

# Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council

**Council Offices**  
**421 SW Camden Avenue**  
**Stuart, Florida 34994**  
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**Please Note  
Location**

## **(GoToMeeting)**

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## **Meeting Agenda**

**September 9, 2021 ~ 2:00 p.m.**

1. Roll Call
2. Agenda Approval
3. Approval of May 13, 2021 Meeting Minutes
4. Access to Capital Project Update
5. Consistency Findings on U.S. Economic Development Administration Applications for Grant Funding
6. Overview of U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) American Rescue Plan Funding Opportunities
7. Annual Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Plan Update
8. COVID Response and Recovery Task Force Update
9. Public Comment
10. CEDS Committee Member Comment
11. Next Meeting – November 18, 2021
12. Adjournment



Agenda items are available on our website at <http://www.tcrpc.org>

**Special Needs:** Participants with special needs can be accommodated by calling the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council at least 2 working days prior to the Meeting. We can be reached by phone at (772)221-4060, by fax at (772)221-4067, or by email at [lgulick@tcrpc.org](mailto:lgulick@tcrpc.org).

**DRAFT Minutes of the  
Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committee  
Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council  
May 13, 2021 Meeting**

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Chair Jones called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

**Agenda Item 1: Roll Call**

Ms. Heidt called roll.

**Committee Members and Alternates Participating in Person**

Ted Astolfi	Martin County
Pauline Becker	Martin County
Kevin Kryzda	Martin County
Pinal Gandhi-Savdas	Martin County
Gary Hines	Palm Beach County
Alan Chin Lee	Palm Beach County
Peter Jones	St. Lucie County

**Committee Members and Alternates Participating Virtually**

Helene Caseltine	Indian River County
Charles Duval	Palm Beach County
Thuy Shutt	Palm Beach County

**Excused**

Mark Mathes	Indian River County
Nicholas Rojas, Alternate	Indian River County
Lee-Anna Otis	Indian River County
Jared Gaylord	Martin County
Ralph Davino, Alternate	Martin County
Kathie Smith, Alternate	Martin County
Charles Duval	Palm Beach County
Pete Tesch	St. Lucie County

**Absent**

Nepoleon Collins	Palm Beach County
R. Douglas Bynoe	St. Lucie County

## **District Staff**

Thomas Lanahan (Virtual) TCRPC  
Stephanie Heidt TCRPC  
Terry Ann Paulo TCRPC

## **Visitors**

William Cross (Virtual)  
Joan Goodrich (Virtual)  
Sara Maxfield (Virtual)  
Bill West (In-Person)

## **Agenda Item 2: Agenda Approval**

*Committee Action:* Mr. Hines moved approval of the agenda. Mr. Astolfi seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

## **Agenda Item 3: Approval of March 11, 2021 Meeting Minutes**

*Committee Action:* Mr. Astolfi moved approval of the March 11, 2021 meeting minutes. Mr. Kryzda seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

## **Agenda Item 4: Florida Power & Light Company – Presentation by Kate Cotner, Senior External Affairs Advisor**

Ms. Cotner presented an overview of Florida Power & Light Company (FPL) customer programs and assistance. She noted that to date, FPL has provided \$75 million in COVID-19 assistance through such initiatives as decreasing customer bills; waiving late and reconnection fees; payment extensions; and direct bill relief. FPL also helped small businesses recover from the pandemic through their Market Street Recovery Program. Ms. Cotner also highlighted FPL's educational support programs that provided devices and virtual programming for remote learning; and their college workforce development programs.

Ms. Cotner provided the Committee information on FPL's EVOlution plan, which will install electric vehicle (EV) charging stations throughout their service area. FPL will partner with organizations to create charging points for current and future EV drivers. FPL will provide the EV-charging equipment that they will install and maintain. The partners agree to a 7-year commitment and cover the cost of electricity used at their site.

Ms. Becker asked what the cost is to charge a car. Ms. Cotner indicated that while there is no direct answer, charging stations located at their offices, which are typically always in use, average about \$50 per month per space. She indicated she will get the exact figure per kilowatt. Ms. Becker noted that her relatives in California experience extensive times when they have no electricity, which makes her hesitant to have a vehicle that will rely on

electricity. Ms. Cotner noted that in several states, California included, there are unregulated utilities. She stated that Florida is a regulated state and FPL spends a lot of money to make sure they provide reliable service to their customers.

