIES COALITION ON REDESIGNATION

The SFRPC's Southeast Florida Clean Cities Coalition (SEFLCCC), a public-private partnership spanning Monroe through Palm Beach counties, was recently approved for redesignation by the U.S. Department of Energy. The redesignation from the U.S. Department of Energy's Vehicle Technologies Office means that the South Florida region will continue to have access to Clean Cities tools, resources, and support networks to help convert fleets to non-petroleum fuels that can help

decrease harmful vehicle emissions, achieve sustainability goals, and reduce long-term transportation costs. The redesignation signals national recognition of the continued efforts by local fleets and government entities to build a more sustainable transportation system in South Florida that supports the local economy and quality of life.



SFRPC HOSTS SOUTHEAST U.S. CLEAN CITIES ANNUAL MEETING

The Southeast Florida Clean Cities Coalition hosted the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and Clean Cities Coalition Directors from the Southeast United States for a two-day information sharing and planning meeting on February 27th and 28th in Hollywood, FL. At this meeting, the U.S. DOE announced the recertification of the Southeast Florida Clean Cities Coalition and applauded our Coalition as one of the best in the United States. The U.S. DOE has asked the SFRPC and Coalition if we would be willing to host a National Conference later this year or early next year. The SFRPC has hosted and staffed the Coalition for more than 25 years.



SOUTHEAST FLORIDA CLEAN CITIES AND SOUTH FLORIDA LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE HOST ELECTRIC & PROPANE SCHOOL BUS FIRST RESPONDER TRAINING

The Southeast Florida Clean Cities Coalition and the South Florida Local Emergency Planning Committee Region 10 (LEPC) identified first responder training needs for Broward, Miami-Dade, and Monroe counties. To meet this need, the Coalition and the LEPC hosted a training for electric and propane school buses on May 18, 2023. The training was provided to support Blue Bird's contract to supply Broward County Public Schools (BCPS) with 60 new electric school buses. The order replaced part of BCPS diesel fleet with zero-emission vehicles through the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Electric School Bus Project. This deal marks the largest electric school bus fleet purchase in Blue Bird's history.

Approximately 50 first responders from Miami-Dade and Broward counties participated in this standing-room only training opportunity. The responders rotated between a classroom and outside, hands-on training. The classroom training provided an overview of the propane system and the electric vehicle battery. During the hands-on component of the training, responders were able to climb on board and underneath the propane and EV school buses to thoroughly examine engine mechanics and structural components and to field questions directly to the manufacturers. The program was well-received, and plans are in the works to provide additional alternative fuel vehicles training later in FY 2023.



ICE MECHANICS' INTRO TO EV MAINTENANCE APPROVED FOR PILOT

The Clean Cities Coalition partnered with West Virginia University and Sheridan Technical College on a U.S. Department of Energy grant application to develop an electric vehicle (EV) technician program. The "ICE Mechanics Introduction to EV Repair" envisions the development and deployment of a sustainable, scalable model for delivering a standards-driven, continuing education, focused on EV maintenance for employees who do not work for Original Equipment Manufacturer dealership networks. The project strategically targets four locations across the country to pilot a hybrid EV course for 60 hours to be delivered to approximately 40 to 60 workers who want EV maintenance and repair skills.



BROWARD COUNTY & THE SOUTHEAST FLORIDA CLEAN CITIES COALITION SELECTED BY THE NATIONAL RENEWABLE ENERGY LABORATORY FOR THE CLEAN ENERGY TO COMMUNITIES COHORT

Broward County applied to the U.S. Department of Energy's Clean Energy to Communities (C2C) cohort titled, "Planning and Funding for Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Deployment" with Southeast Florida Clean Cities named as a partner. This is the first pilot for integrating Clean Cities Coalitions into C2C programming. The Southeast Florida Clean Cities Coalition is excited to work with Broward County and NREL to support our local communities. The cohort will consist of six sessions between July and December 2023 and supplementary collaboration between the Southeast Florida Clean Cities Coalition and Broward County between sessions.

Broward County and the Southeast Florida Clean Cities Coalition will work together to provide information and insights for tangible outcomes for communities. The Cohort will support the partners to prepare electric vehicle infrastructure plans, apply for funding, and deploy a strategic network of EV infrastructure.



SOUTHEAST FLORIDA CLEAN CITIES DIRECTOR NOMINATED TO THE DRIVE ELECTRIC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Alisha Lopez, the Clean Cities Director for the Southeast Florida Clean Cities Coalition was recently elected to the Drive Electric Florida Board of Directors. Drive Electric Florida seeks to support and accelerate the adoption of electric vehicles and deployment of accompanying infrastructure. She is the newest member elected this year and the only representative of the Clean Cities Program elected to the Board. She will serve as a liaison between the Clean Cities Coalitions in Florida and the Drive Electric Florida organization. Alisha will help with the policy goal development and educational outreach.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS



OPERATION HEAT SHIELD IV

The Southeast Regional Domestic Security Task Force (SERDSTF) and Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) hosted Operation Heat Shield IV, which focused on advancing the community as a whole and regional partnerships. The exercise was designed and conducted to test and demonstrate critical skills in multidisciplinary areas of expertise and to advance lessons learned during previous exercises. Training to test new capabilities in a controlled environment helps to plan, prepare, prevent, respond, mitigate, and recover from potential terrorist incidents. In addition, the Heat Shield series provides the region's partners with the opportunity to identify gaps for inclusion in future training exercises. Operation Heat Shield IV exercises were held at Port Miami and other locations throughout Miami-Dade County in March. Event partners included law enforcement, fire rescue, emergency response personnel, joint media, and intelligence sharing entities. Through cross-jurisdictional collaboration response capabilities improve and the region's vulnerability from a complex coordinated attack is reduced. Planning exercises are a best practice to help keep South Florida's first responder skills sharp in the event of a real-world emergency.



SOUTH FLORIDA LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE HOSTS WASTE OPERATIONS TRAINING

The [South Florida LEPC](#) sponsored an eight-hour OSHA Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response Course for Miami-Dade's Water and Sewer Department. This course took place throughout October and certified 100 employees of the agency in handling certain hazardous material emergencies. During the month of September, another 200 employees of the agency were certified in similar training.

RESILIENCY PLANNING & REGIONAL COLLABORATION

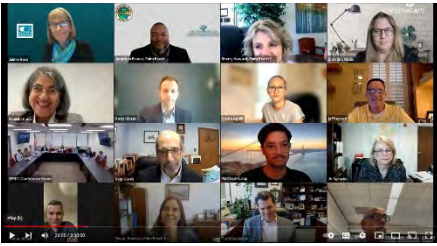


SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE WAS A HUGE SUCCESS

The South Florida and Treasure Coast Regional Planning Councils hosted a 7-County [Regional Conference on Solid Waste Management Challenges and Opportunities](#) in Southeast Florida on October 21, 2022. Featured presentations were given by county professionals and other subject matter experts regarding the current state of solid waste management practice in Southeast Florida, new technologies and "best practice" approaches, and opportunities for greater regional collaboration to manage an ever-growing supply of solid waste.

Based on regional need and demand, the Councils are hosting a follow-up, in-

depth look at Recycling Challenges and Opportunities at their upcoming Annual Conference on October 20, 2023.



MAYORS' ROUNDTABLE ON AFFORDABLE HOUSING

In September 2022, the SFRPC, working in partnership with Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach counties, the TCRPC, and Florida Housing Coalition, organized and convened a Southeast Florida Large County Affordable Housing Conversation. Chair Geller offered opening comments and then welcomed Mayor Levine Cava, Mayor Udine, and Vice Mayor Weiss who provided opening statements sharing the challenges and opportunities associated with affordable housing in their respective counties. Special guests included Florida Housing Coalition Executive Director Jaimie Ross and Legal Director Kody Glazer who provided an update on housing and legislative issues. County Housing Directors Ralph Stone, Jonathan Brown, and Michael Liu provided affordable housing program updates and shared with their colleagues and elected officials best practices, challenges, and potential opportunities to accelerate the development of affordable housing in Southeast Florida. Funding sources, planning and regulatory reform, and best practices were discussed in addition to inclusionary zoning, linkage fees, land use flexibility for affordable housing, impact fee waivers, ARPA funds for affordable housing, and NIMBYism during the two-hour meeting. SFRPC staff is currently working with the county housing directors and elected officials to host a follow up meeting focused on identifying needed improvements to SB 102 passed during the 2023 legislative session and the sharing of accomplishments, best practices, and affordable housing initiatives undertaken during the past year. This meeting is tentatively scheduled for September 2023.



SOUTH FLORIDA & TREASURE COAST JOINT COUNCIL MEETING

The South Florida and Treasure Coast Regional Planning Councils held its Annual Joint Meeting at the Long Key Natural Area and Nature Center in Davie, Florida. Councilmembers heard from state and local experts on a variety of topics including the upcoming Florida Legislative Session; Florida's Coral Reef Protection and Restoration initiatives and federal coral reef legislation; the Marine Research Hub; Southeast Florida Restoration and Flood Control Planning and Projects; proposed state affordable housing legislation; and statewide water infrastructure challenges and opportunities.



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION DISTRICT 6 RESILIENCY DATABASE

The SFRPC and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District 6 have created a [regional resilience database](#) of ongoing, future, and planned resilience efforts. There are currently 156 documents and resources available in the database, with more to come. The intent of this initiative is to create a one-stop

resource of resilience efforts within FDOT District 6 (Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties) that is accessible to FDOT Central Office and other FDOT Districts, local governments, state and federal agencies, and community partners.



SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL MILITARY INSTALLATION RESILIENCE REVIEW

The [South Florida Military Installation Resilience Review](#) (South Florida MIRR), funded by the U.S. Department of Defense Office of Local Defense Community Cooperation with matching funds from the Florida Defense Task Force, is nearing completion. The *South Florida Military Resilience Strategy: Mission Assurance through Community Resilience* report is undergoing final review and will be released shortly. Led by the SFRPC, with consultants Jacobs Engineering and the South Florida Defense Alliance, this strategy addresses the risks, hazards, and vulnerabilities of concern related to the ability of the military to carry out its missions by identifying investments and solutions outside of the fence line in the surrounding communities. Over the last 18 months, the South Florida Project Team has been diligently working in partnership with the military commands and key local stakeholders to enhance the resilience of the following South Florida's defense installations:



- Homestead Air Reserve Base (HARB)
- Miami-Dade County United States Army Garrison-Miami (USAG-Miami),
- South Florida Ocean Measurement Facility (SFOMF), and
- United States Naval Air Station Key West (NASKW).

This strategy addresses the risks, hazards, and vulnerabilities of concern related to the ability of the military to carry out its missions by identifying investments and solutions outside of the fence line in the surrounding communities. The foundation of this work is the robust resilience planning of the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Compact.

SAVE THE DATE
South Florida & Treasure Coast
Regional Planning Councils Annual Conference

**REUSE
REUSE
RECYCLE**

Friday, October 20, 2023
9:30a.m. - 4:00p.m.
Broward Center for the Performing Arts
Mary N. Porter Riverview Ballroom
201 SW 5th Avenue, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33312

More info coming soon!
South Florida | 954-924-3653 | sfadmin@sfrpc.com
Treasure Coast | 772-221-4060 | lgulicket@crpc.org

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

HON. SENATOR STEVE GELLER, CHAIR
HON. SAMUEL KAUFMAN, 1ST VICE CHAIR
HON. QUENTIN "BEAM" FURR, 2ND VICE CHAIR
HON. MICHELLE LINCOLN, SECRETARY
HON. SENATOR RENÉ GARCÍA, TREASURER
MARIO BAILEY, IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIR

ISABEL COSIO CARBALLO, MPA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
SAMUEL GOREN, ESQ., LEGAL COUNSEL

SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL
1 OAKWOOD BOULEVARD, SUITE 250
HOLLYWOOD, FLORIDA 33020
(954) 924-3653 | [SFADMIN@SFRPC.COM](mailto:sfadmin@sfrpc.com)
WWW.SFREREGIONALCOUNCIL.ORG



AGENDA ITEM # IV.D

DATE: SEPTEMBER 18, 2023
TO: COUNCIL MEMBERS
FROM: STAFF
SUBJECT: COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

Recommendation

Information only

SEPTEMBER 2023

SFRPC CHAIRMAN, COMMISSIONER STEVE GELLER, APPOINTED CHAIR OF THE FLORIDA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES COMMUNITY AND URBAN AFFAIRS POLICY COMMITTEE, AND POLICY LEADER OF THE TAX & ADMINISTRATION POLICY COMMITTEE

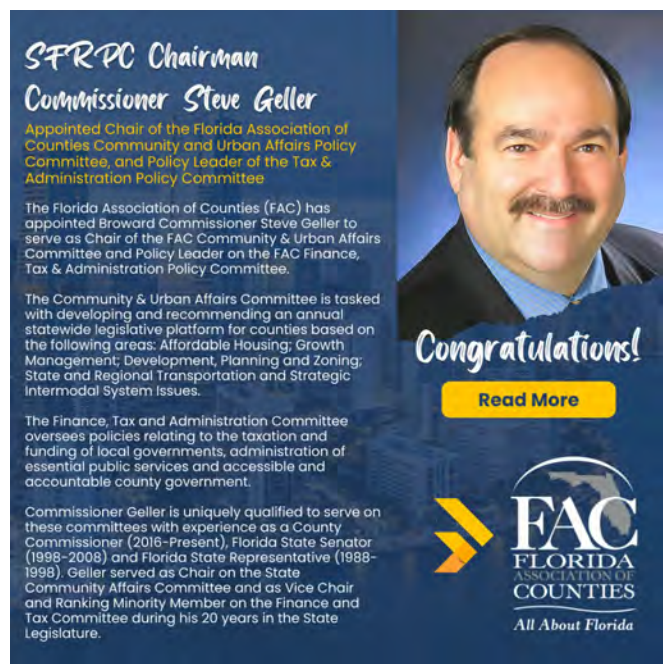
The Florida Association of Counties (FAC) has appointed Broward Commissioner Steve Geller to serve as Chair of the FAC Community & Urban Affairs Committee and Policy Leader on the FAC Finance, Tax & Administration Policy Committee.

The Community & Urban Affairs Committee is tasked with developing and recommending an annual statewide legislative platform for counties based on the following areas: Affordable Housing; Growth Management; Development, Planning and Zoning; State and Regional Transportation and Strategic Intermodal System Issues.

The Finance, Tax and Administration Committee oversees policies relating to the taxation and funding of local governments, administration of essential public services and accessible and accountable county government.

Commissioner Geller is uniquely qualified to serve on these committees with experience as a County Commissioner (2016-Present), Florida State Senator (1998-2008) and Florida State Representative (1988-1998). Geller served as Chair on the State Community Affairs Committee and as Vice Chair and Ranking Minority Member on the Finance and Tax Committee during his 20 years in the State Legislature.

[\[READ MORE\]](#)



SFRPC Chairman
Commissioner Steve Geller

Appointed Chair of the Florida Association of Counties Community and Urban Affairs Policy Committee, and Policy Leader of the Tax & Administration Policy Committee

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Congratulations!

[Read More](#)


FAC
FLORIDA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES
All About Florida


FLORIDA LEAGUE OF CITIES ELECTS NEW OFFICERS FOR 2023 - 2024

The Florida League of Cities (FLC), the united voice for Florida's municipal governments, announced the election of its officers for the 2023-2024 term. Cooper City Mayor Greg Ross was elected President of the League by FLC membership and will serve a one-year term.

"I'm grateful to be chosen to serve as your 102nd President," said Ross immediately following his installation. "For over a century, the Florida League of Cities has been a powerful advocate for the needs of Florida's cities. Together, we will positively shape the future of the cities we serve."

Joining Ross is an impressive list of Florida leaders serving as officers with the Florida League of Cities for the 2023-2024 term including:

- Florida League of Cities First Vice President: Michael Blake, Mayor, City of Cocoa
- Florida League of Cities Second Vice President: Holly Smith, Councilmember, City of Sanibel



**FLORIDA LEAGUE OF CITIES
ELECTS NEW PRESIDENT**

Greg Ross
COOPER CITY MAYOR
SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL
COUNCIL MEMBER & FORMER CHAIR

Cooper City Mayor Greg Ross was elected President of the League by FLC membership and will serve a one-year term.

Ross has served as Mayor of Cooper City since 2012. His involvement with city government began in 2002 when he was appointed to the City Planning and Zoning Board, where he served for seven years, including the last year as Chair. From 2006-2012, Ross served as Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Coordinator for the City and Vice-Chair of Broward County CERT Coordinators. In 2009, he was appointed the City's Special Magistrate.

[READ MORE >](#)

"I'm grateful to be chosen to serve as your 102nd President. For over a century, the Florida League of Cities has been a powerful advocate for the needs of Florida's cities. Together, we will positively shape the future of the cities we serve."

[\[READ MORE\]](#)



SAVE THE DATE
**SOUTHEAST FLORIDA COUNTY MAYORS'
AFFORDABLE HOUSING CONVERSATION**
in partnership with the
Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council

Next Steps 2023

FRIDAY
SEPTEMBER 29, 2023
1:30 - 3:30 PM
ZOOM & IN-PERSON

Details coming soon!
954.924.3653
sfadmin@sfrpc.com

SFRPC
South Florida Regional Planning Council
Proudly serving South Florida since 1974



SAVE THE DATE
South Florida & Treasure Coast
Regional Planning Councils Annual Conference

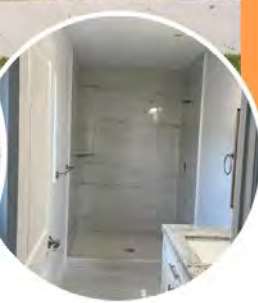
**REDUCE
REUSE
RECYCLE**

**Friday, October 20, 2023
9:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.**
Broward Center for the Performing Arts
Mary N. Porter Riverview Ballroom
201 SW 5th Avenue, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33312

More info coming soon!
South Florida | 954-924-3653 | sfadmin@sfrpc.com
Treasure Coast | 772-221-4060 | lgulick@trpc.org

SOUTHEAST FLORIDA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FUND, INC.

