

VISIONS



Future of The Region Awards Edition

A publication of the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council
Convening the region for 42 years

MISSION STATEMENT

To serve our citizens and member governments by providing a forum to foster communication, coordination and collaboration in identifying and addressing issues and needs regionally.

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TELEWORK GAINING MOMENTUM

Tampa Bay area companies are experimenting with the idea of letting some of their employees telecommute and the TBRPC is helping spearhead the effort.



Some field workers who collect taxes in Hillsborough County can put in a full day at work without ever going into the office, and their boss couldn't be happier.

With a small investment in radios and Internet access four years ago, the workers who collect delinquent fees and taxes increased their collections to \$14 million in a four-year period, up from \$9.1 million in 1995-1998. "As managers we can still talk to the employees every day by phone" said Hillsborough Tax Collector Doug Belden, "but what we are looking at

is results, and we saw an increase of 120 percent in some instances."

Help is on the way for local companies interested in the idea of telecommuting (whether it be part-time – once a week or a few times a month – or full-time), including free consulting and expertise that would normally cost thousands.

The new program, Telework Tampa Bay, was kicked off in February and aims to help more companies realize the productivity, reduced absenteeism, employee retention and flexibility that

working from home offers the company.

Telework Tampa Bay is a partnership between the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council and Bay Area Commuter Services. BACS is an agency funded by the state Department of Transportation that works to reduce road congestion and improve air quality by keeping traffic down. "Telework has many benefits to our regional community: reduced traffic congestion and pollution, enhanced economic development as well as increased employee morale and productivity," said Manny Pumariega, executive director of

the Regional Planning Council. "Telework is one of the most important solutions in solving our transportation issues."

The free consulting and hands-on assistance is available thanks to a grant from the Pinellas and Hillsborough Metropolitan Planning Organizations. The Regional Planning Council and BACS provide the help, but first companies have to get around a corporate culture that likes to see all its employees in one room.

Stuart Anderson, a consultant with UrbanTrans Consultants of Denver, says his first goal is to get employers to look at "management by objective" rather than keeping an eye on employees at their desks. It's not an escape from work, he notes. Workers are judged on what they produce rather than punching a clock. But not everyone is cut out for the isolation from the office and co-workers.

"Companies need to see this as a tool, not necessarily a benefit for employees like insurance," said Sandi Moody, executive director of Bay Area Commuter Services. "It's not a benefit you can give every employee because not everyone can do it. But as a tool it can save space in the office, help the employers retain valuable employees, and it can be an emergency management tool" to keep the work flowing even when roads are washed out or illness strikes. For Bay Area Commuter Services' part, "We see it as a way to reduce congestion on the roadways."

The Regional Planning Council also wants to find a way to stem traffic, because as senior planner Jessica White notes, "it's not getting any better." But White, who is coordinating Telework Tampa Bay, hopes to see telecommuting reach a tipping point where it is normal to find some form of it going on in a wide variety of offices, from health care to government to high tech.

"It's a matter of getting the

momentum going," White said, "because then other companies won't be as intimidated by it.

Once we get the first ones to jump in the pool, it will then build on itself because our goal is that they do have successful programs. We have a case study going along with this so we can track how these folks are doing and help them make it successful and show other employers that it can work for them as well."

Thanks to the Internet, instant



For information about the free consulting program log on to www.teleworktampabay.org.

messages, cell phones and other technological improvements, working from home is getting easier. An American Interactive Consumer Survey found that 11.6 million people teleworked at least one day a month in 1997. By 2003, that number had doubled to 23.5 million. Of those workers, 42 percent worked out of the office one day a week, and 22 percent teleworked every day.

But it's not for every job. Mostly "information-based" jobs can make teleworking work. It's ideal for jobs that require reading, writing, research, working with data and talking on the phone, Anderson said. Many jobs that may not seem appropriate at first may be modified so that the employees can telework, at least on a part-time basis.

In fact, part-time telework is more often how employees use telecom-

muting, saving research, writing time or phone calls for the quiet of their home office.