Mr. Chin Lee asked if there are challenges with the installation of the charging stations. Ms. Cotner noted that in Port St. Lucie there were issues with running lines which would have required them to trim trees, which the City did not want to do. She indicated that they were able to go under ground with the lines. She stated one of the most important things is to make sure that the hosting entity will have enough demand. Mr. Chin Lee asked if there will be backup generators in the event of a power outage. Ms. Cotner stated that to her knowledge that is not currently part of the installation plan, but will be part of the conversation going forward. Mr. Chin Lee noted that at a gas station it takes 3 to 5 minutes to fill up a car with gasoline. He asked if there has been consideration of partnering with companies in areas where there are things to do while the car is charging such as go to a restaurant or go shopping. Ms. Cotner stated that Starbucks has been a big supporter of the plan, because it encourages individuals to come into their stores and spend time. She stated the same is being seen at malls. She noted that there are levels of charging, with Level Two taking up to 11 hours for a full charge, and Level Three being as fast at 20 minutes. She stated that the faster charging stations are being strategically placed along the highways and at service plazas.

Ms. Becker asked who pays for the installations. Ms. Cotner indicated that FPL pays for the installation. She noted FPL also has pilot projects that includes the installation of solar trees to power the stations. She noted that if any of the equipment is damaged, such as by a hurricane, they will replace it.

Ms. Heidt asked how long the contracts are with the participating companies. Ms. Cotner indicated that the initial agreement is for 7 years, but that can be extended an additional three years. She noted that after that FPL will work with the company to take over the equipment.

### **Agenda Item 5: American Rescue Plan of 2021 – Opportunity from Adversity**

Mr. Lanahan indicated the purpose of his presentation is to start the conversation of what will be the legacy of this pandemic. He asked if it will be about rubber gloves and surgical masks, or projects like those done in the past through the Works Project Administration (WPA) or Public Works Administration (PWA) in the recovery from the Great Depression. He stated that this is a good time to find opportunities to address adversity and help lift up people. He provided examples of regional projects done through the WPA program, which include: a mural from the old Fort Pierce post office; the old Martin County Courthouse that is now a cultural center; the old Armory building in West Palm Beach, which is now an art center; the Flagler Memorial Bridge, which has now been replaced but lasted from 1938 to 2014; the Old Lake Worth bridge, which was built in 1937, and lasted until 1973; and a mural from the Lake Worth post office. Mr. Lanahan noted that within the Region there will be a total of \$694 Million available through the American Rescue Plan to counties and cities. He suggested that now is the time to take the opportunity of leveraging those federal dollars with state and local dollars to do big projects that will have lasting effects rather than

spreading around the money to do small projects or fund things that will not be around in the future.

Mr. Astolfi asked if Mr. Lanahan has identified any projects. Mr. Lanahan noted that, at the direction of Council, he has been having conversations with the South Florida Regional Planning Council executive director to identify projects that could be beneficial for the entire seven-county region. He indicated that those projects could include infrastructure improvements to sewer treatment facilities and expanding the U.S. Highway 27 rail corridor that runs along the center of the state to be used for cargo transportation. He stated that there are real infrastructure needs that could be addressed with this unique funding opportunity.

Mr. Lanahan noted that another good investment would be expanding broadband access, which is one of the initiatives that Council has been working on with the state's broadband office. Mr. Kryzda asked if the state is working with other agencies and institutions, such as the Florida Department of Transportation, hospitals, and libraries. Mr. Lanahan indicated not at this time, but he will raise that issue with the state's broadband office as they move forward with developing their strategic plan.

#### **Agenda Item 6: COVID Task Force Update**

Ms. Paulo provided the Committee with an update on the Task Force, which was approved by Council at its April 16<sup>th</sup> meeting. She noted that the Task Force will be responsible for creating a pandemic response plan that will be included in the annual update to the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Plan. The membership will be comprised of CEDs committee members, regional planning council board members, local government representatives, chambers of commerce, special purpose economic development agencies, workforce development boards, and other industry representatives. She noted that there needs to be representation from each of the counties in the Region, but is having difficulty getting representation from Indian River County.