Affordable Housing Initiative



BROWARD COUNTY LAUDERHILL CRA *Lauderhill, FL (8)*

5801 NW 27th Court
5811 NW 27th Court
5821 NW 27th Court
5831 NW 27th Court
5731 NW 28th Court
5741 NW 28th Court
5801 NW 28th Court
5821 NW 28th Court

HOUSING FOUNDATION OF AMERICA *West Park, FL (3)***

Lot 22, Block 66
Lot 23, Block 66
Lot 6, Block 53

LIBERIA ECONOMIC & SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT *Fort Lauderdale, FL (3)*

2861 NW 10th Court
2791 NW 11th Place
375 NW 28th Avenue

LIBERIA ECONOMIC & SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT *Hollywood, FL (2)*

2351 Raleigh Street
2361 Raleigh Street

TURN TWO CONSTRUCTION *Dania Beach, FL (2)***

509 NW 3rd Terrace
511 NW 3rd Terrace

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY MINORITY BUILDERS COALITION *Homestead, FL (4)***

704 SW 7th Street
705 SW 6th Street
813 SW 6th Street
829 SW 6th Street

PALM BEACH COUNTY COMMUNITY PARTNERS OF SOUTH FLORIDA *West Palm Beach, FL (1)***

905 39th Street

www.sfcdfi.org

23 Projects as of August 1, 2023
** In Progress



MEMORANDUM

AGENDA ITEM #V.B.

DATE: SEPTEMBER 18, 2023
TO: COUNCIL MEMBERS
FROM: STAFF
SUBJECT: LEGAL COUNSEL REPORT / LEGAL OPINIONS

Please find herewith two legal opinions received from Legal Counsel since the July 2023 Council Meeting.

Recommendation

Information only.



South Florida Regional Planning Council
1 Oakwood Boulevard, Suite 250, Hollywood, Florida 33020
954-924-3653 Phone, 954-924-3654 FAX
www.sfrationalcouncil.org

From: [Samuel S. Goren](#)
To: [Isabel Cosio Carballo](#)
Cc: [Steve Geller](#); [Steve Geller](#); [Kathe Lerch](#); [Steve Geller](#); [Kimberly Longo](#); [Jacob G. Horowitz](#); [Sean M. Swartz](#); [Paul B. Hernandez](#); [Kimberly Longo](#)
Subject: RE: Hello!! Quick thought for your consideration ...
Date: Tuesday, August 1, 2023 2:01:43 PM
Attachments: [image003.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)

Isabel,

Good Tuesday afternoon.

As you requested and as we further discussed, we have conducted a little more legal research and analysis as to the current and prospective need for a ratification vote of the SFRPC collegial body subsequent to certain public decisions of the Executive Committee.

In the regard, we have re-read and reviewed:

1. The SFRPC's 'Statement of Organization' (the 'Statement') last amended and revised in April, 2021;
2. The Statement was significantly reviewed and revised in 2021. However, Section 7.0, 'Officers, Term of Office and Duties; and specifically Section 7.0(3)(b) which states that:

‘...The Executive Committee shall act for and on behalf of the Council, and shall take such action as may reasonably be necessary to fulfill the duties, functions and responsibilities of the Council as if a quorum were present. It is the intention of the Council that other members present at a Council meeting where a quorum is not present and where the Executive Committee shall act for and on behalf of the Council, shall be permitted to fully participate in the proceedings and matters then pending before the Council or the

Executive Committee’

was not modified and has been carried forward in-tact; and,

3. After many years of good faith lobbying, and independently of the presence of COVID in the year 2020, Senate Bill 1398 (the ‘Bill’) was adopted by the FL Legislature in 2020 to embrace Communications Media Technology (‘CMT’). The Bill is now codified as Section 120.525 (4), FS, ‘Meetings, hearings and workshops’ wherein:

‘...for purposes of establishing a quorum at regional planning councils that cover three or more counties a voting member who appears via telephone, real-time videoconferencing, or similar real-time electronic or video communication that is broadcast publicly at the meeting location may be counted toward the quorum requirement if at least one-third of the voting members of the regional planning council are physically present at the meeting location. A member must provide oral, written, or electronic notice of his or her intent to appear via telephone, real-time video conferencing, or similar real-time electronic or video communication to the regional planning council at least 24 hours before the scheduled meeting’;

Based upon our review of the foregoing, we are of the opinion that the Statement and the Bill can and must be read together in what is commonly referred to as ‘in para materia’ such that statutes (here the Statement and the Bill) must also be construed and read together.

That said, and with the implementation of the Bill and CMT, as well as the creation of a full and complete record of the actions taken by the Executive Committee and the predominant presence and active

participation (including voting) of collegial body members engaged through CMT, it is no longer legally necessary for the SFRPC collegial body to subsequently ratify the valid and binding decisions of the Executive Committee going forward.

(**One caveat: See also Section 1.9.3 of the Executive Director's Employment Agreement wherein the Executive Committee may be delegated the authority by the Governing Body of the SFRPC to perform the annual evaluation of the Executive Director, but subject nonetheless to the approval by the Governing Body of the SFRPC).

We trust that the foregoing legal analysis is responsive to your inquiry.

Regards,

Samuel S. Goren



3099 East Commercial Boulevard, Suite 200
Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33308

Telephone: (954) 771-4500 x 5022 | (561) 276-9400 x 5022 | Fax: (954) 771-4923
Email: SGoren@gorencherof.com | www.GorenCherof.com

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[any other person.](#)

From: Samuel S. Goren
Sent: Monday, July 31, 2023 7:52 PM
To: 'Isabel Cosio Carballo' <isabelc@sfrpc.com>
Cc: Steve Geller <steve@gellerlawfirm.com>; Steve Geller <sgeller@broward.org>; Kathe Lerch <klerch@sfrpc.com>; Steve Geller <bkopec@broward.org>; Kimberly Longo <KLongo@gorencherof.com>
Subject: RE: Hello!! Quick thought for your consideration ...

Isabel,

Good evening. Always good to see you and our SFRPC colleagues.

I will dig a little deeper given the passage of the amendment to Ch. 120, FS affecting RPC's of 3 or more counties and the implementation of Communications Media Technologies, along with the passage of the revised Statement of Organization.

I will circle back with you, tomorrow.

In the interim, to you and all, pls. enjoy a restful and good evening.

Samuel S. Goren



3099 East Commercial Boulevard, Suite 200

Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33308

Telephone: (954) 771-4500 x 5022 | (561) 276-9400 x 5022 | Fax: (954) 771-4923

Email: SGoren@gorencherof.com | www.GorenCherof.com

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From: Isabel Cosio Carballo [<mailto:isabelc@sfrpc.com>]

Sent: Monday, July 31, 2023 4:56 PM

To: Samuel S. Goren <SGoren@gorencherof.com>

Cc: Steve Geller <steve@gellerlawfirm.com>; Steve Geller <sgeller@broward.org>; Kathe Lerch <klerch@sfrpc.com>; Steve Geller <bkopec@broward.org>; Kimberly Longo <KLongo@gorencherof.com>

Subject: Hello!! Quick thought for your consideration ...

Sam, it was great to see you today! I forgot to mention that we might want to revisit the whole notion that what is adopted by the Executive Committee then needs to go back on the agenda the following month.

As you know, when this practice was developed it was because if you were not in the room physically, you were not in the meeting and unable to vote. Not anymore! More members are online than in the room.

Unless, there's a strategic purpose to it such as when we brought the dues item back in May because no Miami-Dade County members were at the April meeting, I am not sure that practice makes any sense anymore. Is it a law or rule, or just a best practice?

Thank you Sam!

Isabel Cosio Carballo, MPA
Executive Director
South Florida Regional Planning Council
1 Oakwood Boulevard, Suite 250
Hollywood, Florida 33020
isabelc@sfrpc.com; www.sfrpc.org
954 924 3653; cell 954 240 3012





SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Steve Geller, Chair, SFRPC

CC: Samuel Kaufman, First Vice Chair
Quentin Beam Furr, Second Vice Chair
Rene Garcia, Treasurer
Michelle Lincoln, Secretary
Mario Bailey, Immediate Past Chair
Isabel Cosio Carballo, Executive Director

FROM: Samuel S. Goren, General Counsel *SSG*
Sean M. Swartz, Assistant General Counsel *SMS*

DATE: September 11, 2023

RE: South Florida Regional Planning Council ("Council") / Executive Director Sick Leave Conversion

Based upon our recent discussions and inquiry from the Chair, this Memorandum shall address our office's opinion with respect to the Executive Director's conversion of accrued sick leave under her Employment Agreement with the Council.

Pursuant to the Council's Personnel Policies and Procedures at Section 7.7, "All employees whose sick leave accrual balance exceeds 500 hours at the end of November of each year will be eligible to participate in the Sick Leave Conversion Plan. Only those hours beyond 500 total hours of accrued sick leave are eligible for conversion. Accrued sick leave may be converted to vacation leave at a ratio of two (2) sick leave hours to one (1) vacation leave hour for accrued sick leave up to 800 hours at a maximum conversion of forty (40) hours vacation leave credited once annually the first period in January."

The Executive Director's Employment Agreement only addresses payout of up to 50% of the 240 hours of Annual Leave that she is credited on October 1st and which expires September 30th of each year. Her Agreement does not discuss sick leave or conversion of

sick leave to vacation hours. As such, we concur that the 120 hours that she can request payment for under her Agreement and the 40 hours that she can request payment for by converting two weeks of sick leave as per the Personnel Policies are two entirely separate matters. In addition, the conversion of the Executive Director's sick leave does not violate Section 215.425, F.S. which governs compensation and bonuses for government employees. Therefore, we are of the opinion that the Executive Director may legally convert 80 hours of sick leave to 40 hours of vacation leave in accordance with her Employment Agreement and under the Council's Personnel Policies and Procedures.

If you have any further questions on this matter, please feel free to contact our office.

SSG:SMS



MEMORANDUM

AGENDA ITEM #VI.A

DATE: SEPTEMBER 18, 2023

TO: COUNCIL MEMBERS

FROM: STAFF

SUBJECT: ATTENDANCE FORM

Information only.



South Florida Regional Planning Council
1 Oakwood Boulevard, Suite 250, Hollywood, Florida 33020
954.924.3653 Phone, 954.924-3654 FAX
www.sfrationalcouncil.org

2022/2023 ATTENDANCE RECORD

| EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS | 10/17/22 | 11/21/22 | 1/23/23 | 2/17/23 | 4/17/23 | 5/15/23 MDTPO | 6/16/23 Monroe Co | 7/31/23 |
|---|----------|----------|---------|---------|---------|------------------|----------------------|---------|
| ANDREOTTA, JASON Florida Dept. of Environmental Protection | D | D | D | * | * | * | * | * |
| HUYNH, DAT Florida Dept. of Transportation | VP | * | VP | * | * | VP | D | D |
| VILABOY, Armando L South Florida Water Management District | - | - | - | - | - | * | P | P |

A majority of the meetings were physical/virtual meetings

P = Present

VP = Virtually Present

A = Absent

D = Designee Present

* = Excused Absence

- = Not Yet Appointed

MDC = MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

MC = MONROE COUNTY

MDTPO =Miami-Dade Transportation Organization

** Joint Meeting March 18, 2022*

** Exec. Committee/Workshop only



MEMORANDUM

AGENDA ITEM #VI.B

DATE: SEPTEMBER 18, 2023

TO: COUNCIL MEMBERS

FROM: STAFF

SUBJECT: CORRESPONDENCE AND ARTICLES

Please find herewith a compilation of recent articles for your review and information.

Recommendation:

Information Only.

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PortMiami dredging killed 80 times more coral than expected. More digging coming soon

BY ALEX HARRIS



The skeleton of a dead coral, smothered by sediment raised by the dredging of Port Miami. Miami Waterkeeper

When the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers first set out to deepen PortMiami to make room for bigger and more ships in 2013, it estimated all that work would kill about 3.3 acres of corals.

A new report from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration found the toll was exponentially greater — 278 acres of coral reef gone forever.

The report, released last week, confirms suspicions that were raised even before the Corps started chopping away at the rock underbelly of the busiest cruise port in the world. All that activity raised clouds of sand and dirt that smothered corals — and may have led to or exacerbated the outbreak of a terrible disease that's since killed corals all over the Caribbean.

And yet, eight years after the project officially finished, no agency has been held accountable for destroying nearly 300 acres of coral, although Miami-Dade County could be on the hook for it. And more South Florida dredging is on the way.

PortMiami is gearing up for the next phase of its dredging project, one that could cover even more ground than the 2013 project. And Port Everglades, in Broward County, is well underway on its own dredging project, which it now estimates could also kill a similar number of corals.

“At this point, I think it's safe to say that more money has been spent planning the next dredging project than fixing the last one,” said Rachel Silverstein, head of Miami Waterkeeper and a longtime foe of PortMiami dredging.

She and her organization sued over the project and successfully got 10,000 corals replanted to replace the million or more she estimated were killed by the dredging.

“That’s a drop in the bucket in terms of the total scale of the impact that was done,” Silverstein said. “This gaping wound in the reef has been sitting unanswered for almost a decade. It is beyond time we fix it.”

WHO PAYS FOR IT?

The NOAA report’s record of the damage from the dredging project is more than just an accounting of the environmental losses from economic expansion, it could also mean a financial penalty to the taxpayers of Miami-Dade.

The Army Corps of Engineers was in charge of the dredging project, but its “local sponsor” was Miami-Dade County. So while the Corps was the one who hired the company to dredge — and monitor the corals — Miami-Dade signed a [2012 local sponsor agreement](#) to handle the additional coral monitoring required by law after the project finished.

The document states Miami-Dade is responsible for “meeting the mitigation success criteria or any associated additional mitigation that may be necessary.”

Silverstein said that, according to [the county’s permit](#), anything that remains damaged a year after a project is completed is considered permanent damage, and state and federal rules require someone to fix it, usually by paying for mitigation.

The NOAA report does conclude that “compensatory mitigation is essential to jump-start recovery of this invaluable ecosystem.” But NOAA isn’t in charge of determining what’s permanently damaged, Florida’s Department of Environmental Protection is. And DEP has yet to complete its survey of the damage.

DEP did not respond to the Herald’s questions of why it hasn’t finished the survey work after nearly a decade, whether it would come after Miami-Dade to fix the problem or how much it would consider charging for the damage. But last June, in a meeting with several agencies including the county and Waterkeeper, DEP said [its preliminary estimate showed 213 acres of corals](#) smothered by sediment.

The price tag for fixing that much damage could be high.

[NOAA report on Port Miami dredging impact on corals](#) by Miami Herald on Scribd

One estimate, used by the Army Corps for mitigation costs in Port Everglades in 2016, pegged the cost of replacing an acre of reef at about a million dollars, using an arguably less effective method of replacing reefs. With NOAA’s estimate, or even the state’s early findings, that could potentially leave Miami-Dade on the hook for more than \$200 million — or more.

Miami-Dade declined to comment on its legal or financial responsibility for the damage, and instead sent a statement from Mayor Daniella Levine Cava, who said she advocated for increased monitoring during her time as a commissioner, while the project was ongoing.

“My priority is and will continue to be safeguarding our environment — which is inextricably linked to our economy and future prosperity — and ensuring sustainable growth for our community,” she said. “I’m deeply concerned about the damage of coral colonies and committed to learning everything we can about what took place and where we go from here.”

Levine Cava said her staff is reviewing the report and speaking with DEP about next steps.



The dredger Terrapin Island sits in the center where it will deepen PortMiami in order to accommodate Super Tankers in the future in this Dec 6, 2013, file photo. C.M. GUERRERO cmguerrero@miamiherald.com

But it isn’t guaranteed that DEP will come after Miami-Dade for a hefty check. In some cases, like in Fort Lauderdale after its dilapidated and saltwater corroded sewage pipes burst and spewed filth into local waterways, the state turned the mandatory fines for the city into a demand for a list of projects to fix the problem.

Silverstein said she’d like to see the same thing in this situation. She sees this amount of funding as a potentially “transformative” source of money to ramp up coral reef restoration in South Florida.

“Rather than a penalty or an enforcement action, we want to see something truly positive out of this and see funding go toward helping the coral restoration community,” she said. “We need to be able to restore millions, if not tens of millions or hundreds of millions, of coral in a year.”

“The time has come to scale it to industrial levels.”

FUTURE DREDGING

The NOAA report noted that lessons learned from the 2015 PortMiami dredging project are already being worked into other dredge projects, like PortMiami’s and Port Everglades’ latest expansions.

“The development of additional lessons learned and translation to dredging project best practices near coral reefs or other sensitive habitats is warranted,” the report said. “Future port expansions cannot further contribute to the downward trajectory of the condition of Florida’s coral reef and must be in the public interest.”

Phase IV of PortMiami's dredging project has only just begun and is in the planning stage. Officials don't yet have an estimate for how many corals could be hurt by the project, which has four times the footprint of the Phase III project.

Port Everglades' project is much further along. Earlier this year, the Corps said [in a presentation](#) that it expects the Port Everglades dredging project to directly kill about 449,000 corals. That includes about 26 acres of coral habitat directly killed by digging and anywhere from 124 to 177 acres smothered by sediment.

The Corps told restoration companies it would likely need to replant anywhere from 498,000 to 720,000 corals — with 100,000 to 500,000 coming from the coral nurseries dotting South Florida's coast.

That might be a tall order for Florida's nascent coral nursery market, especially after a summer of "apocalyptic" bleaching and death.

The biggest producer in South Florida, Coral Restoration Foundation, said it makes 45,000-50,000 "reef-ready" corals every year, each about the size of a hand. University of Miami's Rescue A Reef program said it can produce about 5,000 corals a year, but that can be scaled up with additional funding.

"No one in the field right now can handle coral restoration of that size," Silverstein said. "And if we don't have the ability to phase up coral restoration to meet the mitigation needs for these projects, there will be a dredging moratorium."

Read more: <https://www.miamiherald.com/news/local/environment/article279055859.html>

Miami-Dade lawmakers to chair 4 House committees in 2024 Legislative Session

BY JESSE SCHECKNER

Daniel Perez and Demi Busatta Cabrera will keep their committee leadership posts. Alex Rizo and Tom Fabricio are the new Chairs of two other panels.

Four state Republican Representatives from Miami-Dade will Chair committees in the Florida House during the 2024 Legislative Session.

Their share of panel leadership posts — 12% of 34 non-joint committees — is commensurate with the county's share of the state population.