One of the secrets to designing a good telework program, Anderson said, lies in the ability to create and organize jobs so they can be done with minimal supervision. "Sometimes it's looking at the types of things employees work on and getting them to focus on the product," Anderson said.

Some of his clients are surprised to find telecommuting can work for them, he said. Police detectives in Irvine, Calif., insisted that telecommuting couldn't work. But when they realized how much of their time is spent on paperwork, Anderson did a pilot project where the detectives did their paperwork at home.

The result: The detectives found they were finally catching up on paperwork by spending time each week working at home without the distractions of the office. They got more accomplished and became more organized about how they spent their time. It seems getting

the workers out of the workplace can sometimes mean more work gets done. "We've found a typical productivity increase of 12 percent-plus," Anderson said, "and that's significant."

Companies that sign on for the Telework Tampa Bay pilot project will get access to national telework experts, presentations designed for upper and middle management, help in developing policies, and program evaluation guidelines. Also included: training sessions for managers and teleworkers.

Since the program is in its infancy, there are still spots available for companies that would like to be part of the pilot project. Check out the program's Web site at www.teleworktampabay.org, call Jessica White with Telework Tampa Bay toll-free at 1-888-736-8640, or e-mail jessica@tbrpc.org. ❖

THE McINTOSH AWARD

This year's principal Future of the Region award winner is the dynamic renaissance of Tampa Heights through a community concept building project.

Geographically, Tampa Heights – Tampa's first suburb – would seem to have been bullied by progress. On every side, interstates and developers threatened the integrity of the neighborhood.

But the community survived, and thrived, developing a multi-ethnicity that gives Tampa Heights its unique character. It also gave the Hillsborough County City-County Planning Commission a genuine challenge, which it met and met with excellence.

As a result, the commission received the 2003 Charles A. McIntosh Jr. Award of Distinction for its Tampa Heights: Rebuilding Community project.

In fact, it's a big award for a big project. "It almost takes two people to carry it," noted Terry Cullen, team leader for the City of Tampa's planning team.

The four-year neighborhood planning project – largely a grass-roots effort constructed around a concept known as "community concept building" – uses the resources of the neighborhood to help turn the neighborhood around, Cullen explained.

When the project started in 1999, Tampa Heights was being threatened by development. The community lies immediately north of downtown Tampa, and it was home to important Tampa business leaders of all ethnic backgrounds as well as a thriving African-American business district. Tampa Heights reached its economic peak during the 1920s, and as more suburbs opened to Tampa's middle class, the prestige of Tampa Heights began to decline.

Today, Tampa Heights has approximately 8,500 residents but it has been challenged by the combination of lower income residents, low home ownership, crime, isolation and being the receiving zone for the area's homeless.



A videographer captures an entryway to Tampa Heights.

"We learned how to build consensus with neighborhood groups. Consensus-building is probably the biggest thing we learned. Neighborhoods have to allow people to reach out to each other and negotiate."

– Terry Cullen, team leader for the City of Tampa's planning team.



Neighbors listening to neighbors in a Tampa Heights discourse.

The Tampa Heights Neighborhood Plan began in 1999 when residents, led by the Tampa Heights Civic Association and other community leaders, came together to resist land speculations and development pressures. The plan was eventually adopted by the neighborhood in November 2002 and by the Tampa City Council in February 2003.

Another benefit of the plan has been a short video of the grass roots discussion process. The video educates the residents on the neighborhood planning process. "We created the video to show and inspire other neighborhoods," Cullen added, "to take charge of their own destiny."

"Our experience is that neighborhoods rely on the government to do too much for them," he added, "(when) they have the ability to do more for themselves and they just don't know how. The local government has a limited ability to make significant changes."

Since Tampa Heights represents such a wide range of historic, economic and cultural interests, the plan called for the residents to dialogue and find common ground. "The city neighborhood planning process requires neighborhoods to vote on their plan," Cullen said. "At that time, at least 75 percent of the people in

the neighborhood had to approve the plan."

