

Updated 2/6/12

First Coast Consortium Approach and Frequently Asked Questions

What is the First Coast Consortium? The Consortium is a voluntary partnership assembled to respond to the HUD Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant. It was created in 2010 and welcomes new members.

What is the HUD Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant? The 2011 Regional Planning grant program encouraged grantees to support regional planning efforts that integrate housing, land-use, economic and workforce development, transportation, and infrastructure developments in a manner that empowers regions to consider how all these factors work together to bring economic competitiveness and revitalization to a community. The program places a priority on partnerships, including the collaboration of arts and culture, philanthropy, and innovative ideas to the regional planning process. Funds can be used to create a regional plan for sustainable development (Group 1) or can be used to modify existing plans so that they are in accordance with the livability principles associated with the grant, or to prepare detailed execution plans for an adopted regional plan (Group 2).

What are the livability principles? They are:

1. Provide more transportation choices;
2. Promote equitable, affordable housing;
3. Enhance economic competitiveness;
4. Support existing communities;
5. Coordinate policies and leverage investment;
6. Value communities and neighborhoods

Was First Coast Consortium funded? No, but the Consortium remains committed to working together on a better future for the region, and anticipates filing for other grant opportunities.

How does the Consortium work? All partners are committed to collaboration on a regional plan for sustainable development and on the action steps needed to advance the region's prosperity, livability and sustainability through the work program. There are two types of partners, each of which simply signs and submits an MOU in order to join.

Executive Committee partners are named in grant applications as being responsible for meeting the requirements of HUD or other funding sources and the region in creating a Regional Plan for Sustainable Development. The lead Agency, NEFRC, is an Executive Committee partner responsible for meeting all grant requirements. The other Executive Committee partners as of the 2011 funding cycle were the North Florida TPO, City of Jacksonville, ULI North Florida, Health Planning Council of Northeast Florida, Inc., the Regional Community Institute of Northeast Florida and JaxUSA Partnership for Regional Development.

Consortium partners are committed to the region and willing to assist in creation of the plan, including helping to engage their constituencies in the planning.

Who can join the Consortium? Any private sector organization, non-profit, academic or research institution, philanthropic partner, community organization, governmental entity, individual, or intermediary agency that bears responsibility for or has an interest in the sustainable development and redevelopment of Northeast Florida, may be a Consortium partner.

How does an organization join the Consortium? If you or your organization is in the listed categories above, simply sign the MOU and return it electronically to mmoehring@nefrc.org, and mail the hard copy original to Margo Moehring, NEFRC, 6850 Belfort Oaks Place, Jacksonville, Florida, 32216. Please also answer the Member Questions listed on the form posted on the website, and return the answers to Ms. Moehring.

How will the Consortium function if we are funded? If we are funded by HUD, there will be 120 days from notice of funding to negotiate and execute a formal Consortium agreement.

If I join the Consortium, does that mean my organization will receive funding from a grant? Not necessarily. You should join the Consortium if you are committed to this regional planning effort. Each member should be willing to show their commitment by contributing, at a minimum, in-kind services needed by the work program. This is important, because if we are not funded, we will still need the benefit of some level of the insights your organization can provide into the Regional Plan.

What was the work program in 2011? An outline is provided below. The approaches may differ, as funding was not approved.

Part 1. Integrated Impact Assessment of First Coast Vision (Cover 19 issues plus impact on local governments and business) by the Consortium. Based on results, Strategic Regional Policy Plan by end of year one of contract.

Part 2. Fill in the gaps: Implementation of Action Items from First Coast Vision (Leadership, Housing, Climate Change, Regional Atlas, Health, Regional Green Infrastructure, Multi-Modal Transportation Framework) Year one through three of contract.

Part 3. Institutionalize Regional Leadership. Use the funding to create a management structure that will last past the funding period that capitalizes on the strengths of existing leadership and organizations to create champions for sustainable development in the region. Year one through three of contract.

Part 4. Implement First Coast Vision measures as baseline. Develop Data Clearinghouse and Metrics. Year two through three of contract.

What is First Coast Vision? A vision for growth and development in the seven county Northeast Florida region for the next 50 years. This program has been lead by the

Regional Community Institute of Northeast Florida, Inc. It was provided to NEFRC so that they may consider its findings as they update the Regional Plan.

How does the Vision relate to the Consortium? The Consortium will use the vision to inform a process that considers and engages all of our citizens in creating a plan for the sustainable future of the region, and develops the capacity and strategy to achieve our goals.

How is the public involved? Public participation was an important part of First Coast Vision and will be a significant part of the Regional Plan. The Consortium will help with engaging residents who otherwise might not be involved in planning.

What kinds of organizations would be most helpful to the Consortium?

Organizations that bring all perspectives are needed. Here are just a few examples. We hope that banks will join us to help to assess whether the development types that the plan might envision will be financeable. We hope that community organizations will join us so we can engage the people they serve. We hope that youth organizations will join, as the young people they represent will be the most impacted by our efforts.

What happens if we are not funded? We were not funded in 2010 or 2011, but work continued on First Coast Vision, a vision for growth and development in the Northeast Florida region for the next 50 years. We will work on an update to the Regional Plan, with the benefit of as much input as we can get from the public and the partners, whether we are funded or not.

How can I access the MOU, member questions or get more information? Go to www.firstcoastvision.com and click on the Consortium tab.