Atop the list is Speaker-designate **Daniel Perez** of Miami, who will continue to serve as House Rules Committee Chair, a position normally held by future House Speakers.

House Speaker **Paul Renner** — who doled out this year and next year's committee assignments — was Perez's immediate predecessor in the role. Perez takes over as Speaker in November 2024.

Rep. **Linda Chaney** of St. Petersburg will similarly keep her position as Vice Chair, and Plantation Rep. **Mike Gottlieb** will stay on as the ranking Democratic member.

Two other Representatives from South Florida, though none from Miami-Dade — Democratic Reps. **Christine Hunschofsky** and **Kelly Skidmore** — will remain on the committee as well.

Hialeah Rep. **Alex Rizo** is taking over as Chair of the Choice and Innovation Subcommittee. Sebring Rep. **Kaylee Tuck** is departing the panel to instead chair the new Select Committee on Health Innovation with Coral Gables Rep. **Vicki Lopez** as Vice Chair.

Jacksonville Beach Rep. **Kiyan Michael** will serve as Rizo's second in command in the Choice and Innovation Subcommittee, while Tampa Rep. **Susan Valdés** will hold the ranking minority seat.

Four other Miami-Dade lawmakers — Democrat **Kevin Chambliss** of Homestead and Republicans **Fabián Basabe** of Miami Beach, **Alina Garcia** of Miami and **Juan Porras** of Miami — will join 11 other non-ranking members of the panel.

Miami Lakes Rep. **Tom Fabricio** is taking the reins of the Ethics, Election & Open Government Subcommittee following the departure of its prior Chair, fellow Miami-Dade resident **Juan Fernandez-Barquin**. Fernandez-Barquin left the Legislature in June to serve as the county's appointed Clerk of Courts. Fabricio was not part of the subcommittee during the 2023 Session.

Webster Barnaby of Deland will serve as Vice Chair. Kissimmee Rep. **Kristen Arrington** is the Democratic ranking member.

Again, four others from Miami-Dade — Porras, Rizo and Democrats **Ashley Gantt** and **Felicia Robinson** — will serve on the subcommittee too, alongside 11 other non-ranking members.

The all-South Florida leadership of the **State Administration and Technology Appropriations Subcommittee** will go unchanged, with Coral Gables Rep. **Demi Busatta Cabrera** serving as Chair, Islamorada Rep. **Jim Mooney** in the Vice Chair seat and Robinson holding the ranking Democrat post.

Republican Rep. **David Borrero** of Sweetwater is part of the 15-member group, as is **Jervonte Edmonds** from nearby West Palm Beach.

Interim meetings for the 2024 Legislative Session begin 9 a.m. Tuesday, Sept. 19. Members have until Jan. 5 to file bills for consideration. The first day of Session is Jan. 9.

Read more: <https://floridapolitics.com/archives/633501-miami-dade-lawmakers-to-chair-4-house-committees-in-2024-legislative-session/>

Homestead Community Redevelopment Agency Rocks the Block and Breaks Ground on New Homes

BY COMMUNITYNEWS RELEASES



The Homestead Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) kicked off its Southwest Neighborhood New H.O.M.E (Home Ownership Made Equitable) Initiative and Rock the Block neighborhood beautification on SW 6th Street. On Saturday, August 29, 2023, dozens of volunteers, city employees, and elected officials gathered to clean up SW 6th Street from 6th Avenue to 10th Avenue. Participants collected trash, installed new mailboxes, painted fences, and planted trees and flowers. Sidewalks and driveways were also pressure cleaned and the street will be repaved in the coming months. Several homes in the area will also be receiving a fresh coat of paint, thanks to the CRA.

Saturday also marked the groundbreaking of four new homes that are part of the Southwest Neighborhood New H.O.M.E Initiative which promotes affordable homeownership as a way to create a thriving community and a gateway to building generational wealth. Qualified buyers will receive \$20,000 in down payment assistance from the CRA and education about additional programs available for assistance. The homes will be constructed through Minority Builders Coalition (MBC), a nonprofit developer, and other partners such as **South Florida Regional Planning Council**, Housing Foundation of America, LHP Construction & Management, Corp., and Sagoma Construction.

For information about the new homes contact Nancy at Housing Foundation of America at 954-923-5001.

For information about CRA projects, please visit www.cityofhomestead.com/cra.

Read more: <https://communitynewspapers.com/south-dade/homestead-community-redevelopment-agency-rocks-the-block-and-breaks-ground-on-new-homes/>

By sea and by land, Florida Keys deputies discover a large migrant smuggling operation

BY DAVID GOODHUE



A white Ford van is parked on the side of U.S. 1 in Key Largo Thursday, Sept. 7, 2023. The Border Patrol and Monroe County Sheriff's Office say it was carrying people from Cuba recently smuggled into the Florida Keys. U.S. BORDER PATROL

Florida Keys deputies stopped a car pulling a trailered boat Thursday morning, and that led to a migrant smuggling operation involving three scenes along the island chain. Monroe sheriff's deputies stopped the boat as it was being pulled off a ramp at the former site of the Quay restaurant on the Gulf side of the Middle Keys city of Marathon, said Adam Linhardt, sheriff's office spokesman. He said the vessel, which was not tied down properly, triggered the traffic stop.

Witnesses told the deputies that they had seen that same boat, a blue and white center console with a Bimini top, unloading what looked like a large group of migrants by the Seven Mile Bridge, about seven miles south of the boat ramp, Linhardt said.

The sheriff's office called the U.S. Border Patrol, who took over the investigation. Later, in what seemed like an unrelated event, deputies pulled over an orange car and a white van driving north on U.S. 1 around mile marker 104 in Key Largo, which is about 50 miles north of the boat ramp. Linhardt said both cars were speeding. Inside were 21 people from Cuba who the sheriff's office and Border Patrol say were the Cuban migrants who landed earlier.

Walter Slosar, chief agent for Border Patrol's Miami operations, said in a statement on X, formerly Twitter, that the migrants and "multiple suspected smugglers" were taken into custody. He said the case is under investigation by his agency along with Homeland Security Investigations.

This breaking news report will be updated.

Read more at: <https://www.flkeysnews.com/news/local/article279066334.html#storylink=cpy>

Higher trash fees coming in Miami-Dade, but financial strains remain from garbage

BY DOUGLAS HANKS



The annual fee for residents whose trash is collected by Miami-Dade County is going up by \$38. Miami-Dade Solid Waste Management

Miami-Dade residents will pay higher trash fees in 2024 after a divided county commission narrowly approved a \$38 yearly increase. The 7.5% increase to the existing \$509 fee marked one of the most contentious votes of the year for the 13 commissioners, with a narrow majority at first rejecting the proposal. Two hours of debate later, a vote switched and Mayor Daniella Levine Cava won a higher fee she said was vital to [maintain existing trash and recycling services](#) for the nearly 350,000 households on county garbage routes.

"I'm absolutely grateful that decision was made," Levine Cava said after the 7-6 vote approving the \$547 yearly fee.

[READ MORE: Recycling costs just doubled in Miami-Dade. What's next for your yearly trash fees?](#)

Levine Cava's proposed fee didn't draw much public opposition: Nobody spoke at the hearing scheduled before the vote at the Stephen P. Clark Government Center.

But commissioners said the higher fee would be too much of a burden for residents living on the financial edge and without the time to make a trip to downtown Miami to sit in the chambers awaiting their chance to speak.

"A lot of the folks who didn't come are working-class folks who can't leave their jobs," Commissioner Kevin Cabrera said. "I'm not going to vote for this. I'm not going to continue to increase fees on our residents."

Cabrera was on the winning side of the first trash vote, which saw Levine Cava's [proposal for a \\$36 increase](#) fail by one vote. Chairman Oliver Gilbert, who voted for the increase, declared a brief recess.

The swing vote appeared to be Commissioner Keon Hardemon, who favored higher fees but voted against the mayor. He complained the \$36 increase wouldn't put the county's trash system on sound financial footing or bring in more crews needed to pick up piles of litter regularly dumped across Miami-Dade.

"I don't want my community to look like other communities," said Hardemon, who represents parts of downtown Miami and the northern areas of the city. "Sometimes you have to pay for that."

After the break, Hardemon briefly pushed for an increase of more than \$100, Hardemon settled for the \$38 hike that will go into effect Oct. 1. Joining Cabrera in voting against the increase were commissioners Cohen Higgins, René Garcia, Roberto Gonzalez, Raquel Regalado and Anthony Rodriguez.

RECYCLING PROGRAM WASN'T CUT

While the vote tables some of the drastic cuts floated to absorb flat fees — in July, Cabrera briefly proposed ending the county's recycling program — the higher charges won't solve the Solid Waste Management Department's ongoing financial strain.

The administration said [a \\$116 increase](#) is needed to cover collection services in the department's nearly \$700 million budget, and that to cover the gap Miami-Dade will borrow from reserves set aside for landfill extensions and a new incinerator to replace the outdated one in Doral that was shuttered by a February fire.

Gilbert criticized commissioners who balked at the higher fee but wanted to cover the gap with one-time revenues or demand a long-range plan on the future of Solid Waste from the administration.

"If you want to cut services, fine. Make a proposal to cut services," Gilbert said. "But understand that the fees match the service."

With Solid Waste reserves dwindling, commissioners and Levine Cava could be wrestling with an even larger fee increase in 2024, when the mayor and half of the board will be up for reelection. "I don't want to have this discussion in an election year," said Commissioner Juan Carlos Bermudez, who backed the higher fee, "because I know what's going to happen."

The compromise proposal for an extra \$2 per household that won Hardemon's vote came from Commissioner Eileen Higgins. She added a requirement that the administration use the additional revenue to target illegal dumping of garbage and relief for low-income homeowners.

Levine Cava said she wants to shift garbage fees in 2025 to a new property tax on homes that use county trash service, which would mean bills tied to real estate values instead of flat fees.

Commissioner Marleine Bastien voted for the higher fees but said she's certain many homeowners can't afford even an extra \$36 yearly expense. "Times are tough," she said. "Folks are hurting."

This article was updated with the correct sponsor of the \$38 trash-fee increase.

Read more at: <https://www.miamiherald.com/news/local/community/miami-dade/article279008609.html#storylink=cpy>

States Say Flood Insurance Fight Should Continue

BY JIM SAUNDERS



Taylor County sustained flooding and other widespread damage in Hurricane Idalia. Mike Exline

TALLAHASSEE — Florida and other states are trying to fend off an attempt by the Biden administration to end a lawsuit challenging changes to the National Flood Insurance Program that have led to higher premiums for many property owners.

Attorneys for 10 states and local government agencies in Louisiana filed a 44-page document Tuesday urging a federal judge to reject arguments that they lack legal standing to challenge the changes, which became fully effective April 1 after being phased in. U.S. Department of Justice lawyers filed a motion last month to dismiss the case.

Tuesday's document pointed to "crippling effects" of changes in the program, which is the dominant provider of flood insurance in the country.

"Plaintiffs do not dispute that, under the legacy rating system (previous system), many individuals experienced slight annual increases as permitted under (a federal law)," said the document, submitted by Louisiana Attorney General Jeff Landry and joined by the other plaintiffs. "But policyholders have never seen rate increases like the ones they are seeing" under the changes.

The legal fight is playing out as areas of Florida's Gulf Coast clean up from flooding caused by Hurricane Idalia, which barreled up the gulf last week before making landfall in the Keaton Beach area of Taylor County.

A document in the lawsuit said the National Flood Insurance Program included about 1.391 million Florida policies, with total coverage of nearly \$367 billion. Many homeowners who have mortgages are required to carry flood insurance.

The lawsuit, filed in June in the federal Eastern District of Louisiana, centers on changes known as “Risk Rating 2.0: Equity in Action.” Federal officials contend that the changes, which gradually started taking effect in October 2021, are designed to make the flood-insurance program “actuarially sound” and reflect the risks of each property.

“These changes all reflect best practices in the insurance industry, which is precisely what Congress charged FEMA (the Federal Emergency Management Agency) to do under the NFIA (National Flood Insurance Act),” Justice Department attorneys wrote last month. “Furthermore, the geographical distribution of premium payments has been stark: Under the legacy rating approach, taxpayers and policyholders in landlocked states were covering the cost of flood risk in a few coastal states. Risk Rating 2.0 charges every policyholder their fair share based on their property’s true flood risk and thus accomplishes the stated purpose of the NFIA.”

But the lawsuit alleges, in part, that federal officials violated a law known as the Administrative Procedure Act by making changes that were “arbitrary and capricious.”

In trying to prevent dismissal of the case, the plaintiffs raised a series of arguments about having standing to challenge the changes, including saying they will suffer economic harm.

“It (the overhaul) imposes unreasonable and unexpected costs across the board, and as a result, it imposes distinct and direct harms on each plaintiff,” the document filed Tuesday said.

Along with Florida and Louisiana, other states in the case are Idaho, Kentucky, Mississippi, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Texas, Virginia.

While the National Flood Insurance Program dominates the market, a commentary released Friday by the AM Best financial-rating agency said an increasing number of Florida property owners are buying private flood-insurance coverage.

“Given the rise in average pricing of flood policies provided through the National Flood Insurance Program, private flood insurance in Florida has seen notable growth, with the number of policies up 30% in 2022 from 2021,” the commentary said.

Read more: https://www.newsserviceflorida.com/latest/headlines/states-say-flood-insurance-fight-shouldcontinue/article_7f4200c4-4cbf-11ee-b15f-13fde477da49.html

Fact Check: Is this the hottest summer on Earth

BY JOHN CARNEY



The Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners will hold a public hearing on Mayor Daniella Levine Cava's proposed 2024 budget on September 7.

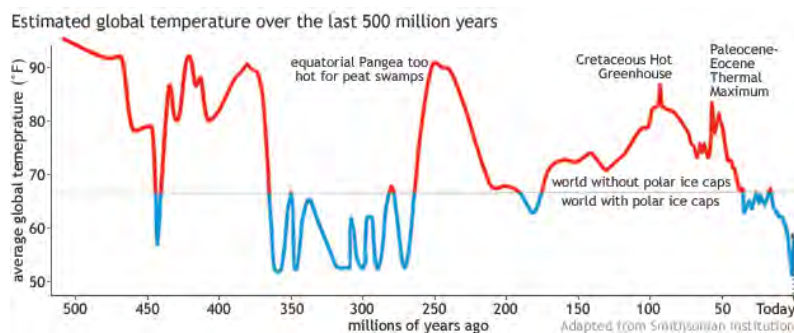
An article in Barron's about rising food prices made [the claim](#) on Wednesday morning.

CNN's headline [proclaimed](#): "The world has just experienced the hottest summer on record – by a significant margin."

You can find similarly alarming headlines from [CBS News](#), the [Guardian](#), and the [Associated Press](#).

Verdict: Misleading. Compared with most of the earth's history, this summer is unusually cold. The "record" referred to is kept by the United Nations World Meteorological Organization and European climate service Copernicus. It goes back only to 1940.

Researchers for the Smithsonian Institution surveyed the earth's temperatures over the last 500 million years. As you can see from the chart below, the earth has been much hotter for most of the past 500 million years.



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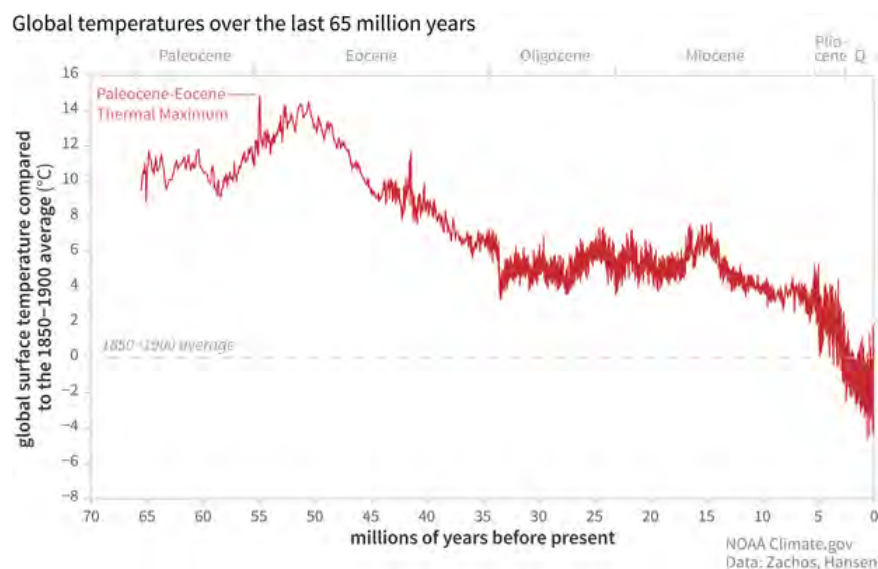
This study was not undertaken by climate change deniers. In fact, the researchers who undertook it wanted to prove how devastating climate change can be to life on earth.

“The two researchers also thought a temperature curve could counter climate contrarians’ claim that global warming is no concern because Earth was much hotter millions of years ago. Wing and Huber wanted to show the reality of ancient temperature extremes—and how rapid shifts between them have led to mass extinctions. Abrupt climate changes, Wing says, ‘have catastrophic side effects that are really hard to adapt to,’” the Smithsonian wrote in 2019.

Even earlier on, the earth was much, much hotter. When our planet was young and still being bullied by wayward miniplanets smashing through the solar system, the heat of these collisions would have kept Earth molten, with temperatures upward of 3,600° Fahrenheit, according to [this piece](#) on climate.gov.

That website—climate.gov—is the official climate information site of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, a scientific and regulatory agency within the United States Department of Commerce.

Even if we zoom in on the time scale, as climate.gov did in their article, we can see that the Earth is far from the warmest it has ever been.



Let’s quote climate.gov again:

Modern human civilization, with its permanent agriculture and settlements, has developed over just the past 10,000 years or so. The period has generally been one of low temperatures and relative global (if not regional) climate stability. Compared to most of Earth’s history, today is unusually cold; we now live in what geologists call an interglacial—a period between glaciations of an ice age.

So what is going on with all these media organizations claiming this is the hottest recorded summer on earth? A lot of misleading work is being done by the phrase “on record” or the word “recorded” in the news stories. The “record” referred to is kept by the United Nations World Meteorological Organization and European climate service Copernicus. It goes back only to 1940.

Apparently, the headline writers thought “Hottest Summer Since 1940” was just not alarming enough.