And they did. When the vote was held, 98 percent of those voting endorsed the plan, Cullen said. "Now we have a stewardship team that meets on a monthly basis to try to implement projects to help the neighborhood. And we have a community development corporation."

"We learned a lesson," Cullen continued. "We learned how to build consensus with neighborhood groups. Consensus-building is probably the biggest thing we learned. Neighborhoods have to allow people to reach out to each other and negotiate."

Certainly, the dialogue was a learning process. "We discovered a lot of people were frustrated because they felt their voice wasn't heard," Cullen said. "Many were very, very angry, but once you gave them outlets and allow them to plug into a process that has meaning, they're willing to work with you."

"It took quite some time," he added. "You have to have the time. Consensus-building takes time. You can't rush it."

A number of projects now are being discussed for Tampa Heights – everything from better streets to better public services. One long-range project, for example, involves making Tampa Street

THE GOLDNER AWARD

The Herman W. Goldner Award winner, water district chairman Ronnie Duncan, promotes strong regional cooperation as he pushes conservation of our precious resource.

Ronnie Duncan, being an astute businessman and chair of the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) governing board, knew he had been nominated for the 2003 Herman W. Goldner Award for Regional Leadership.

He just didn't know he had won until the night of the awards. He said he was "overwhelmed (and) humbled" by the award, named for the former mayor of St. Petersburg. "When anyone designates you as a regional leader, that is quite an honor and is quite a humbling experience in that it says so much.

"What I do . . . on behalf of regional cooperation and participation is because I believe in it," he added, "not because I expect any attaboys or recognition. I was most appreciative."

Duncan, a resident of Tarpon Springs, joined the SWFWMD board five years ago. He is also president of The Duncan Companies, a commercial real estate consulting and development enterprise. He was previously a managing partner in Sevell & Duncan Realty Services of Boca Raton and a regional partner with the Edward J. DeBartolo Corp.

A secret to Duncan's success as a leader, says a fellow SWFWMD representative, is that he not only reaches out to adults with his message of conservation but also to children. "I've seen the impact of his working with children and the impact on their parents," noted Watson Haynes, vice chair of SWFWMD.

Just a few years ago, Florida was facing a major drought. Duncan sought ways to get that message to the residents under SWFWMD's umbrella of responsibility. "When we started conservation – putting restrictions on businesses, asking people to cut back – Ronnie worked with our education people and said, 'Let's go to the schools. Let's talk to the kids about conservation,'" recalls Haynes.

recalls Haynes.

And it worked. The students took the message to heart – and to home, sharing what they learned at school from SWFWMD and urged their parents to participate, which they did in great numbers, Haynes said.

Indeed, Duncan spearheaded the formation of a Water Conservation Task Force to promote conservation and the efficient uses of water, recalled Linda S. McBride, communications director for SWFWMD. "Through Duncan's leadership, the district compiled one of the largest inventories of water conservation materials available anywhere in the United States," McBride wrote. (The materials are currently available at www.watermatters.org or www.conservationinfo.org.)

She added: "Each government thinks the water belongs to them. Duncan explained the regionalism of the water system.



Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council Chair Steve Simon congratulates Swiftmud's Ronnie Duncan on his acceptance of the Goldner award as TBRPC executive director Manny Pumariega looks on during the Future of the Region Awards presentation.



“We learned in the past during the water wars that we individual governments cannot go it alone. Therefore, a regional approach ... is a very effective and beneficial approach to issues that are larger than life.”
 – Ronnie Duncan, chairman Swiftmud

Duncan brings different governments together – minimalizing the parochialism.”

With his extensive business and political background, Duncan inspires confidence.

“Duncan is perhaps one of the most well-prepared, articulate, energetic people in this region as far as giving back to the community as a whole,” observed Pasco County Commissioner Steve Simon.

“Even though he has narrowed

his energies to water issues, the work he does has so much impact on the future of this area,” Simon said.

