

# **EVALUATION AND APPRAISAL REPORT**

## **NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA STRATEGIC REGIONAL POLICY PLAN**

This document has been prepared with financial assistance from the  
Florida Department of Community Affairs

North Central Florida Regional Planning Council  
2009 NW 67th Place, Suite A  
Gainesville, Florida 32653-1603

December 7, 2000

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
INTRODUCTION	v
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	v
STRATEGIC REGIONAL SUBJECT AREAS	
Affordable Housing	I-1
Economic Development	II-1
Emergency Preparedness	III-1
Natural Resources of Regional Significance	IV-1
Regional Transportation	V-1
REGIONALLY SIGNIFICANT FACILITIES AND RESOURCES	VI-1
COORDINATION OUTLINE	VII-1

## LIST OF TABLES

<b>Table</b>		<b>Page</b>
I-1	PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS PAYING 30 PERCENT OR MORE OF ANNUAL INCOME ON HOUSING: HOUSEHOLDS EARNING LESS THAN \$10,000 PER YEAR	I-3
I-2	PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS PAYING 30 PERCENT OR MORE OF ANNUAL INCOME ON HOUSING: HOUSEHOLDS EARNING BETWEEN \$10,000 AND \$19,999 PER YEAR	I-4
I-3	PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS PAYING 30 PERCENT OR MORE OF ANNUAL INCOME ON HOUSING: HOUSEHOLDS EARNING BETWEEN \$20,000 AND \$34,999 PER YEAR	I-5

## LIST OF TABLES, CONT'D.

Table		Page
I-4	PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS PAYING 30 PERCENT OR MORE OF ANNUAL INCOME ON HOUSING: HOUSEHOLDS EARNING BETWEEN \$35,000 AND \$49,999 PER YEAR	I-6
I-5	PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS PAYING 30 PERCENT OR MORE OF ANNUAL INCOME ON HOUSING: HOUSEHOLDS EARNING \$50,000 AND OVER PER YEAR	I-7
I-6	HYPOTHETICAL DRI: ESTIMATED PHASE 1 AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEMAND AND SUPPLY	I-11
II-1	FARM LABOR AND PROPRIETOR'S INCOME, 1990 THROUGH 1996	II-4
II-2	DIXIE AND TAYLOR COUNTY FISH AND SHELLFISH LANDINGS, 1990-1997	II-5
II-3	NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA ANNUAL PULPWOOD HARVEST, 1991, 1993, & 1995 (CORDS)	II-5
III-1	NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA PUBLIC SHELTER CAPACITY USING AMERICAN RED CROSS PUBLIC SHELTER GUIDELINES	III-3
IV-1	CHANGE IN ESTIMATED WATER CONSUMPTION, 1990-1995	IV-7
IV-2	PERCENTAGE CHANGE IN ESTIMATED WATER CONSUMPTION, 1990-1995	IV-8
IV-3	WATER QUALITY OF FIRST MAGNITUDE SPRINGS OF NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA	IV-10
IV-4	NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA FIRST AND SECOND MAGNITUDE SPRINGS NOT CURRENTLY LISTED AS NATURAL RESOURCES OF REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE	IV-11
IV-5	1998 SECTION 303(D) LIST, NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA REGION	IV-24
V-1	REGIONAL ROAD NETWORK: SEGMENTS CURRENTLY OPERATING BELOW THE ADOPTED MINIMUM LEVEL OF SERVICE STANDARD	V-2

## LIST OF TABLES, CONT'D.

<b>Table</b>		<b>Page</b>
V-2	REGIONAL ROAD NETWORK: SEGMENTS ANTICIPATED TO DROP BELOW THE ADOPTED MINIMUM LOS BY 2011	V-3
V-3	COMPLETED REGIONAL ROAD NETWORK IMPROVEMENTS 1996-1999	V-5
V-4	SCHEDULED REGIONAL ROAD NETWORK IMPROVEMENTS: 2000-2005	V-7
V-5	NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA PARATRANSIT RIDERSHIP: FISCAL YEARS 1995-96 AND 1998-99	V-12
V-6	NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA PARATRANSIT FUNDING: FISCAL YEARS 1995-96 AND 1998-99	V-13

## **INTRODUCTION**

Section 186.511, Florida Statutes (F.S.), calls for the Council to prepare an assessment of the regional plan once every five years. The purpose of the assessment is to evaluate the successes and failures of the plan and the preparation necessary amendments, revisions, or updates to the plan based upon the assessment. The assessment report is to primarily be based on the region's progress toward attainment of strategic regional policy plan goals using the plan's regional indicators. Rule 27E-5.008, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.), notes that the assessments shall identify plan amendments which may be necessary as a result of changing regional conditions, changes to the State Comprehensive Plan, or other statutory changes.