The records of fossilized corals, leaf shapes, ancient glaciations, and hothouse periods show that global temperatures are nowhere near as warm as they have been in the past. It may be hot out there this summer—perhaps even the hottest in decades—but we are nowhere near the hottest temperatures the earth has experienced.

Read more: <https://www.breitbart.com/environment/2023/09/06/fact-check-this-is-not-the-hottest-summer-on-earth/>

Miami-Dade considers trash rate hike to keep recycling program. What to know ahead of the vote

BY YAIMA CRESPO



The Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners will hold a public hearing on Mayor Daniella Levine Cava's proposed 2024 budget on September 7.

Residents of Miami-Dade County may soon see an increase in their trash collection fees.

The proposed increase is due, in part, to climbing operational, staffing, and global recycling costs exacerbated by the long-term impact of the pandemic.

The proposed fee increase, which would add \$36 to the current annual fee of \$509, aims to keep the recycling program and other waste services operational for over 366,176 households.

But not everyone is on board.

"I'm not going to be voting in favor of any sort of increases for our residents," said Miami-Dade Commissioner Kevin M. Cabrera (District 6).

Cabrera argues the community is already grappling with several challenges.

"They're struggling with inflation. They're struggling with ever-increasing property taxes, property insurance, groceries, gas," Cabrera said.

Cabrera suggests temporarily halting the existing recycling program, calling it ineffective.

"Let's figure out ways to make it better," he said.

NBC6 spoke with Miami-Dade Mayor Daniella Levine Cava.

"Recycling is a very, very important part of how we deal with our waste stream," the mayor said.

She warns that stopping the recycling program would worsen existing conditions.

"We have limited capacity to put things in our landfill. Right now, we don't have a waste-to-energy plant, which was taking half of our garbage. If we do not recycle, that's just more going to the landfill and filling them up quicker," the mayor said.

Earlier this year, a fire at a waste-to-energy plant in Doral left the county scrambling to find alternative waste disposal solutions.

Levine Cava proposes building a large waste-to-energy facility near the Everglades, as a way to address the situation.

Noel Cleland, chair of the Sierra Club Miami Group, supports the Mayor's initiatives, which also aims to develop a zero-waste master plan.

"I think her whole team is showing a lot of foresight initiative to try to be able to have not a one-size-fits-all, but let's do a little bit of everything to keep this from becoming a crisis," Cleland said.

Cabrera would like to take a step further and stop traditional recycling.

"I do think that we need to build a new waste-to-energy facility that is ultimately the best way to recycle. Why? Because in a waste-to-energy facility, you're getting waste, you're creating energy, which is generating funds for taxpayers," Cabrera stated.

Davie and Pembroke Pines already use this approach, sending waste and recyclables to a waste-to-energy facility. Under Florida law, this process counts as renewable energy.

Levine Cava and Cabrera agree that improving public education on recycling could benefit the program but it will require more funding.

According to the Miami-Dade Department of Solid Waste Management, the rate of contamination — wrong items placed in the recycling bin — has decreased to 40%, but according to data from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the county's recycling rate is still lower than other parts of the state.

Read more: <https://www.nbcmiami.com/responds/miami-dade-considers-trash-rate-hike-to-keep-recycling-program-what-to-know-ahead-of-the-vote/3105657/>

Housing, transit and resilience: Mayor Levine Cava's proposed budget for Miami-Dade

BY HELEN ACEVEDO



The Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners will hold a public hearing on Mayor Daniella Levine Cava's proposed 2024 budget on September 7.

Next week, the Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners will hold a public hearing on Mayor Daniella Levine Cava's proposed 2024 budget.

It's a record \$11.7 billion blueprint aimed at a lot of the crises the county is experiencing these days. From housing affordability and public transit to climate change resiliency and recycling.

When the Mayor unveiled her [budget last month](#), she called it "smart, compassionate and future-ready."

Speaking on the latest South Florida Roundup, Mayor Levine Cava told WLRN's Tim Padgett that the budget is a year at a time but the county's needs are far into the future.

"What's great about this particular budget is that we're making extraordinary investments in infrastructure," she said. "We've brought down almost \$2 billion in federal and state grants covering everything from transit to septic to sewer resilience and other other transportation infrastructure."

Just last year the county declared a [housing affordability crisis](#) — and the problem persists.

The Mayor says that through the county's [HOMES](#) program, they are carrying out several solutions — from renovating housing that would otherwise be demolished to rental assistance and providing homeowners with subsidies to take care of their insurance.

"We've prevented 25,000 households from eviction and are providing legal support, counseling support, relocation assistance, everything we possibly can to deal with this ongoing crisis," she said.

READ MORE: [Signature Miami-Dade affordable housing program off to a slow start](#)

Transit is another point the Mayor wants to target with her proposed budget. She told the South Florida Roundup that when combining housing and transportation, "we are the least affordable place in the country."

Her plan includes funding the Better Bus Network, completing the South corridor and making upgrades to the county's MetroRail and MetroMover system.

After a fire this year knocked out our most important garbage incinerator, waste management solutions are dire for the county.

"We just can't keep building up the landfills or shipping our garbage out of state," said Levine Cava. "We need to stop purchasing disposable plastics. We need to compost in our homes. We need to get smart about recycling."

The mayor says that the county will be launching an improved outreach campaign to move toward sustainable strategies for waste management.

Miami Dade County is taking in record revenue. So, when it comes to property tax rates, Mayor Levine Cava is proposing a 1% cut to meet the needs of the community.

"The growth of the economy, the newcomers and the increased property roles need to be shared. We need to share with the public because they are struggling," she said.

On September 7, the Board of County Commissioners will hold their first budget hearing where commissioners will be open to public comment and begin debating the budget for the next year.

Also featured on the South Florida Roundup was the City of Miami mayor Francis Suarez's ethics issues and his short-lived run for president, as well as the international community's inability to come up with a workable plan of intervention to help Haiti overcome gang rules.

You can listen to the full episode [here](#) or wherever you get your podcasts.

Read more: <https://www.wlrn.org/government-politics/2023-09-04/housing-transit-resilience-budget-miami-mayor-levine-cava>

Brightline again delays trips from South Florida to Orlando

BY DAVID LYONS



A view of two Brightline trains inside the company's new "Basecamp" maintenance facility in Orlando. A startup of service to Orlando International Airport is still pending as Brightline moves to complete a certification with federal regulators.

Brightline, the higher speed South Florida rail service, announced another delay Wednesday of the launch of its 170-mile extension to Orlando from West Palm Beach, and will again refund tickets, this time for rides scheduled for between Sept. 7-21.

"Thank you for booking tickets to be part of the initial rides between South Florida and Orlando — we're close to identifying a start date, but we've added a few more days to our work schedule to complete the final stages of certification and testing," the company told would-be riders in an email early Wednesday morning.

And so, "rides booked between Sept. 7-21 are canceled," Brightline said.

A similar message appeared on the company's social media account with "X," formerly known as Twitter. The company's online schedule now shows tickets may be purchased starting Sept. 22.

[It was the second false start](#) in less than a month after the Miami-based rail line announced the completion of its construction phase, which includes a new station at Orlando International Airport.

The railroad [initially sold tickets in anticipation of a Sept. 1 launch](#) on the front end of the Labor Day weekend. But management said the certification process could not be completed in time. Refunds again will be paid in full, with credits arriving in customer accounts within three to five days, the notice said.

As before, the company is also gifting a complementary "premium" service voucher for future use, equivalent to the party size of your original purchase. And it is offering discounts through Avis, its rental car partner, should passengers still need to travel to the Orlando area on their original dates.

Lengthy certification process

Among other things, Brightline needs to obtain Federal Railway Administration approval for a so-called Pre-Revenue Service Safety Validation Plan, which the agency said is under review. Earlier this month, the agency said it anticipated announcing a decision on its approval “in the near future.”

The Florida East Coast Railway, which owns the tracks on the north-south portion of the Brightline extension, is not involved in the process.

According to the agency, there are multiple regulatory approvals necessary for an operation to start service that are addressed under different FRA regulations. They include a certification of Brightline’s positive train control system, which is designed to prevent train-to-train collisions and derailments caused by excessive speeds.

Brightline also needs to comply with regulations such as the Americans with Disabilities Act, and various state or local codes/ordinances.

St. Lucie River bridge

Last week, Brightline and the FEC announced they were completing additional rehabilitation work on the St. Lucie River drawbridge in Stuart in advance of Brightline’s opening to Orlando.

The U.S. Coast Guard, which sets the operating timetable for raising and lowering the bridge, approved an FEC request for a temporary set of operating hours so the work can be completed.

“The scope of work includes replacement of timber ties and lift rails to improve operating speeds over the bridge,” the railroads said in a statement.

The bridge’s operation has been a flashpoint between the railroads and marine industry interests, with the latter group raising concerns over passage limitations once Brightline’s passenger trains start running.

But after discussions, the Coast Guard set a temporary timetable and operating procedures through mid-December as a test to ensure equitable access for the railroads and marine operators.

Among other things, Brightline and FEC installed a bridge app and website to serve as a guide to boaters. Brightline and the FEC also installed “variable message signs” on each side of the bridge, which are interconnected to the railroad’s signal system. The signs display a countdown to each bridge closure and opening.

Brightline recently constructed a bridge monitor house, and a tender is located on site between 6 a.m. and 10 p.m. each day.

Read more: <https://www.sun-sentinel.com/2023/08/30/brightline-again-delays-orlando-trips-will-refund-ticket-purchases-for-rides-through-sept-21/>

Electric cars soaked by saltwater from hurricane go up in flames, Florida officials say

BY IRENE WRIGHT



A Tesla burst into flames in Palm Harbor after it was flooded with saltwater during Hurricane Idalia, the fire department said. Palm Harbor Fire Rescue via Facebook

Hurricane Idalia ripped through Florida's Nature Coast, leaving a path of destruction behind.

But, as the floodwaters recede, there is a new risk threatening owners of electric vehicles.

Two Tesla cars, one in Palm Harbor and another in Pinellas Park, seemed to spontaneously combust after becoming flooded with saltwater during the hurricane, Florida officials said.

On Aug. 30, Palm Harbor Fire Rescue responded to a Tesla on fire in Dunedin, according to the department's Facebook post.

The car had become [flooded with saltwater](#) during the storm surge following Hurricane Idalia.

In Pinellas Park, on Aug. 31, a Tesla owner called a tow truck to [move his flooded car](#), the Pinellas Park Police Department told WTSP.

When the car was on the back of the truck, it suddenly burst into flames, leaving behind a charred frame when the fire was finally subdued, the outlet reported.

"If you own a hybrid or electric vehicle that has come into contact with saltwater due to recent flooding within the last 24 hours, it is crucial to relocate the vehicle from your garage without delay," Palm Harbor Fire Rescue said in the post.

Firefighters said exposure from saltwater can trigger spontaneous combustion of lithium-ion batteries, used in electric cars, but also found in some golf carts and electric scooters.

“Don’t drive these through water. PHFR crews have seen numerous residents out in carts and children on scooters riding through the water,” Palm Harbor Fire Rescue said.

REMINDERS OF HURRICANE IAN

In September 2022, Hurricane Ian brought massive flooding to Florida’s west coast.

In the weeks following the saltwater surge, there were [12 reports of electric vehicle fires](#) in Collier and Lee counties, according to the U.S. Fire Administration.

One of those fires grew so severe it burned down two houses on Sanibel Island, the administration said.

“According to the NHTSA, residual salt within the battery or battery components can form conductive ‘bridges’ that can lead to short circuit and self-heating of the battery, resulting in fires,” the USFA said. “The time frame in which a damaged battery can ignite has been observed to vary widely, from days to weeks.”

AWARE OF THE RISKS

Tesla is [aware of the potential fire risks](#) following saltwater flooding in its vehicles and provides information about flooding on its website.

“Tesla wants to ensure you have the information you need to should there be a risk of vehicle submersion or if your vehicle experiences submersion in water,” the company says. “If you notice fire, smoke, audible popping/hissing or heating coming from your vehicle, step away and immediately contact your local first responders.”

Tesla also recommends moving any submerged car at least 50 feet away from all structures or combustible materials for fear a fire would spread.

McClatchy News reached out to Tesla about the specific fires following Hurricane Idalia and did not receive an immediate response.

Palm Harbor is about 25 miles northwest of Tampa.

Pinellas Park is about 20 miles south of Palm Harbor.

Read more at: <https://www.miamiherald.com/news/state/florida/article278835624.html#storylink=cpy>

Theme park planned near Zoo Miami faces long delay

BY IRENE WRIGHT



The Miami Wilds water park is planned near Zoo Miami. MIAMI-DADE COUNTY RECORDS

Plans for the Miami Wilds water park near Zoo Miami could be delayed for years, and the hotel on the site could be scrapped, as the county responds to a lawsuit against the project by an environmental group. In 2020, the Miami-Dade County Commission approved a [lease on 27.5 acres](#) at 12400 S.W. 152nd St. with Miami Wilds LLC for the purpose of building a water park, a hotel with at least 200 rooms, and 15,000 to 20,000 square feet of retail. It also approved a release to remove land use restrictions from part of the property to allow for development.

In February, the Center for Biological Diversity, the Tropical Audubon Society and several environmental groups dedicated to protecting bats and butterflies filed a lawsuit in U.S. District Court in Miami against the U.S. Department of the Interior and the National Park Service, seeking injunctive relief to block the project.

Alleging that the Miami Wilds project would violate the Endangered Species Act by threatening rare animals in the Pine Rocklands ecosystem, the environmental groups stated in the lawsuit that the National Park Service improperly transferred land use restrictions from the project area without first completing an environmental analysis and considering conservation measures. The Center for Biological Diversity asked the court to set aside the National Park Service's release from land use restrictions on the property so it can complete an environmental review.

Miami-Dade County was granted a motion to intervene in the case as an additional defendant on June 29. The lawsuit remains pending. On Sept. 6, the County Commission will consider a resolution designed to "resolve and moot" the Center for Biological Diversity lawsuit, according to a staff memo. This would be accomplished by amending the lease with Miami Wilds in several ways.

First, it would rescind the release that removed the National Park Service's land use restrictions, which would allow the National Park Service to "comply with its legal obligations" for an environmental study before potentially entering into a new release of land use restrictions with the county. The developer can't move

forward with the project until the National Park Service approves this release, or Miami Wilds could wait for two years without a decision from the National Park Service and only build on land that doesn't need a release from land use restrictions. That would essentially delay, and potentially shrink, the project.

The amended lease would also remove Miami Wilds' obligation to build a hotel, require the developer to work with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on coordinating noise and lighting, and remove all Pine Rockland areas from the development site.

However, the amended lease identifies a site used for Coast Guard housing as a potential expansion site for a hotel or affordable housing, but that land isn't included in the current lease.

Paul Lambert, one of the developers behind Miami Wild, said he's happy to move the planned hotel from the entrance of the zoo on the leased parcel to the Coast Guard site. They could potentially build a larger hotel and new housing for the Coast Guard, he said. One of the biggest concerns that environmental groups had was that the hotel would result in people staying on the site 24/7, he said, so eliminating the hotel from the leased parcel should resolve that.

Lambert added that 100% of the land Miami Wilds would be developed on is currently the zoo's parking lot. Studies have found that an endangered bat flies over the parking lot at night, but it flies over other properties as well, he said. Lambert doesn't believe the water park, which would be closed at night, would disturb the bats.

"Once this [environmental] analysis goes through, it will allow us to do all the additional studies we need to do and begin the design process," Lambert said. "We are happy this is coming to a resolution and the legal cases can wind down."

Eliminating plans for the hotel would reduce the project's job requirements as set forth in the lease to 225 from 304 and drop the anticipated capital investment to \$47 million from \$99 million. Regardless, Lambert said, the first phase of the water park would cost over \$100 million to build because of the increase in construction costs since the time the deal was signed.

"We are relieved that the county and National Park Service are poised to rescind the unlawful removal of land use restrictions from the site," said Elise Bennett, director and senior attorney for the Center for Biological Diversity's Florida and Caribbean office. "But until there's a firm commitment to protect key habitat on and around the site, we remain concerned for the endangered bats, beetles, butterflies, snakes and plants who live there. There must be a better place to build a theme park and retail development than this highly environmentally sensitive habitat that these rare species need to survive."

Bennett said she would like to see a commitment from the National Park Service to analyze the project under the Endangered Species Act and National Environmental Policy Act before it considers whether to grant a release to the county for development.

Read more: <https://www.bizjournals.com/southflorida/news/2023/08/30/theme-park-planned-near-zoo-miami-faces-long-delay.html>

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Presents and Integrated View and Update of its Many Projects in Southeast Florida

On August 29th, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACE), Jacksonville District held a virtual public meeting to update partners, stakeholders, and the public on numerous projects the Corps is leading in southeast Florida and discuss plans for integration of ongoing projects. While the ACE has discussed these projects individually before, at this meeting they illustrated how these projects work together for overall regional resiliency and how they are integrated together through integration.

ACE Staff discussed project integration and provided project overview and status update on the following:

- a) Navigation Projects
 - Miami-Harbor Improvement Studies
- b) Coastal Storm Risk Management (CSRM) Projects
 - Miami-Dade Back Bay CSRM
 - Key Biscayne CSRM
 - Dade County CSRM
- c) Flood Risk Management Projects
 - C & SF Flood Resiliency Study
- d) Ecosystem Restoration Projects
 - Broward County WPA C-11 Reservoir
 - Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands (BBCW)
 - Biscayne Bay Southeastern Everglades Ecosystem (BBSEER)

In addition, the ACE's Resilience Partners the South Florida Water Management District, Miami-Dade County, and Broward County provided updates and their perspectives.

The meeting begins at minute 20:09.