The Goldner award is given annually to an individual who exemplifies the spirit of regional cooperation, dedication to his/her community and notable achievement in encouraging future vision.

The award is named for Goldner because, in addition to becoming mayor of St. Petersburg in 1961, he is considered the founding father of the Tampa Bay

Regional Planning Council. Retired, he lives in Virginia Beach, Va.

“I believe patiently that water and being good stewards of water must have a regional perspective,” Duncan said.

“We learned in the past during the water wars that we individual governments cannot go it alone. Therefore, a regional approach . . . is a very effective and beneficial approach to issues that are larger than life.” ❖

HONORING NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENT

The winners at the 12th annual Future of The Region Awards are making innovative changes that are elevating the quality of life in the Tampa Bay region.

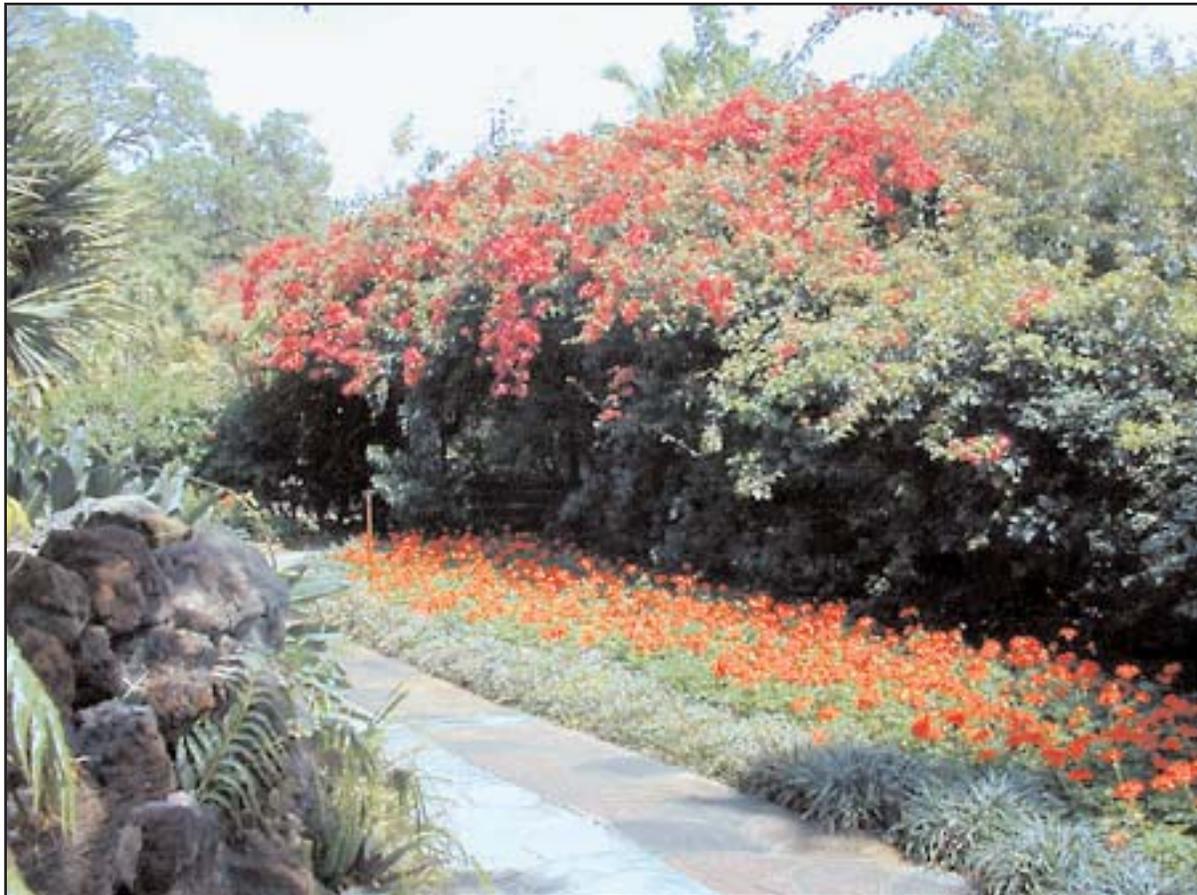


Saving and restoring Sunken Gardens, one of St. Petersburg's oldest attractions, earned the lush destination two spots on the list of the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council's 12th Annual Future of the Region Awards.