The assessment is organized around the reporting requirements of Chapter 186.511, F.S. and Rule 27E-5, F.A.C. The plan's five strategic regional subject areas: Affordable Housing, Economic Development, Emergency Preparedness, Natural Resources of Regional Significance, and Regional Transportation, are assessed separately. Each subject area assessment includes an evaluation of regional indicators, the identification of the successes and failures of the plan, the impact of the subject area on local government comprehensive plans, an evaluation of unanticipated problems and opportunities, and the impact of changes in state statutes and rules on the regional plan. The assessments conclude with the identification of recommended plan amendments and new actions necessary to address issues identified herein. Finally, the plan's list of Regional Facilities and Resources and its Coordination Outline are also reviewed.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

Generally, the plan's affordable housing goal of reducing the percentage of the region's lower-income households spending 30 percent or more of their annual household income on housing is thought to have been furthered since the adoption of the regional plan in 1996. Unfortunately, supporting evidence is scanty. The decennial census is the primary source for housing affordability indicators. New data by which a comparison can be made to the plan's current regional indicators is unavailable prior to the January 2001 submittal deadline for the Council's Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR). That data which is available suggests the region enjoyed rates of housing affordability for lower-income households in 1995 which were similar to those of 1989, the most recent year for which census data is available. Additionally, all local government comprehensive plan amendments reviewed by the Council since adoption of the regional plan have been found to be consistent with the plan's affordable housing goal. Finally, all developments of regional impact (DRI) reviewed by the Council since adoption of the DRI adequate housing rule have been consistent with this rule.

The EAR recommends a number of relatively small changes to the subject area. The most significant recommendation calls for amending the affordable housing subject area to identify a DRI affordable housing methodology which divides the moderate-income, low-income, and very low-income ranges into subcategories to match affordable housing supply to demand within these subcategories in a manner consistent with Rule 9J-2.048, F.A.C.

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Substantial progress has been made in implementing the goals of the economic development subject area. The region has participated in the nationwide employment boom of the late 1990s and the economy of every county in the region is stronger today than in 1990. The number of employers has risen, unemployment rates have dropped, and average incomes have increased.

In light of the successful implementation of the subject area's goals, the EAR recommends a relatively small number minor changes. The most significant recommendation is the addition of a new policy to address the Council's involvement with the Interstate-75 Corridor Task Force.

### **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

Significant progress has been made in implementing the goals of the emergency preparedness subject area. Since adoption of the regional plan in 1996, the region's emergency weather radio coverage has been significantly expanded. A majority of the region's coastal communities have installed warning sirens. The quality of public emergency shelters is improving through the use of American Red Cross guidelines to determine the fitness of structures for use as emergency shelters. The ability of local governments to receive emergency assistance has increased with all but three local governments becoming signatories to the Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement for catastrophic Disaster Response and Recovery.

With regards to longer-term planning issues, an additional four north central Florida local governments have become participants in the National Flood Insurance Program since 1996. Furthermore, the region's two coastal counties are in the process of expanding the geographic extent of their coastal High Hazard Areas as designated in their local government comprehensive plans.

Five counties and three municipalities in north central Florida have recently banded together to create a regional hazmat team. However, certain areas of the region remain beyond a 60-minute response time of the nearest available local hazmat team. It is anticipated that all eleven north central Florida counties will eventually join the regional hazmat team.

The EAR recommends a number of small changes. The most significant recommendations call for adding policies to address the completion of public shelter surveys and the creation of a new study to address north central Florida public shelter net surpluses and deficits based on Risk-compliant ARC 4496 shelter guidelines.

## **NATURAL RESOURCES OF REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE**

North central Florida local government comprehensive plans are generally consistent with the regional plan with regards to the identification and protection of Natural Resources of Regional Significance. This conclusion is based on a staff assessment of local government comprehensive plan, plan amendment, and EAR reviews made by the Council since adoption of the regional plan.

A need exists for the creation of new regional indicators, particularly indicators of groundwater and surfacewater quality and quantity, the health of listed species, and land cover within selected Natural Resources of Regional Significance. In some cases the EAR recommends specific regional indicators are proposed. In others the review merely suggests the need for the development of indicators. Although currently addressed in the regional plan, additional emphasis should be given to systematic monitoring of groundwater and surfacewaters. Current monitoring efforts are often sporadic. While a core monitoring network is in place, consideration should be given to expanding the network to include all waterbodies identified as natural resources of regional significance. Just as importantly, consideration should be given to improving the frequency of monitoring in order to assure the provision of historical data for defensible trend analysis. In addition to water monitoring, the review recommends monitoring land cover within selected Natural Resources of Regional Significance to evaluate land cover change over time.

A number of new natural resource protection policies are recommended to strengthen the relationship between the regional plan and Developments of Regional Impact (DRI), local government comprehensive plans, and applications reviewed by the Council for federal funding. Currently, the regional plan provides policy direction calling for the protection of some, but not all, Natural Resources of Regional Significance. The EAR recommends expanding the plan's policy direction to address all Natural Resources of Regional Significance. While recommending additional protection policies, the EAR also emphasizes the need for local government discretion in establishing minimum levels of protection.

## **REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION**

With the notable exception of the Gainesville urban area, the overall level of service of the regional road network has improved since the adoption of the regional plan. The level of service of the regional road network has declined while public transit ridership has dramatically increased within the Gainesville urban area. Public transit ridership in the remainder of the region has also increased but at more modest rates.

The EAR recommends a number of relatively small changes. The most significant recommendation calls for amending Regional Transportation Goal 5.1 to recognize the use of Transportation Concurrency Exception Areas (TCEAs) in local government comprehensive plans for urban infill and redevelopment areas. The amendment is required by recent changes in state law which call for regional agencies to encourage the use of TCEAs in local government comprehensive plans.

## **REGIONAL FACILITIES AND COORDINATION OUTLINE**

The EAR recommends adding pre-historic and historic sites to the regional plan's list of regional facilities. The EAR also recommends updating the Coordination Outline chapter to reflect current Council activities and programs.