SE FL Project Integration Virtual Public Meeting:

<https://usace1.webex.com/usace1/ldr.php?RCID=3b8f968fdc0a24b57688e74133dff123>

Password: FvFTc2rA

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Read more: https://sfregionalcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/ALL_SLIDES_29Aug23-SEFL_integration_public_mtg_1.pdf

Examination of Sedimentation Impacts to Coral Reef along the Port Miami Entrance Channel, December 2015 and April 2016

BY NOAA'S NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE

In December 2015 and April 2016, NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) assessed potential damage from dredged sediments to coral reefs adjacent to the Port Miami Entrance Channel. This was an unprecedented evaluation based on concerns brought to us by various partner, regulatory, and action agencies and after reviewing satellite images depicting large sediment plumes over areas of coral reef. Based on our own observations of sediment damage to coral reefs, we were then afforded through NOAA's Coral Reef Conservation Program, the ability to take a closer look at the coral reef. The reefs examined are fishery habitats protected under the Endangered Species Act and the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act). The surveys focused on locations more distant from the channel than those specified by the State of Florida for assessing permit compliance during dredging. The work conducted during December 2015 examined the Inner Reef North of the channel (findings described in Miller et al. 2016 and NMFS 2016a), and the work completed during April 2016 included the Inner Reef south of the channel. The purpose of the surveys was to further our understanding of the spatial extent and severity of sediment-related impacts resulting from the dredging. The majority of locations examined were not included in previous quantitative assessments by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), its contractors, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), or other groups. Our surveys were limited to areas mapped as reef or hardbottom before the dredging began and focused on determining bottom cover, measuring sediment depth, and recording coral condition related to sediment stress after dredging ceased.

We found bottom cover at sediment assessment locations differed significantly from reference locations. The bottom cover class "sediment over hardbottom" was the primary driver of the variation along the Inner Reef, representing an average of 42% of bottom cover observations at sediment assessment locations, compared to only 7% at reference locations. The mean sediment depth also differed significantly between Inner Reef sediment assessment locations, 1.4 ± 0.1 centimeter (cm), and reference locations, 0.6 ± 0.1 cm. On the Inner Reef, severe impacts to coral reef habitat from sediments occurred over an estimated 278 acres of reef, and lesser impacts likely extended to an even larger area. We view this acreage estimate as conservative for many reasons, including, but not limited to, exclusion from the acreage calculation of the nearby patch reefs, artificial reefs, Outer Reef, and Nearshore Ridge Complex. Combining our results with those from Barnes et al. (2015), Cuning et al. (2019), and data collected from the FDEP-permit required monitoring, in addition to measurements and observations made by several groups (FDEP 2014; Miami WaterKeeper 2015; DERM 2015) of the same dredging event, it is possible that a much larger acreage of coral reef habitat was damaged by dredge-related sedimentation.

NMFS will use this information to help Port Miami, state and federal agencies, and other stakeholders with planning the Port Miami Phase IV dredging. For Port Miami Phase IV, the Endangered Species Act and Magnuson-Stevens Act require NMFS to forecast impacts relative to an environmental baseline. The environmental baseline must include the past and present impacts of all federal, state, or private actions and other human activities in the action area; the anticipated impacts of all proposed Federal projects in the action

area; and the impact of state or private actions that are contemporaneous with the consultation in process. This report helps establish the environmental baseline by enumerating the acres of coral reef affected by the unplanned sedimentation impacts. The report also will guide subsequent surveys needed by the USACE and Port Miami to determine the mitigation needed for Port Miami Phase III and Phase IV.

Read more: <https://sfregionalcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/669975874-NOAA-report-on-Port-Miami-dredging-impact-on-corals.pdf>

Trash burning in Broward? Opponents rally against possibility of new incinerator

BY LISA J. HURIASH



Can Broward learn how to recycle enough to stave off efforts to build another incinerator? County officials say while it's possible another waste-to-energy plant could be built in the southern portion, there is no plan in the works now.

Mary Stephens, a longtime Pembroke Pines homeowner, worries about the possibility of an incinerator being built near her Pembroke Pines community.

Like some of her neighbors, she says the potential addition would spoil the quality of her neighborhood, where she has lived for 28 years. "I've been losing sleep, I'm really freaked," Stephens said. She lists her concerns: "The air quality, the noise, my house value."

Upset residents have united against the potential for [an incinerator being added](#) to county property off U.S. 27 near Pembroke Pines and Southwest Ranches. County officials say while it's possible a waste-to-energy plant could be built in the southern portion, there is no plan in the works now and officials said it would be a last resort, because of the expense, the environmental concerns and the public pushback.

Moving forward, part of the decision would hinge on whether Broward residents can learn how to recycle [enough to stave off efforts](#) to build another incinerator in the county.

"It all depends on what is needed," County Commissioner Beam Furr said.

"Could it be there?" Furr asked of a potential incinerator. "Yes. Everything is on the table. But I will tell you there is an emphasis on trying to reach 75% recycling and the reason is if you can reach 75% recycling, you don't have to build another incinerator.

“If we can’t reach 75%, we have to find someplace for that garbage to go. We don’t want to be adding more to the landfill.”

Residents’ concerns

Pembroke Pines recently hosted a Town Hall meeting for residents to voice their concerns. In attendance was Richard Ramcharitar, of Southwest Ranches, who is one of the organizers of Broward Clean Air. The group formed in June for fear of an incinerator being built.

“Human health is a major issue,” he said. “We’re not just concerned about ourselves, but the entire community,” including animals.

He worries if there were an accident, like what happened in Miami-Dade County in February, there would be “no way to evacuate animals fast enough.”

Ramcharitar was referring to the fire at the incinerator plant in Doral, in Miami-Dade County. The smoke from the trash fire reached unhealthy levels, and forced people indoors and two nearby schools closed early and canceled outdoor activities. Officials had encouraged nearby residents to wear masks, run their air conditioning at home to recirculate air, and roll up vehicle windows while driving through.

Miami-Dade’s mayor is recommending the county-owned plant remain shuttered, and replaced with a new incinerator about eight miles away at an airfield, which sits within several miles of the Everglades, the Miami Herald reported.

Southwest Ranches is a town near the Broward County site, where residents are getting increasingly concerned. The town council passed a resolution last month urging the county not to build an incinerator near its borders, stating that such a plant would be “incongruous to the town’s desire to maintain its rural lifestyle” and saying that empirical data suggests such “plants negatively impact the environment by emitting harmful contaminants into the atmosphere.”

Steve Winner, of Southwest Ranches, said it was “ludicrous to consider an archaic form of trash disposal at the foot of the Everglades in an area we’re trying to preserve.”

County’s considerations

The worry comes as the majority of Broward’s cities have voted to create a new taxing authority that will be tasked with handling trash and recycling.

Pembroke Pines voted last week against the move, becoming one of three cities that didn’t join in. But the majority of the 31 Broward municipalities did back the plan. Now, as efforts get underway to create a master plan, the formalities and organization begin in September. Voting into the system also means those cities are pledging their garbage to the system.

It will come down to disposal of both trash and recycling: “Where does trash go when it’s picked up (and) where is it going to go?” said Furr, who is the vice chairman of the Solid Waste Working Group, the group of elected officials who are trying to enhance Broward’s recycling capabilities and reduce waste.

Among the choices for the waste: burn it in an incinerator, recycle it, bury it in the landfill, or compost it. "Or other options they are doing in Europe that I am looking at," Ross said. "Israel is doing something different. Everyone is doing something different."

Recycling in Broward reached a high in 2012 at a rate of 60% of the waste. But then the numbers of recycling items plummeted, while the landfill rate went up. The rate of recycling the waste now hovers at nearly 31%, Furr said.

Broward generates four million tons of garbage every year, Furr said. "That has to be dealt with," he said.

Among the options:

- There are currently three boilers within the incinerator in unincorporated Broward County near Davie. An addition could be a fourth boiler, which would handle another 250,000 tons of capacity of trash.
- Build an incinerator on another county property off U.S. 27 near Pembroke Pines and Southwest Ranches, which would provide another million tons of capacity.
- The county could purchase another property someplace else, such as landfill at the Monarch Hill site near Coconut Creek now owned by Waste Management to build an incinerator or use it for "another methodology" like composting, Ross said.

"My hope is we recycle so much" that there is no more need for an additional boiler or incinerator to handle trash.

Still, for now, "there is no plan yet," Furr said.

Read more: <https://www.sun-sentinel.com/2023/08/28/opponents-rally-against-possibility-of-a-new-incinerator-in-broward/>

A new law is supposed to boost affordable housing. South Florida cities are furious

BY ANDRES VIGLUCCI AND RAISA HABERSHAM



An architectural rendering shows a residential and commercial complex that would replace nine small motels along the Broadwalk in Hollywood beach. A two-story beach club and restaurant would face the Broadwalk, with a high-rise apartment tower behind it, separated by North Surf Road. A parking garage that's part of the project can be seen at far right near two existing motels whose owners have not agreed to sell to the developer. MICHE Kaller Architecture

The Florida Legislature was widely praised this year when it [passed sweeping legislation](#) designed to supercharge construction of affordable housing by directing hundreds of millions of dollars in low-interest loans and big tax breaks to developers.

But in the early days of implementation in South Florida, the Live Local Act is running into significant roadblocks because of another, less-publicized feature of the law that went into effect July 1: Provisions that override local zoning controls on building height and density.

The idea is to allow developers to build big in exchange for setting aside apartments in mixed residential and commercial projects at lower rents for people who meet certain income criteria. The new law, touted as a bold and comprehensive attempt to tackle [Florida's crippling housing crisis](#), requires cities and counties to approve the projects without hearings where elected officials could seek public input and discuss and vote on the proposals, even if they dramatically violate existing height and density restrictions.

Critics question whether the state law really will help people struggling the most to afford soaring apartment rents and home sale prices that became [South Florida's hallmark during the pandemic](#). Most controversially, the Live Local Act bars local authorities from enacting rent controls as Orange County voters did last year.

Housing advocates had called for such controls to calm down the frenetic Miami-Dade housing market. What's more, the language of the law appears intended to entice real estate developers who typically build market-rate

projects to build housing, rather than give experienced affordable homebuilders new incentives to get more homes built.

In at least two local cities, Doral and Hollywood, developers have cited the new law signed by Gov. Ron DeSantis, in publicly floating supersized plans for high-rise residential and commercial developments that would far exceed anything around them in height, scale and density.

Oasis Doral would be a 17-acre residential and commercial project at a major intersection backing up to a pair of longstanding developments of modest two-story townhomes Villas of Amberwood surrounding a golf course called Costa del Sol. In Hollywood along the beachfront Broadwalk, a group of motels would be replaced with an 18-story condo and apartment tower complex, a three-story beach club and restaurant facing the pedestrian promenade.

The proposals though not yet formally submitted to local officials for review and approval, have rapidly drawn heated pushback in both cities from residents, property owners and public officials. Elected officials in Doral and Hollywood are frustrated that the state law appears to render them powerless to address community concerns or to plan for the effects on established neighborhoods from the oversized scale of the contemplated new projects.

In both cities, officials say they're applying the brakes to considering developers' applications under the law for real estate projects including affordable homes — possibly in violation of the statute — while they sort out its implications and press state legislators to clarify or revise the law's zoning clauses. That official posture represents a rare public resistance to the Legislature's increasing tendency to approve developer-friendly laws that gut local zoning, environmental and tenant protections in a practice called "preemption."

Weston, another city in Broward County, already has taken its own preemptive action. After the Legislature in March passed the housing bill the governor signed into law, the city commission on June 20 [passed the first reading](#) of an ordinance that would require a public hearing for development proposals involving affordable housing.

LOCAL OFFICIALS LEFT WITHOUT INPUT IN LAW

The money promised from the law, which earmarked \$711 million in funding for various state housing programs, has yet to flow. The [Florida Housing Finance Corporation](#), a state agency that [manages the programs](#), has not yet released rules for competitive funding but said it will open applications Oct. 1.

But developers are already racing to figure out if they can take advantage of the zoning override provisions, consulting with land-use attorneys who have been putting out the word to recruit business, lawyers and business groups say, and approaching municipalities with preliminary development plans.

In South Florida, the Doral and Hollywood proposals are among the first to surface publicly statewide — and the first to run into what some experts say could be a wave of public opposition, as projects are submitted to counties and cities for approval.

Officials and residents say the Live Local law means they can't say "no" or scale back plans by a developer who wants to build towers in the middle of a warehouse district or a low-scale downtown district, no matter how

disruptive or how little sense it makes. Some complain that legislative authors of the act, championed by Republican Senate President Kathleen Passidomo of Southwest Florida, did not consult with county or municipal officials or developers specializing in affordable housing, or rejected their input when it was offered.

The reaction has been especially furious in Doral.

An overflow crowd packed a confrontational townhall meeting earlier this month to grill a developer over his Live Local Act colossal construction proposal. The plan calls for five new 10- and 12-story towers with 623 new apartments and 44,000 square feet of commercial space on the traffic-clogged southwest corner of Doral Boulevard and Northwest 97th Avenue.

Audience members booed and groaned out loud as the developer, Edward Abbo of Aventura-based The Apollo Companies, tried to downplay the effect of his proposed towers on the low-scale neighborhood.

A LITTLE BRICKELL ON A DORAL CORNER?

“We’re up in arms against the size of the project,” Costa del Sol association president Jim Ferguson said in an interview after the meeting. “It’s too high and too close to our property line, and there are traffic issues at an already congested intersection. There are no 12-story towers anywhere within a mile or two from here. So you would have a little Brickell on the corner there. It’s just crazy.”

The meeting came a week after the Doral town council, reacting to increasingly angry pleas from residents, unanimously approved on first reading a six-month moratorium on accepting or processing Live Local affordable housing development applications, even after Apollo’s attorney, Joseph Goldstein of powerhouse law firm Holland & Knight, issued a barely veiled threat to sue the city. The council has set a second and final vote on the moratorium on Aug. 23.

Critics, including Doral Mayor Christi Fraga, say Apollo’s proposal would cram way too much development into a corner of Doral Boulevard and Northwest 97th Avenue never meant for it.

Abbo’s proposal would set aside 250 units, or 40% of the total, as workforce or affordable housing as defined by the state. That 40% portion is the threshold under the new law to override local zoning. The law applies in all commercial, industrial and mixed-use districts, but exempts areas zoned only for residential construction.

Fraga noted that, under Live Local, the Apollo development proposal provides no opportunity to Doral, as it normally would, to negotiate if a developer wants more height or density than allowed by existing zoning to ensure a project scale compatible with the surroundings. Instead, under the state law a developer can go as high as the tallest building in a one-mile radius within the local jurisdiction, and match the density of the densest allowed local zoning.

The act essentially tries to force the city to accept whatever the developer proposes, Fraga said, so long as the plan conforms to other aspects of local zoning rules, such as setbacks. Because the law also bars cities from prohibiting residential projects in industrial zones, she said it could also threaten the city’s economic and employment backbone — its extensive warehouse districts. Land speculation could cause prices in warehouse districts to rise, making continued industrial use economically unfeasible.

And putting housing in an industrial zone, Fraga said, seems questionable at best — especially if it puts people struggling to meet rent payments far from transit, work and shopping.

“This is the epitome of what local preemption is,” Fraga, who proposed the moratorium, said in an interview. “This truly can change the characteristics of a neighborhood that can completely challenge the quality of life of our residents. It overrides measures we have in place to protect that.

“My goal is not to be sued,” the Doral mayor said. “But I saw the uproar in the community and had to do something. My goal is to protect this community.”

During the special council meeting called to consider the moratorium, Doral city attorney Valerie Vicente said planners and administrators need the time to figure out how to process Live Local applications, interpret ambiguous language in the state law and consider how best to revise the zoning code to mesh with its requirements and protect residents.

“The city has been left grappling how to implement this statute,” Vicente said. “A lot has been left to interpretation. It’s such a significant impact for the city that it has to be done in a careful manner.”

In a subsequent letter to Doral officials, attorney Goldstein urged the council not to give final approval to the moratorium, which he argues would be illegal. He said the city has no choice under the new law but to approve Apollo’s project within 120 days of formal application.

Developer Abbo, during the townhall meeting, said he’s willing to work with residents to allay their concerns, though most appeared unpersuaded. “We are not your enemy,” Abbo said. “We’re here to work together and see how we can come up with a development that integrates well.”

REMOVING NOSTALGIA FROM HOLLYWOOD BROADWALK

The second proposal, along Hollywood’s famed two-mile beachfront Broadwalk, would require demolition of nine of the resort district’s modest but characteristic mid-Century motels.

The plan by Brooklyn-based real estate investors and developers Condra Property Group would replace the one- and two- and three-story buildings and their 123 motel rooms with three separate structures on three blocks — the 18-story condo and apartment tower complex with ground-floor commercial, the beach club and restaurant facing the Broadwalk and an eight-story parking garage.

The residential complex would include 87 rental apartments, with an entrance separate from the condos, that meet the state definition of workforce or affordable housing. In a pre-application form filed with the city, the developers say the proposed height matches that of the city-sponsored Margaritaville Resort, and the density is less than that of Hyde Residences and Resort. Both properties sit farther south on Hollywood beach.

Condra partners Mark Drachman and Allen Konstam said they had previously proposed a 13-story hotel on property they had been assembling for several years, but the plan ran aground when Hollywood officials would not budge on their refusal to allow the developers to build higher than the current 65-foot height limit in the beach district.

Once Live Local passed, though, their attorney suggested they take advantage of its zoning override provisions, which also include a significant property-tax reduction, Drachman and Konstam said. The additional height and density allowed, along with the tax break, make the overall project financially feasible even with reduced apartment rents, they said.

“We jumped on it immediately,” Konstam said. Drachman added: “We are able to build a beautiful building that makes sense and offer affordable housing.”

Drachman said their development plan attempts to be “very mindful” of the Hollywood surroundings, placing the 18-story tower on the west side of their property towards A1A, with a low-rise club building facing the Broadwalk. The buildings they intend to tear down are outdated and in some cases in bad condition, they said.



An architectural rendering shows a residential and commercial complex that would replace nine small motels along the Broadwalk in Hollywood beach. A two-story beach club and restaurant would face the Broadwalk, with a high-rise apartment tower behind it, separated by North Surf Road. A parking garage that's part of the project can be seen at far right near two existing motels whose owners have not agreed to sell to the developer. MICHE Kaller Architecture

The partners acknowledge that numerous neighbors and city officials are opposed to their plan, but contend local hotel workers would benefit because they could live in the apartments, though they have not yet set rent and income targets. They said they intend to submit an application to the city in September.

“It’s a location that’s kind of a NIMBY location,” Konstam said, referring to “not in my backyard” opponents of development. “Obviously people don’t want any development of any size there. People are going to have their opinions. Others are absolutely excited.