Mr. Jones indicated he has a few people in mind that he will approach and have them contact Ms. Paulo. Mr. Astolfi suggested someone from the Tourism Development Council. Ms. Caseltine asked what the time commitment would be. Ms. Paulo indicated that the commitment is to attend a one-hour meeting each month. She also noted that the committee will sunset in June of 2022. Ms. Caseltine asked if the task force members can attend those meeting virtually. Ms. Heidt noted that the task force will be required to operate under Sunshine rules, so there is a requirement for an in-person quorum on voting matters. However, there will be a virtual attendance option for all meetings.

Mr. Chin Lee noted that what the task force will be developing will be more of a response and recovery plan, not just a plan that is specific to COVID-19. Ms. Caseltine noted that her chamber has a disaster recovery plan that she will share so it can be used to help inform the Task Force's plan. Ms. Heidt noted that the task force will not only be creating a plan, but collaborate as a group to discuss what has been occurred in their respective jurisdictions and share some of their best management practices. Ms. Caseltine also recommended

checking with the International Economic Development Council to see if they will share their recovery plan.

Ms. Paulo noted that she is in the process of putting together the results of the Business Impact Survey, which she will provide to the Committee.

### **Agenda Item 7: Public Comment**

None

### **Agenda Item 8: CEDS Committee Member Comment**

Mr. Jones provided information related to the issues that companies are facing trying to find qualified workers. He noted that at a recent workforce committee meeting there were presentations on programs that are available to provide individuals with new skills sets to help fill needed positions. He indicated that it is especially difficult to find workers for the hospitality industry. He stated that if we know what new jobs will be coming over the next year, then we can plan training programs to make sure we have a skilled labor force to fill those jobs. He noted that we also need to consider where people are going to live, because housing options are limited with the increase in housing prices caused by individuals relocating here because it is more desirable to live here, especially if you can work remotely.

Mr. Jones encouraged Council members to read the *The Demographic Drought* report by Emsi that provides information about the transformation of the labor market and what strategies companies need to take to respond to the changing workforce.

Mr. Astolfi noted that another thing to consider is that the baby boomers that really expanded the workforce are now retiring. Also, people are not having children until later in life, so the decline in population has exacerbated this issue. He suggested that there will need to be immigration from other countries to fill needed positions. Mr. Kryzda noted that there are several people who have come to this country that are ready, willing, and able to learn new skills, but are prohibited by immigration policies. He indicated this needs to be looked at because these “undercover citizens” are making money here, but they send their money back to their home families in other countries and are not contributing to the economy through paying taxes and buying goods and services here. Ms. Becker stated that she believes that people are being incentivized through COVID-19 relief support to not look for work. She stated we need to get people trained for the jobs that are available.

Mr. Jones stated there may be some things this Committee could do to help the problem. Mr. Astolfi said that one important thing to be addressed is the culture part of working, meaning that employees today want to be treated fairly and recognized for their value. He indicated that part of that is being paid a livable wage and other things are such as flexible work hours.

Mr. Chin Lee noted that the talent pool no longer needs to be local to a company, so the competition for qualified workers will be more competitive as companies move to more

virtual work environments. This means that companies are no longer competing locally, but nationwide for the same talent.

Ms. Maxwell messaged the group that any industry that is not paying a living wage will have this problem and it does not matter where they are located. Mr. Kryzda stated that, for example, companies will not want to pay California rates to an engineer unless he is living there.

**Agenda Item 9: Next Meeting – July 8, 2021**

Chair Jones indicated that the next meeting is scheduled for July 8, 2021.

**Agenda Item 10: Adjournment**

There being no further business, Chair Jones adjourned the meeting at 3:30 p.m.

TREASURE COAST REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL  
COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY COMMITTEE

M E M O R A N D U M

To: Committee Members  
From: Staff  
Date: September 9, 2021  
Subject: Access to Capital Project Update

Capital is critical for entrepreneurs as they grow their businesses. A regionally healthy small business community is essential for sustainable economic development and neighborhood revitalization. Entrepreneurs need access to capital, networks, and guidance as they grow.