“We didn’t propose an 18-story building the entire block, which we could have. Our goal is not to throw a monkey wrench into everyone’s area. We’re willing to work with the city and state to figure out this Live Local Act. We want everybody to be happy.”

But opponents say the scale and size of the project would tear apart the beach district's historic low-scale fabric and pack more people and automobile traffic into narrow streets already jammed to the point of near-immobility in winter high season and holidays. The critics say it would also disrupt the resort area's hospitality economy, which relies on tourists and snowbirds.

"This is going to be a disaster, that is a really bad idea," said Marie Balmaseda, manager at the Hollywood Beach Hotel, whose owners rejected overtures to buy from the Condra developers. The motel would be sandwiched between the condo complex and the parking garage. "This is a very small area and it's already packed. Think about it."

A few blocks down the Broadwalk, the longtime owner of the 1955 Bel Aire Motel, Craig McAdams, said the resort area's low-scale, familiar environment is what has drawn visitors to Hollywood beach from Canada and other points north for decades, including the regulars he depends on.

"This is what you call a mom-and-pop," McAdams said of the motel, which has been in his family for 66 years. "And so you're telling me that, at the signing of a pen, the state can change the face of Hollywood beach? So you can wipe out our laws and stick it to the residents? That ain't right. Someone has to have a long-term vision for this area other than lining your own pocket."

DISREGARDING COASTAL CLIMATE CHANGE EFFECTS

The narrow beach district stretches just two blocks between A1A and the Broadwalk. It's already prone to flooding and highly vulnerable to the [rising seas](#) and storm surge driven by [climate change](#), Hollywood city commissioner Caryl Shuham said.

Shuham said the new law is flawed because its one-size-fits-all approach allows no provisions for such disparate local conditions and impacts, which should be left to local officials to handle.

"The idea that you would be encouraging density on barrier islands, how could they not have considered that?" Shuham said. "And how can you take away the public's right to weigh in?"

Moreover, she said, the law encourages developers to run roughshod over the city's careful planning to foster dense but carefully scaled mixed-use redevelopment, including affordable housing, in the city's nearby downtown and along transit and transportation corridors, where it's most appropriate.

Its effect on Hollywood would be "destructive," Shuham said. Then there's the question of enforcement: The law requires developers to keep rents for units set aside under Live Local at required low levels for 30 years, but doesn't say how that will be verified, or who will take on the onerous task.

Given the doubts, Hollywood assistant city manager Raelin Storey said town officials are not ready to move on any applications under the Live Local Act until such issues are cleared up — something she said might take litigation to determine.

"We are still analyzing the law and it's going to take a little while. There are questions we are still sorting through," Storey said. "It's going to require the courts or the state to provide clarity. We're not going to allow something to go forward without more clarity on that."

“We see many of the positive elements of Live Local, including the financing and getting development to market rapidly. We need affordable housing desperately. But then there are the concerns over how development looks and the impact on the existing fabric of our community, and this does seem to throw that out the window. It’s an opportunity for random development.”

Critics like Shuham say the zoning override rules also risk creating considerable public backlash against the laudable goal of dramatically increasing the state’s supply of workforce or affordable housing.

And some question whether the substantial benefits Live Local funnels to developers will pay off in terms of truly increasing the supply of homes for those most in need of affordable housing in Florida.

The act does reverse the state and the Legislature’s own longstanding practice of diverting millions of dollars in revenue earmarked for affordable housing to other uses.

It’s also clearly drafted, at least in part, to aim at cities and counties that made it hard for developers to build housing in many places through zoning restrictions, including prohibitions on building residential development in commercially zoned areas, or low density limits that encourage sprawl and artificially restrict housing supply.

‘PRO-DEVELOPER STUFF COUCHED AS AFFORDABLE HOUSING’

That’s, however, not generally the case in Miami-Dade or cities like Miami, which already encourage development mixing residential and commercial. Miami-Dade has enacted far-reaching rules that encourage high-density development, including workforce and low-income housing, at and around public transit stations and along transit corridors, and require municipalities to lift restrictions on high-density housing development.

Compared to the carefully calibrated county approach, one Miami-Dade official not authorized to speak to the media called the Live Local law a blunt instrument.

There is also the question of who precisely the law will help.

It targets people making up to 120% of the local area median income, with rent levels set for each location by the state Housing Finance Corp. Developers can follow that standard or offer the set-aside housing at a 10% discount off prevailing market rents, depending on which alternative results in lower rents.

In Miami-Dade County, the median income is currently set at \$74,700 for a two-person household. In Broward, it’s \$82,100. That means projects approved under the Live Local Act should be affordable to two-person households making no more than \$89,640 in Miami-Dade and \$98,520 in Broward.

Those numbers define so-called workforce housing, typically described as being aimed at essential workers like teachers, cops and firefighters or hospitality workers who increasingly can’t afford to live near their jobs. That’s different from what’s generally understood to be affordable housing, which targets residents making below the county’s median income level.

Estimates compiled by Miami Homes for All, a housing advocacy group, show the local housing shortage is most severe for households making under 80% of the county’s median income. But the law doesn’t help those lower-income households that advocates say are the most in need of assistance. One executive at a large affordable development firm said the zoning provisions do little to foster construction of housing affordable to

people making less than the median income, which requires significant public subsidies and a complex mix of federal tax credits and financing, especially given the current high cost of construction. In fact, developers already doing subsidized affordable housing don't qualify for the property tax breaks under Live Local.

Instead, the law is geared to encouraging developers of market-rate projects to get into the workforce housing arena by offering so much profitable extra development capacity that they can afford to charge lower rents on some homes.

One partner at a major Miami law firm with a large land-use team predicted the Florida law will be attractive chiefly to developers looking to build mid-rise projects given sky-high construction, financing and insurance costs. Building above eight stories multiplies costs because of structural building-code requirements.

Attorney Anthony De Yurre, a partner at Bilzin Sumberg, said that extra floor or two of development capacity can be enough of an incentive for developers that he predicted the law will produce what it's meant to — a proliferation of mixed-income projects across the state, most at a middle scale.

"This will ultimately create mixed-income developments, so that developers are incentivized to include workforce housing along with market-rate housing, but not subsidized affordable housing," De Yurre said.

Some skeptics and critics, though, say they think the law will do more good for developers than for Floridians struggling with housing costs.

"It's a lot of pro-developer stuff, couched as affordable housing," Hollywood commissioner Shuham said.

Said Doral mayor Fraga: "I know developers have had their eyes on this bill for some time. It's a gift for them."

Read More: <https://www.miamiherald.com/article278059857.html>

State board taking control of Miami-Dade toll expressways after MDX loses court fight

BY DOUGLAS HANKS



The Miami-Dade Expressway Authority is being dissolved under a state law that courts recently upheld creating a new toll board to oversee five toll expresses, including the Dolphin, in Miami-Dade. Miami Herald file

The Miami-Dade Expressway Authority agreed Friday to surrender control of five of the county's busiest toll roads after losing multiple court fights against a [state law creating a replacement agency](#).

While some legal avenues remain, the chairman of the county-controlled board on Friday sent an email instructing employees of the Miami-Dade Expressway Authority (MDX) to begin taking orders from administrators of the new state board, the Greater Miami Expressway Agency (GMX).

"I am saddened to report that our fight for local control of MDX has taken a bad turn," Jose "Pepe" Diaz, a former Miami-Dade commissioner who served as MDX's chairman said in in the evening email. "This requires me to advise you that the legislative created agency, GMX, formed to take over MDX by the legislature, should now be allowed to access MDX's facilities and control over its affairs."

[READ MORE: Why Miami-Dade may lose control of Dolphin Expressway in state takeover of toll roads](#)

The email announced the end of a protracted fight for control of the Dolphin Expressway and four other commuting routes. The battle, mostly played out in court motions and hearings, pitted Miami-Dade's government against the administration of Gov. Ron DeSantis and the Republican-controlled Legislature.

Drivers on the former MDX expressways — Airport, Dolphin, Don Shula, Gratigny and Snapper Creek — shouldn't notice a difference beside changes in signage. The MDX was part of Florida's expressway system, with tolls paid electronically through SunPass or the state's toll-by-plate readers. MDX toll rates have been the same

since 2018, according to its most recent financial report, and the state law creating GMX [imposes restrictions](#) on toll increases through 2029.

In a statement, GMX's executive director, Torey Alston, said the transition will be smooth.

"The Greater Miami Expressway Agency (GMX) is committed to a seamless transition of operations that ensures the traveling public of South Florida continuity of services and sound financial accountability, including the continued payment of wages to current staff and to vendors,"

Alston said. The big changes in the switch from MDX to GMX come from who controls the boards and the more than \$230 million in toll revenue they produce each year. County commissioners appointed a majority of the members to the MDX board. Diaz, now Sweetwater mayor, was one of three former Miami-Dade commissioners on the board. Under state law, the governor appoints a majority of the GMX seats.

The legislature also kept power over the new GMX panel in Tallahassee by giving the Legislative Budget Commission veto power over the board's borrowing plans. That's a key function of toll boards, which borrow against toll revenue to pay for upgrades and expansions. MDX lists \$1.5 billion dollars in debt on its balance sheet, most of it bonds sold on Wall Street tied to yearly toll receipts.

The new GMX board is made up of Miami-Dade residents, including Miami lawyer Marili Cancio as chair. The board has met over the last year in state offices, and recently passed motions suspending MDX's top management. Alston is a former chief of staff at the state Transportation Department and a current DeSantis appointee on the Broward School Board.

With state lawmakers having authority over GMX borrowing, that will give Tallahassee a potentially central role in the future of an MDX signature project. The agency planned to spend more than \$1 billion extending the Dolphin — also known as State Road 836 — into West Kendall. That project has been stalled during control fight, which limited MDX's ability to borrow money from Wall Street given uncertainty over its future.

[READ MORE: Dems blame 'grudge' by Lt. Gov. Nuñez for latest state takeover bid of Miami toll roads](#)

Florida once owned the expressways that have been under MDX control since the 1990s, when the state struck a deal with Miami-Dade to create an independent toll board to run the roads and spend the money they generate. In recent years, MDX board members experienced friction over toll decisions with Republican members of the Legislature from Miami-Dade, including a [future lieutenant governor](#), Jeanette Nuñez.

Florida lawmakers first authorized the GMX takeover in 2019, but Miami-Dade and MDX fought off that law with court challenges. A primary defense was the "home rule" status Florida's Constitution grants Miami-Dade, the most populous county in the state. That provision generally prevents Tallahassee from enacting laws that only target Miami-Dade.

The Legislature defused that defense this year by tweaking the law to give GMX authority beyond Miami-Dade, to a corner of Monroe County that currently has one gravel road running through the federal Big Cypress Swamp preserve.

“It’s a joke,” said Gene Stearns, the longtime lawyer for MDX who called the state’s actions an “extraordinary attack” on home rule. “There’s never going to be an expressway through the Big Cypress Swamp.”

The new legislative language went into effect July 1 and led to a string of recent court wins for GMX. On Aug. 7, a Leon County judge ordered Bank of America to turn over MDX’s operating accounts to GMX.

On Wednesday, a Miami-Dade judge also rejected the Home Rule defense. On Friday, the Third District Court of Appeal rejected a county request to intervene. That was MDX’s last chance to fend off the GMX takeover, and Diaz sent his email after the ruling became public.

While appeals continue, Diaz said MDX was abandoning its defiance of the state law and acknowledging GMX had the legal authority to take over expressway operations.

“This is a sad day for many reasons but we have not gone down without a fight,” Diaz wrote in the email that went out at 6:55 p.m. and provided to the Miami Herald through a records request. “While I hope the County will find a way to restore local control of MDX, unless it does and unless the appellate court rules in our favor, you must come to work as usual, do your jobs as usual and accept the new leadership that has been thrust upon this agency by the legislature.”

Read more at: <https://www.miamiherald.com/news/local/community/miami-dade/article278406259.html#storylink=cpy>

Mayor wants Doral trash incinerator to stay closed after fire, rebuild near Everglades

BY DOUGLAS HANKS



An aerial view of the Miami-Dade Resources Recovery Facility-Covanta Energy incinerator plant in Doral before a fire damaged the county-owned facility in February 2023. Mayor Daniella Levine Cava wants a modern replacement moved out of the city and in a more isolated area near the Everglades. PEDRO PORTAL

Miami-Dade's mayor wants to abandon the county's shuttered incinerator in Doral and pursue a modern replacement near the Everglades while keeping open the possibility of retaining the trash-burning operation at the current site.

The plan released Friday by Mayor Daniella Levine Cava touches on the county's various trash challenges, [including the proposed \\$36 yearly hike in garbage fees](#) and how to avoid a development moratorium [if local landfills run out of space for more trash](#).

[READ MORE: Miami-Dade's trash chief resigns after warning that a landfill crisis is coming](#)

For Doral, the memo could be a double-barreled win, at least in the short term. The city urged Levine Cava and commissioners to relocate the privately run incinerator plant, which was burning about half of the garbage collected daily by Miami-Dade trucks before a fire shut it down in February.

Not only is Levine Cava recommending the county-owned plant run by Covanta remain shuttered, she's urging the commission to back replacing it with a modern facility eight miles northwest from the current one.

The proposed site for a modern incinerator is an airfield off Krome Avenue owned by Miami-Dade, which sits within several miles of [the Everglades](#).

It also is located outside the Urban Development Boundary, the planning divide Levine Cava has fought to keep in place as a check against over-building near the Everglades and farmland. The mayor's office noted the line

wouldn't have to move for a new incinerator and the other facilities Levine Cava wants to build around to handle other trash needs, such as processing yard waste. Government facilities are already allowed outside the line, known as the "UDB."

Known as the Opa-Locka West Airport, the idle airfield with two runways is located near where Krome Avenue meets Route 27. While there are some residential neighborhoods nearby, the property sits next to rock quarries.

Residential development expanded near the Doral plant after it was constructed in 1985. Homeowners complain of odor and truck traffic from the facility, which burns trash and converts it into exhaust, energy and ash.

"I'm happy with the memorandum," said Commissioner Juan Carlos Bermudez, the former Doral mayor who lives near the current plant and has been fighting to move it. "I think it's a perfect site."

While Levine Cava said the airport site should be the county's first choice for a modern incinerator, Miami-Dade would still ask regulators to approve constructing one on the current location in Doral.

The mayor wrote that "given the difficulty of obtaining applicable permits" from the federal Environmental Protection Agency and Florida's Department of Environmental Protection, Miami-Dade should submit proposals for the locations at the airport, in Doral and a third possibility near the current incinerator in Medley.

[READ MORE: Recycling costs just doubled in Miami-Dade. What's next for your yearly trash fees?](#)

Regulators would consider those proposals in a preliminary review that Levine Cava said could be completed in a year. The other two locations would be available as back-ups if permits can't be obtained for the airfield site.

Securing permits and then constructing a new incinerator would take about 10 years, she said. Levine Cava said the new plant would use modern technology already at work in Palm Beach County to make the incinerator process more efficient, creating less ash and odor.

"The Administration believes that the County now has a unique opportunity to invest in and modernize a 40-year-old system and turn it into a financially sustainable, environmentally responsible program that will grow with the needs of our community," she wrote.

In the memo, Levine Cava said the \$92 million estimate to repair the burned plant was too high to make sense. Without an incinerator for 10 years or more, Miami-Dade would rely on landfills for disposing of all its trash.

That could be a problem for developers because Florida requires counties to have enough landfill capacity to absorb five years worth of population growth in order to build new homes.

Levine Cava said she's considering a plan to transport some garbage out of the county by cargo train, and wants to expand existing contracts for landfills in Central Florida.

She's also recommending Miami-Dade commissioners approve expansion of the North Dade landfill off Northwest 47th Avenue outside Miami Gardens before it runs out of space in 2026. Already 135 feet tall, Levine Cava said she wants the landfill to grow taller but not expand its footprint.

Levine Cava also wants commissioners to study how to expand the county's second landfill, off Southwest 240th Street near Homestead [known as "Mount Trashmore."](#)

Commissioners have an immediate decision to make on the county's trash system, with Levine Cava urging passage of a \$36 increase in the \$509 fee more than 300,000 households pay for county trash pick-up services. The money is needed to pay for higher recycling costs and growing expenses related to garbage pick-up and disposal.

Levine Cava said she wants to end the fees in 2025, with Miami-Dade creating a new property tax to fund trash expenses instead that would vary based on the value of the real estate receiving the service. Commissioners would need to approve the new tax ahead of the 2025 fiscal year, which begins Oct. 1, 2024.

The vote on the higher trash fee is scheduled for Sept. 6, when commissioners would also decide whether to accept Levine Cava's memo on long-term plans for the incinerator.

Read more at: <https://www.miamiherald.com/news/local/community/miami-dade/article278384419.html#storylink=cpy>

Florida lawmakers urge NOAA to enhance coral rescue efforts

BY BILL KEARNEY



Bleached corals on Florida's Looe Key, July 28, 2023. Teams dedicated to ocean restoration are urgently moving samples to tanks on land as a marine heat wave devastates entire reefs. (Jason Gully/The New York Times)

A bipartisan group of Florida lawmakers has written a letter to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration urging the agency to use its emergency powers to support the rescue and protection of corals threatened by the current marine [heat wave](#).

Florida's coral reef tract, the third largest in the world, has been suffering a [coral bleaching event](#) due to a marine heatwave this summer. Coral bleaching happens when stressors cause corals to expel the algae living in their tissues, turning the coral white.

The algae's photosynthesis provides the coral with nutrients. If the bleaching event is short-lived, corals have been known to regain algae and recover, but if the stress is prolonged, the corals often die.

The letter, addressed to NOAA administrator Richard Spinrad, stated, "We urge you to expeditiously use the emergency mechanisms available to you under to the Coral Reef Conservation Act (CRCA) to maximize the efforts being undertaken by state and federal managers and their non-profit partners to identify and monitor continuing heat stress across the reef, maintain essential genetic diversity of coral populations, and plan for responsible reintroduction and restoration."

Among the signees were Sen. Marco Rubio, R-FL, Rep. Darren Soto, D-FL, Sen. Rick Scott, R-FL, Rep. Maria Elvira Salazar, R-FL, Neal Dunn, R-FL, Jared Moskowitz, D-FL, Scott Franklin, R-FL, Gus Bilirakis, R-FL, Anna Paulina Luna, R-FL, Carlos Gimenez, R-FL, John Rutherford, R-FL, Kathy Castor, D-FL, Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick, D-FL, Frederica Wilson, D-FL, and Debbie Wasserman Schultz, D-FL.

The bipartisan Coral Reef Conservation Act reauthorized and modernized the Coral Reef Conservation Act of 2000. It strengthened NOAA's resources to help non-federal partners working on coral conservation.

Some sites around the Florida Keys are being exposed to twice the amount of heat stress that causes corals to die, and earlier in the year than ever before, scientists from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration said in a telephone news conference. They said the phenomenon is likely to affect the Caribbean very soon and a global bleaching event could be just around the corner.

"We are quite concerned and worried and stressed about this event," said Ian Enochs, a research ecologist at NOAA's Atlantic Oceanographic & Meteorological Laboratory. "It's not a normal thing."

Up and down the chain of islands that form the Florida Keys, coral rescue groups and government and academic institutions have mobilized to save the corals by relocating them to land-based facilities where they can be studied.

The goal is to figure out which coral types are best at surviving heat stress and then using them to build a more resilient reef, said Andy Bruckner, research coordinator for NOAA's Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary.

Read more: <https://www.sun-sentinel.com/2023/08/19/florida-lawmakers-urge-noaa-to-enhance-coral-rescue-efforts/>

606-unit Miami Worldcenter condo tower to have five parking spaces

BY JOHN CHARLES ROBBINS



A new luxury condominium tower planned for Northeast First Avenue downtown expects to be the second-to-last development making up the multi-block mixed-use development known as Miami Worldcenter.

Developer Aria Development Group proposes to construct the 31-story building, called 600 MWC, at 600 NE First Ave. offering 606 residential units, about 3,750 square feet of commercial uses, 1,261 square feet of office use, and related amenities.

The city's Urban Development Review Board recommends approval. Miami Worldcenter District is a large mixed-use development under construction led by principals Arthur Falcone and Nitin Motwani, spanning several blocks in the Park West neighborhood.

The new tower is to rise on property that has frontages on Northeast First Avenue on the east and Northeast Sixth Street on the south. the property abuts the FEC Corridor to the north.

The property is within a half mile of a Transit Oriented Development (TOD) area, centered on the Freedom Tower Metromover Station. Due to its location and zoning, the developer isn't required to provide parking.

Brian Dombrowski, an attorney for the developer, wrote that there is an adjacent Metromover station, as well as multiple bus and trolley stops within walking distance. The project will provide five parking spaces.

Mr. Dombrowski wrote, "The development of the property will provide ground level retail, which the existing surface parking lacks. This will enhance the pedestrian realm, activate the ground floor, and encourage walkability in the area which currently has no retail frontages."

He added, "The property is located within a short walk of Maurice Ferré Park which provides recreational options, and Bayside provides dining and retail options within walking distance."

The developer is requesting special permission via warrants to:

- Permit new construction within the Miami Worldcenter District that ensures conformity of new buildings within the district.
- Increase the maximum lot coverage from 80% to 96%. The project proposes an arcade that provides shade and protection to pedestrians.
- Reduce the vehicular access separation from 60 feet to 51 feet.

The developer is also asking for a Special District Permit to increase the residential floorplate length from 200 feet to 212 feet 2 inches.

Attorney Iris Escarra, who also represents the developer, told the review board, "We have a huge dedication of right of way along Sixth Street and First Avenue, 14% of the site."

She noted all of the activity in this area, saying, "Along Sixth Street there are five active projects going in ... it will be an amazing street in the downtown core."

She added, "Hopefully when we're done there'll only be one block left (undeveloped) in Miami Wordcenter."

Luis O. Revuelta, principal of Revuelta Architecture International, presented details of the site plan and building design to the board.

"We tried to differentiate the building from those around us," he said.

The tower will be a darker shade of reflective glass, to give the building a sense of higher-end luxury, he said.

Board member Robert Behar called the project "great" and said it will be a good addition to the area.

Board member Gia Zapattini said, "I really like the design. I think it's beautiful. Very elegant. Very sophisticated ... Congratulations, I think it's a great project."

Board member Anthony Tzamtzis said, "I think it's an elegant building ... it's a little plain, you know, not really very loud but well laid out and very functional."

Board Chairman Ignacio Permuy said, "The massing is heavy, it's a little bit up there, but having said that, the way the building is designed, articulated and resolved, Mr. Revuelta, you've done an exceptional job, so I commend you and the entire team. It is a great project and it will have a positive, immediate impact on the area."

The vote to recommend approval was unanimous.

Read more: <https://www.miamitodaynews.com/2023/08/15/606-unit-miami-worldcenter-condo-tower-to-have-five-parking-spaces/>

City of Tampa warns about garbage trucks catching on fire because of household chemicals

BY CASEY ALBRITTON

TAMPA, Fla. (Tampa Bay Now) - The City of Tampa is warning about a recent trend called "hot loads."

With the recent Florida heat, lithium ion batteries and hazardous chemicals are causing fires in garbage trucks. "It can cause a great explosion, it can cause property damage, it can cause pedestrian damage, anyone within the proximity," said Wayne Jackson with the City of Tampa Department of Solid Waste.

Jackson says recently garbage trucks catching on fire have been a problem. "When you see smoke, there's a fire," he said.

With the intense Summer heat, lithium ion batteries and other hazardous chemicals being thrown away are dangerous.

"We've had I believe two hot loads so far this year just in 2023," said Tampa Mayor, Jane Castor.

Hot loads happen when these batteries and chemicals get overheated and explode, and Mayor Jane Castor says on Saturday one of the City of Tampa garbage trucks caught fire.

"What makes a lithium ion battery fire different than a regular fire is they produce a lot of toxic gas, create explosive environments, and they are definitely difficult to extinguish," said Barbara Tripp, Tampa Fire Chief.

Lithium ion batteries are used in everyday items like cameras, cell phones, laptops and more.

Tripp says there are some signs that your lithium ion battery is overheated.

"Changing of the color, too much heat, the shape and you might see some and you might see liquid leaking out of the item," said Tripp.

Now, the city is asking people to bring their lithium batteries to Hillsborough County chemical collection sites, or download an app called Tampa Trash and Recycling that will tell you how exactly to dispose of these materials.

Jackson says in the meantime, his team is taking extra precautions to stay safe.

"When they came on, that's one of the things we try to encourage. Be safe out there, take your time, don't take chances so that you can go home to your family," said Jackson.

Read more: <https://www.cbsnews.com/tampa/news/city-of-tampa-warns-about-garbage-trucks-catching-on-fire-because-of-household-chemicals/>

Fed raises interest rates 0.25 point, opens door to another hike despite easing inflation

BY PAUL DAVIDSON, CHARISSE JONES, AND BAILEY SCHULZ

WASHINGTON – Despite a recent pullback in inflation, the [Federal Reserve](#) raised its key interest rate by a quarter point Wednesday and signaled another hike is at least on the table, if not likely, in coming months amid a solid economy.

The move nudged the federal funds rate [to a range of 5.25% to 5.5%](#), the highest level in 22 years. In a statement after a two-day meeting, the Fed repeated that “determining the extent of additional policy firming (rate increases) that will be appropriate” to lower inflation to the Fed’s 2% target will hinge on inflation as well as economic and financial developments, among other factors.

Is the Fed going to raise interest rates again?

That suggests another rate increase is likely in September or November, Barclays wrote in a note to clients last week. Another hike would have been less likely if the central bank had reverted to language in a prior statement that referred to “the extent to which additional policy firming may be appropriate,” Barclays said.

Protect your assets: [Best high-yield savings accounts of 2023](#).

At a news conference, Fed Chair Jerome Powell acknowledged inflation's slowdown in June but added that while it's "welcome, it's just one report, one month of data." He said the process of lowering inflation to the Fed's 2% goal "has a long way to go."

"The labor market continues to be strong," he said, noting the Fed wants to bring supply and demand in the economy and labor market "into better balance." Otherwise, consumer prices could surge again. Noting the Fed will see two more inflation reports and two jobs reports before its next meeting in September, Powell said, "It's certainly possible we would raise (rates) again at the September meeting and it's also possible we would hold steady."

In its statement, the central bank said that “economic activity has been expanding at a moderate pace” – an upgrade from its previous description of “modest” growth. That’s a possible signal that the Fed believes the economy could withstand another rate hike and that sturdy growth may push inflation higher again. “Job gains have been robust in recent months, and the unemployment rate has remained low,” the Fed added, echoing its previous statement.

"We're seeing strong spending and a strong economy and that made us confident we can go and raise interest rates for a third time" since the Silicon Valley Bank crisis in March, Powell said. The latest rate bump means another rise in borrowing costs for consumers and businesses who got a reprieve when the Fed paused its aggressive hiking campaign in June. Rates for credit cards, adjustable-rate mortgages, auto and other loans are now poised to climb again. But Americans, especially seniors, are finally reaping higher bank savings yields after years of paltry returns.

How much did the Fed raise interest rates?

After lifting its benchmark short-term rate by 5 percentage points in 14 months – its biggest flurry in 40 years – the Fed took a break in June to assess the lagged effects of a hard-nosed strategy that many forecasters say will cause a recession this year.

Yet at the same meeting, Fed officials forecast two more rate increases in coming months to contain a bout of pandemic-related inflation that hit a 40-year high of 9.1% a year ago. Although yearly consumer price increases have steadily eased, a “core” measure that strips out volatile food and energy items and better reflects long-term trends has remained stubbornly high.

Earlier this month, however, the consumer price index unexpectedly revealed that both overall inflation and the core reading slowed notably in June, to 3% and 4.8%, respectively, though that’s still above the Fed’s 2% target. Goldman Sachs believes Wednesday’s rate hike will be the last now that inflation has reached a “turning point.”

“By the November meeting, we expect the core inflation trend will have taken a decisive step down... and that this will convince (the Fed) that a second hike is unnecessary,” Goldman wrote in a note to clients. Markets that predict Fed funds rate movements also believe the central bank will now hold rates steady before cutting them next year.

How is the economy in the U.S. right now?

Barclays, however, says a still resilient economy and stock market will persuade the Fed to raise rates once more. On Thursday, the government is expected to report that the economy grew a fairly solid 1.8% in the second quarter, faster than many forecasters projected earlier this year.

Last month, employers added 209,000 jobs and average wages grew 4.4% annually. Both mark slowdowns from earlier paces but are still strong showings. Initial jobless claims, a gauge of layoffs, have retreated toward historically low levels after rising in June. Consumer spending, the economy’s main engine, is still robust despite higher borrowing costs and prices. A core measure of retail sales that excludes volatile categories increased sharply last month.

And financial conditions have been favorable, with the S&P 500 stock index climbing steadily since March. That tends to lift consumer sentiment and bolster spending. The positive economic backdrop likely makes the Fed “skeptical that inflation will remain on a downward trajectory toward its 2% target without another rate hike,” Barclays wrote in a research note. The resilient economy also seems to be persuading Fed officials that the inflation could be tamed without triggering a recession. Powell said Fed staffers are no longer predicting a downturn. “There is a pathway,” Powell said.

What is CPI?

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is a measurement of the average change in prices for certain products and services during a period of time, according to the Bureau of Labor Services.

Why is CPI important?

The Federal Reserve keeps its eye on two key spokes of the economy, price stability and maximum employment, and those are the main considerations in its [interest-rate decisions](#). The Fed looks at the CPI to help determine if prices are “stable.”

What is the difference between CPI and core CPI?

Core prices leave out volatile food and energy items and therefore give a more accurate snapshot of longer-term trends.

How are auto loans affected?

The average interest rate on newly financed vehicles jumped to 7.2% in June, the highest it's been in 16 years, and up from 5.2% a year earlier. Used vehicle rates leaped to 11% from 8.3%, according to car industry data from Edmunds.

Meanwhile, the average monthly payment of \$733 for a new vehicle in the three months ending June 30 was a record – and up from \$678 a year earlier. And a record-high 17.1% of consumers financed a new vehicle with a monthly payment of [\\$1,000 or more](#), Edmunds said.

“The good news for new car buyers is that automakers have gradually offered more subsidized loan programs as inventory has improved and stabilized,” said Jessica Caldwell, Edmunds' executive director of insights. “That should take some of the sting out of [rising interest rates](#) for qualified consumers with good credit, with the caveat being a shorter loan term than desired in many cases. All other shoppers will need to [tread cautiously](#).”

The rejection rate for [auto loans](#) in June rose to 14.2%, the [highest level since this data was first collected](#) in 2013, as lenders become leery of borrowers who have struggled with high inflation and a surge in interest rates and have piled on debt to make ends meet.

Many lenders, including Fifth Third Bancorp, Citizens Financial, U.S. Bank and Capital One Financial, have already either cut out or scaled back auto lending.

Loan rejection rates on the rise

The [rejection rate for people applying for credit](#) jumped to 21.8% in June, the highest level in five years, according to a Federal Reserve survey released earlier this month.

Rejection rates for credit cards, credit card limit increase requests, mortgages, and mortgage refinance applications rose to 21.5%, 30.7%, 13.2%, and 20.8%, respectively, the Fed said. Major banks have reported setting aside more money to cover bad consumer loans as credit card balances rise.

Will mortgage rates be affected by Fed's rate decision?

Not necessarily. The Fed can impact but doesn't directly set mortgage rates, so home loan costs may not shift significantly in the near term. Other factors, like [housing demand](#) and the [economic outlook](#), also influence mortgage rates.

Those rates did double in the wake of the first Fed rate hikes last year, but the most recent moves by the central bank have had minimal impact.

“Each month when the Federal Reserve has raised rates most of the time the mortgage market has already baked in those rate increases because it's been very clear what the Federal Reserve had intended to do,” says Bright MLS Economist Lisa Sturtevant.

Nevertheless, any action that makes consumers or investors less certain can cause mortgage rates to fluctuate. And in the three periods since the late 1970's when the Fed raised interest rates to cool the economy, prices generally stayed steady, but the number of existing homes sold declined.

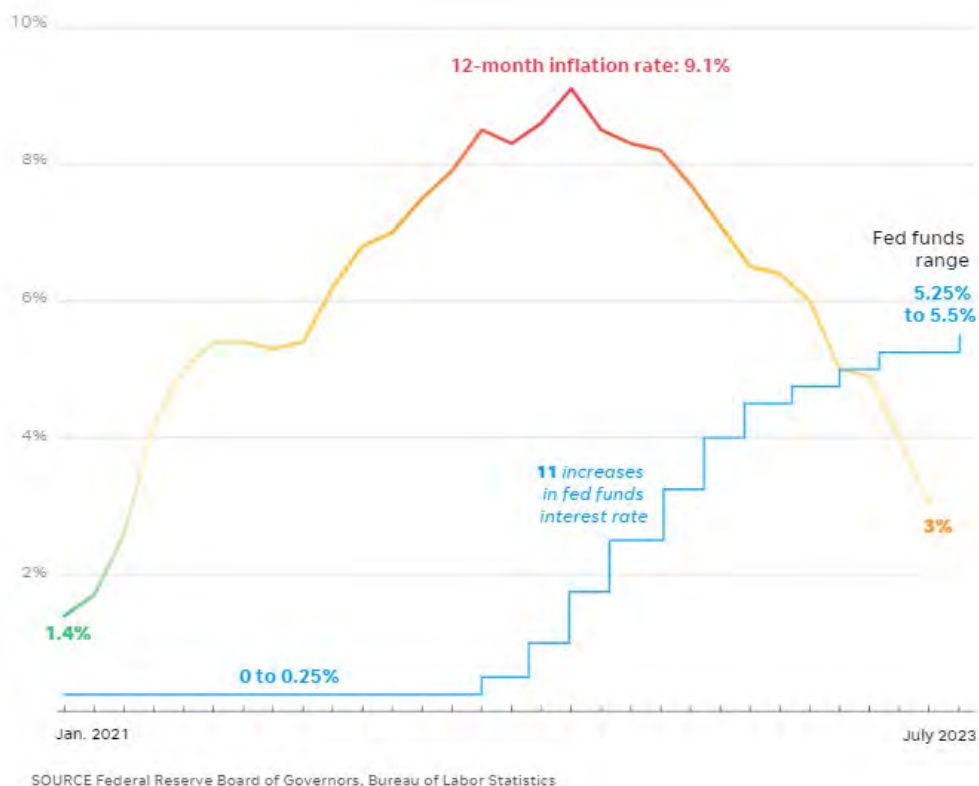
Current mortgage rates

The average rate [for a 30-year fixed mortgage](#) was 6.78% as of July 20, according to the latest data from Freddie Mac. The 15-year fixed-rate mortgage averaged 6.06%

Fed rate hike history

Inflation has cooled since the Fed started its rate hike campaign, but experts have mixed opinions on whether the Fed should take credit.

Some economists [say little or none of the progress](#) on inflation comes from the Fed's interest rate hikes, and instead point to the unwinding of pandemic-related supply chain bottlenecks, a sharp drop in commodity prices and a pullback in COVID-19-related consumer spending binges. Others say the central bank has played a supportive role by affecting consumer inflation expectations and modestly dampening a hot job market.



When is the next Fed interest rate decision?

[The Fed's meeting schedule is:](#)

- July 25-26
- Sept. 19-20
- Oct. 31/Nov. 1
- Dec. 12-13

What the Fed rate increases meant to credit card rates

The interest rates banks charge on their credit cards are pegged to the prime rate which is largely connected to the Fed funds rate.

In the late '70s and early '80s, state laws largely barred credit card lenders from charging more than 18%. In the mid-90s, with the prime rate hovering between 8% and 9%, credit card rates were 15.5% to 16%. Now, as the prime rate has risen to 8.25%, the average interest rate for a new credit card has risen from 14.6% in February 2022 to 24.2% last week, [according to LendingTree](#). That's raised monthly interest charges to \$140 – roughly a \$55 monthly uptick – on the average American's \$6,965 credit card balance.

Unemployment number

The [U.S. gained 209,000 jobs in June](#) as the unemployment rate dipped from 3.7% to 3.6%, according to the Labor Department.

That growth came despite inflation and high interest rates that are making it more expensive for both employers and consumers to borrow. But it was also the weakest uptick since December 2020.

How will another rate hike affect the stock market?