Access to smart capital can help attract and create businesses, expand existing businesses, and offset contracting businesses in other areas of the economy. Frequently, worthwhile projects with great economic potential go unfunded due to the inability to access needed capital. Impacts to business caused by the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted weaknesses in our area's access to capital.

To address this issue, the Florida Small Business Development Center at Indian River State College, the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council, and the Economic Development Center of St. Lucie County have come together as a Coalition to begin discussing the creation of public-private partnerships to build permanent capital access tools in our communities. To that end, the Coalition has undertaken the following initiatives:

- In June and July a survey was distributed to business owners, nonprofits and independent workers in the Treasure Coast Region of Indian River, St. Lucie, Martin, and Palm Beach counties with the overall goal of understanding their experiences and challenges related to obtaining funding resources for their businesses.
- A Capital Lender Survey was developed and launched in July to identify the continuum of funding that is available; which businesses lenders serve; and the types of products and services that are offered. The information gathered through the survey will provide the most clear and concise understanding of any limitations there are when it comes to capital access for our small businesses on the Treasure Coast.
- Because having support and guidance of banking, legal, accounting professionals, and other key stakeholders is key to a successful capital access launch for small businesses, the Coalition will be hosting an Access to Capital Regional Summit that will help to:

- Understand and fill gaps in access to capital for Treasure Coast businesses.
- Attract and develop funds to fill existing gaps in access to capital.
- Broadly distribute knowledge of capital access opportunities by networking bankers, attorneys, CPAs and other business professionals.

At the September CEDS meeting, Mr. Bill West will provide information to Committee Members on these efforts bring improve access to capital for small businesses in the Region.

### Recommendation

For information only.

# Agenda Item 5

## TREASURE COAST REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY COMMITTEE

### MEMORANDUM

To: Committee Members

From: Staff

Date: September 9, 2021

Subject: Consistency findings on U.S. Economic Development Administration Applications for Grant Funding

Projects receiving funding through the U.S. Economic Development Administration must show consistency with the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Plan (CEDS) for its respective Region. As projects are submitted to EDA for review, the CEDS Committee will review applications and provide consistency findings with the Treasure Coast CEDS plan.

#### Recommendation

District staff will provide project summaries and applicants may provide presentations of proposed projects at regularly scheduled and special meetings of the CEDS Committee. Upon Committee approval, District staff will provide a letter to the applicant to be submitted as part of their funding request.

# Agenda Item 6

## TREASURE COAST REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY COMMITTEE

### MEMORANDUM

To: Committee Members

From: Staff

Date: September 9, 2021

Subject: Overview of U.S. Economic Development Administration American Rescue Plan Funding Opportunities

In July 2021, the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA) announced \$3 billion in funding opportunities to invest in distressed and underserved communities impacted by the Coronavirus pandemic. This investment, funded by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) of 2021, is intended to support economic development focused on advancing equity, creating good-paying jobs, helping workers to develop in-demand skills, building economic resilience, and accelerating the economic recovery for the industries and communities hit hardest by the Coronavirus pandemic.

Through this funding opportunity, EDA will invest in infrastructure, innovation, and workforce training to create good-paying American jobs, and strengthen our nation's global economic competitiveness. Under its Investing in America's Communities Program, EDA developed the following six opportunities and allocated funding:

- Build Back Better Regional Challenge (\$1 billion)
- Good Jobs Challenge (\$500 million)
- Economic Adjustment Assistance Challenge (\$500 million)
- Indigenous Communities Challenge (\$100 million)
- Travel, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation Grants (\$750 million)
- Statewide Planning, Research, and Network Grants (\$90 million)

EDA's priorities under its **Investing in America's Communities** program are:

- Getting Americans back to work
- Supporting Underserved Communities
- Accelerating Recovery of our hardest-hit communities
- Planning for a resilient future

At the September 9, 2021 meeting, District staff will provide an overview of these funding opportunities.

### Recommendation

For information only.