Stocks have been surging on hopes that inflation is slowing enough that a rate hike on Wednesday will be the last from the Fed this year, and the economy will [avoid recession](#), - especially since the [labor market is strong](#). The benchmark broad-market S&P 500 index closed Tuesday at the highest level since April 2022, while the blue-chip Dow had a winning streak of 12 consecutive days, the longest rally since February 2017.

Despite this impressive run, some remain wary because higher rates make borrowing and business investment more expensive. They also dampen consumer spending, which pares corporate profits and can spark layoffs. Some economists say that a ripple effect could still occur, though most likely towards the end of the year.

"Recession risk is still elevated, pushed out but not quite eliminated," said Alex Pelle, economist at Mizuho Securities USA. "Economic bears may yet be right that monetary policy lags will eventually have a serious bite."

What is a recession?

[A recession is](#) "a significant decline in economic activity that spreads across the economy and lasts more than a few months," according to Michael Pugliese, an economist with Wells Fargo. The nonprofit National Bureau of Economic Research, which designates when a recession occurred, looks at various indicators such as the jobless rate, consumer spending, retail sales and industrial production.

The last two downturns happened when the economy was jolted by a housing crisis in 2008/2009 and then the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, which led to massive layoffs as many businesses struggled or were forced to shutter when people hunkered down in their homes.

A recession this year would be triggered by the string of rate hikes implemented by the Federal Reserve to tame an economy that rapidly accelerated as the pandemic waned.

Monthly inflation rate

The inflation rate has decreased by more than half from its peak of 9.1% in June 2022. Here's a look at the inflation rate in the U.S. by month since May 2022:

- May 2022: 8.6%
- June 2022: 9.1%
- July 2022: 8.5%
- Aug 2022: 8.3%
- Sept 2022: 8.2%
- Oct 2022: 7.7%
- Nov 2022: 7.1%
- Dec 2022: 6.5%
- Jan 2023: 6.4%
- Feb 2023: 6.0%
- Mar 2023: 5.0%
- Apr 2023: 4.9%
- May 2023: 4.0%
- June 2023: 3.0%

How high will interest rates go in 2023?

In June, the Fed forecast additional rate hikes amounting to a half percentage point this year, according to officials' median estimate. That was a quarter point more than economists expected, and a half point more than the Fed projected in March.

The Fed felt it had to continue boosting rates since earlier hikes were having a minimal impact on inflation. But [financial markets figure](#) that while the key rate will likely get another push in July, there won't be another hike this year because the economy and inflation will cool significantly without one.

Will Fed rate hike help savers?

Higher costs for borrowers can be good news for savers. After years of earning nearly 0% on savings deposits, another boost to the fed funds rate could earn savers another 20 to 30 basis points in high-yield online savings accounts, according to Ken Tumin, founder of DepositAccounts.com, which tracks depository banking products.

Stock market today

Stocks were mixed in morning trading as the markets waited on the Fed's decision. Dow Jones futures were up a slight 0.03% and 10-year treasuries rose 3.86%. The S&P 500 was down 0.16% and Nasdaq dipped 0.40%.

Will Fed rate hike hurt borrowers?

The Fed's rapid rate hikes have definitely [punched consumers in the pocketbook](#). Because of the 500 basis points in rate increases from March 2022 to May 2023, borrowers already will [pay \\$34.4 billion in extra interest charges](#) over the next 12 months, according to WalletHub.

Another 25-basis-point increase, which is expected to be announced by the Fed on Wednesday, will cost consumers \$1.72 billion more. That means the annual cost of the Fed's recent rate bumps is a staggering \$36 billion in total, WalletHub said. At the end of March, total household debt stood at [\\$17.05 trillion](#), and the share of debt becoming delinquent rose for most debt types, according to the New York Federal Reserve.

When will inflation go down?

The worst of the [current bout of inflation](#) is probably behind us, with the four-decade high inflation rate of 9.1%, reached last June, dropping to 3% last month.

“I’ve seen forecasts of inflation coming down to normal levels by the end of 2023 and into 2024,” Fabio Gaertner, an associate professor at the Wisconsin School of Business, previously told USA TODAY.

For now, however, the current inflation rate is still well above the Fed’s 2% goal.

How does raising interest rates help inflation?

The Fed raises its key rate to make it more expensive for consumers and businesses to borrow, potentially putting a break on spending and slowing down spikes in the costs of goods and services.

How many times has the Fed raised rates?

Since March 2022, the Fed has increased its benchmark federal funds rate at 10 consecutive meetings by a total of 5 percentage points. That’s the steepest spate of rate hikes in forty years. But in June it broke that streak when it left the key rate unchanged.

Can the U.S. dodge a recession with a "soft landing?"

Amid stubborn inflation, economists have [hoped for a soft landing](#) that would mean prices are reined in without big jumps in joblessness or the economy contracting.

Many have [predicted a rockier road](#), paved by the Fed implementing ten rate hikes in a row to get inflation under control. Those actions have threatened to tip the U.S. economy into at least a mild recession, economists say.

But a low unemployment rate, consistent consumer spending, and gradually falling inflation are giving some banks and investors more confidence that a “soft landing” could be the outcome.

“We have greater resiliency within the economy than I would have anticipated at this point in time, given the extent of rate increases we’ve gotten,” Matthew Luzzetti, [Deutsche Bank’s chief U.S. economist said](#).

Are we in a recession?

No, though some economists say that if the Fed continues to raise rates, the U.S. will tip into a downturn.

So far it hasn’t happened largely due to consumers having significant savings to fall back on in the wake of the pandemic. During the global health crisis, when many Americans had to stay home and were on the receiving end of trillions of dollars in federal stimulus checks aimed at helping laid-off workers survive, households accumulated roughly \$2.5 trillion in [excess savings](#).

That financial cushion has helped Americans stay afloat despite inflation that reached a four-decade high last June and rising interest rates. Additionally, consumers who had to mostly stay home during the pandemic continue to be in a spending mood, with consumption rising 3.8% in the first three months of this year.

But savings are waning, with only about \$1.5 trillion of the pandemic-related surplus remaining, according to Moody’s Analytics.

U.S. inflation rate

[Consumer prices overall rose 3% in June as compared to a year earlier](#). That was down from the 4% uptick the previous month, according to the Labor Department’s consumer price index.

Payments jump on new 30-year fixed rate mortgage

MONTHLY PAYMENTS BASED ON \$90,000 DOWNPAYMENT

3.6%: January 2022

PRINCIPAL & INTEREST



PROPERTY TAX & INSURANCE

6.8%: July 2023



SOURCE [Bankrate mortgage calculator](#)

June marked the 12th month in a row that [inflation cooled](#) as static [grocery prices took some of the sting](#) out of gas prices that were again on the rise, and rent costs that remained stubbornly high.

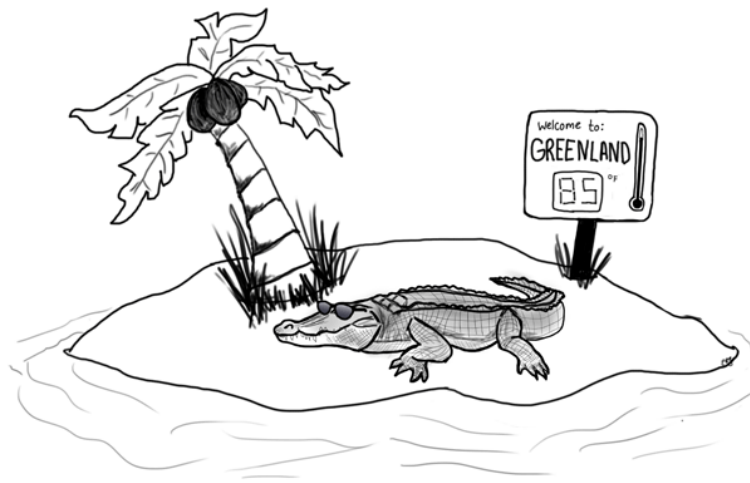
Broadly, prices have been all over the map. Used cars for instance have become more affordable as pandemic-related snarls in the supply chain start to unwind. But services like haircuts and car repairs continue to cost more as employers offer higher wages to keep workers amid lingering labor shortages.

When will the Fed lower interest rates? [With more hikes expected in 2023, timeline shifts](#)

Read more: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/2023/07/26/fed-interest-rate-hike-live-updates/70463418007/>

What's the hottest Earth's ever been?

BY SCOTT AND REBECCA LINDSEY



56 million years ago

Cartoon by Emily Greenhalgh, NOAA Climate.gov.

History of hot

Temperature records from thermometers and weather stations exist only for a tiny portion of our planet's 4.54-billion-year-long life. By studying indirect clues—the chemical and structural signatures of rocks, fossils, and crystals, ocean sediments, fossilized reefs, tree rings, and ice cores—however, scientists can infer past temperatures.

None of these techniques help with the very early Earth. During the time known as the Hadean (yes, because it was like Hades), Earth's collisions with other large planetesimals in our young solar system—including a Mars-sized one whose impact with Earth likely created the Moon—would have melted and vaporized most rock at the surface. Because no rocks on Earth have survived from so long ago, scientists have estimated early Earth conditions based on observations of the Moon and on astronomical models. Following the collision that spawned the Moon, the planet was estimated to have been around 2,300 Kelvin (3,680°F).

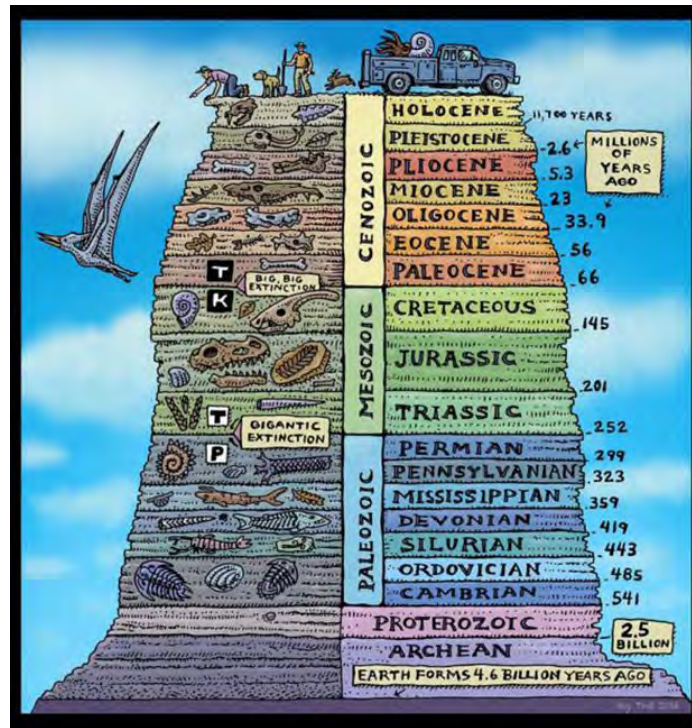
Even after collisions stopped, and the planet had tens of millions of years to cool, surface temperatures were likely more than 400° Fahrenheit. [Zircon crystals](#) from Australia, only about 150 million years younger than the Earth itself, hint that our planet may have cooled faster than scientists previously thought. Still, in its infancy, Earth would have experienced temperatures far higher than we humans could possibly survive.

But suppose we exclude the violent and scorching years when Earth first formed. When else has Earth's surface sweltered?

Thawing the freezer

Between 600 and 800 million years ago—a period of time geologists call the Neoproterozoic—evidence suggests the Earth underwent an [ice age](#) so cold that ice sheets not only capped the polar latitudes, but may have extended all the way to sea level near the equator. Reflecting ever more sunlight back into space as they expanded, the ice

sheets cooled the climate and reinforced their own growth. Obviously, the Earth didn't remain stuck in the freezer, so how did the planet thaw?



A geologic history of Earth since its formation 4.6 billion years ago, divided by eon and period, and showing fossils typical of a given period. Fossils reveal not only ancient plants and animals, but also ancient climates. Artwork © Ray Troll, 2010. Used with permission.

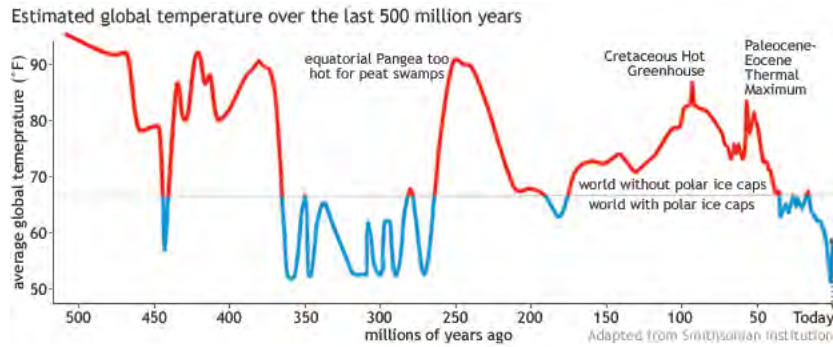
Even while ice sheets covered more and more of Earth's surface, tectonic plates continued to drift and collide, so volcanic activity also continued. Volcanoes emit the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide. In our current, mostly ice-free world, the natural weathering of silicate rock by rainfall consumes carbon dioxide over geologic time scales. During the frigid conditions of the Neoproterozoic, rainfall became rare. With volcanoes churning out carbon dioxide and little or no rainfall to weather rocks and consume the greenhouse gas, temperatures climbed.

What evidence do scientists have that all this actually happened some 700 million years ago? Some of the best evidence is "[cap carbonates](#)" lying directly over Neoproterozoic-age glacial deposits. Cap carbonates—layers of calcium-rich rock such as limestone—only form in warm water.

The fact that these thick, calcium-rich rock layers sat directly on top of rock deposits left behind by retreating glaciers indicate that temperatures rose significantly near the end of the Neoproterozoic, perhaps reaching a global average higher than 90° Fahrenheit. (Today's global average is lower than 60°F.)

The tropical Arctic

A Smithsonian Institution project has tried to reconstruct temperatures for the Phanerozoic Eon, or roughly the last half a billion years. [Preliminary results](#) released in 2019 showed warm temperatures dominating most of that time, with global temperatures repeatedly rising above 80°F and even 90°F—much too warm for ice sheets or perennial sea ice. About 250 million years ago, around the equator of the supercontinent Pangea, it was even too hot for peat swamps!

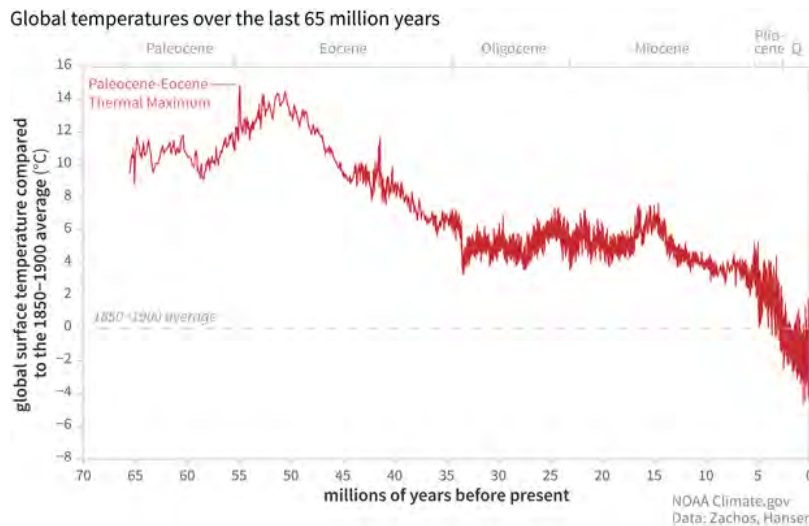


Preliminary results from a Smithsonian Institution project led by Scott Wing and Paul Huber, showing Earth's average surface temperature over the past 500 million years. For most of the time, global temperatures appear to have been too warm (red portions of line) for persistent polar ice caps. The most recent 50 million years are an exception. Image adapted from Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History.

Geologists and paleontologists have found that, in the last 100 million years, global temperatures have peaked twice. One spike was the Cretaceous Hot Greenhouse roughly 92 million years ago, about 25 million years before Earth's last dinosaurs went extinct. Widespread volcanic activity may have boosted atmospheric carbon dioxide. Temperatures were so high that champsosaurs (crocodile-like reptiles) lived as far north as the Canadian Arctic, and warm-temperature forests thrived near the South Pole.

Another hothouse period was the Paleocene-Eocene Thermal Maximum (PETM) about 55-56 million years ago. Though not quite as hot as the Cretaceous hothouse, the PETM brought [rapidly rising temperatures](#). During much of the Paleocene and early Eocene, the poles were free of ice caps, and palm trees and crocodiles lived above the Arctic Circle.

During the PETM, the global mean temperature appears to have risen by as much as 5-8°C (9-14°F) to an average temperature as high as 73°F. (Again, today's global average is shy of 60°F.) At roughly the same time, paleoclimate data like fossilized phytoplankton and ocean sediments record a massive release of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, at least doubling or possibly even quadrupling the background concentrations.



Global surface temperatures were generally high throughout the Paleocene and Eocene, with a particularly warm spike at the boundary between the two geological epochs around 56 million years ago. Temperatures in the distant past are inferred from proxies, in this case, oxygen isotope ratios from fossil foraminifera, single-celled marine organisms. "Q" stands of Quaternary. Graphic produced using [data](#) from [Zachos](#) and [Hansen](#), with help from Dr. Carrie Morrill, Director of the World Data Service for Paleoclimatology.

It is still uncertain where all the carbon dioxide came from and what the exact sequence of events was. Scientists have considered the drying up of large inland seas, volcanic activity, thawing permafrost, release of methane from warming ocean sediments, huge wildfires, and even—briefly—a comet.

Like nothing we've ever seen

Earth's hottest periods—the Hadean, the late Neoproterozoic, the Cretaceous Hot Greenhouse, the PETM—occurred before humans existed. Those ancient climates would have been like nothing our species has ever seen.

Modern human civilization, with its permanent agriculture and settlements, has developed over just the past 10,000 years or so. The period has generally been one of low temperatures and relative global (if not regional) climate stability. Compared to most of Earth's history, today is unusually cold; we now live in what geologists call an interglacial—a period between glaciations of an ice age. But as greenhouse-gas emissions warm Earth's climate, it's possible our planet has seen its last glaciation for a long time.

Read more: <https://www.climate.gov/news-features/climate-qa/whats-hottest-earths-ever-been>