Dubbed the city's "oldest living museum" the dramatic rebirth of the attraction earned top awards in the Community Service and Development categories in the regional awards. And it's easy to see why, given the transformation of a moribund section of Fourth Street in St. Petersburg. With Sunken Gardens as a catalyst, national retailers such as Starbucks, Outback Steakhouse and CVS drug store set up shop within sight of the renovated gardens and 1926 main building.

Purchased by the city in 1999 after residents voted to tax themselves to save Sunken Gardens, the restored gardens paved the way for a whole new atmosphere.

"It has really been a win-win for everyone involved: citizens, businesses, neighborhoods, the city, all of Tampa Bay," said Lindsey Ballas, an economic development specialist with the city of St. Petersburg. "The city as a whole benefitted by not only listening to what citizens want, but actually was creative in getting



federal grants and state preservation grant money to pay for it."

The site is a prime example of a 1930s Florida roadside commercial attraction. It is not only the oldest commercial tourist attraction on Florida's west coast, but one of the finest botanical gardens in the United States.

The origins of Sunken Gardens dates back to 1903 when George Turner Sr. began to convert a five-acre tract of land with a sinkhole on it into a botanical garden.

Sunken Gardens opened as a tourist attraction in 1935 and eventually became one of Florida's top tourist attractions through the 1970s.

But by the early 1990s it was showing its age, and the

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PSTA ROUTE 300x

Sitting in bumper-to-bumper traffic is practically a given for commuters who cross the Howard Frankland Bridge between Hillsborough and Pinellas counties.

To make the trip more enjoyable, and get a few cars off the road, the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA) in August 2003 introduced a new express bus service designed to whisk commuters over the Bridge to their jobs or homes in Pinellas or Hillsborough counties.

The innovative idea made use of federal funds and earned PSTA First Place in the Infrastructure category of the Future of the Region awards for rolling out a fleet of luxury commuter coaches.

The plan is to entice the motorists out of their cars and let them sit back in comfortable buses featuring cushioned high-back reclining seats, individual overhead reading lights, and adjustable air conditioning vents. Free parking coupled with PSTA's low fares (\$1.50 or a \$27 for a 20-ride premium) make for a good savings.

But there's a time savings as well, notes Janet Recca, marketing director for PSTA.

"This is for the longer commute and it's conducive to really making the most of your time," Recca said, "by giving you a good reading light, some temperature controls and a comfortable setting. You could easily reclaim two hours of your life back by taking advantage of this."

PSTA's Route 300X runs from two Park 'N' Ride stations on Ulmerton Road directly into downtown Tampa. It operates 14 daily round trips on weekdays with route stops at several major intersections and then continues on to downtown Tampa. Once downtown, the route travels major streets as well as HARTline's Marion Transit Center.



PORT MANATEE SPOIL ISLAND RESTORATION

Creating a much-needed bird nesting habitat, Port Manatee earned the project top prize in the Environmental category for the Future of the Region awards.

But even more amazingly, Manatee County created it by converting 60 acres of previously dredged material that was overrun with non-native plants.

The birds have voted with their beaks over whether it worked.

The first nesting season after the restoration was completed, Audubon bird counters found 63 species of birds there, including 18 nesting pairs of a threatened species, least terns.

PINELLAS PARK CULTURAL CELEBRATIONS

Taking the top prize in the Cultural/Sports/Recreation category was Pinellas Park, which hosts a series of cultural celebrations at Town Square Plaza Park.

The program celebrates cultural diversity in events such as the Puerto Rican Patron Saints Festival to the 14th annual Country in the Park event.

People from around the bay area have flocked to these events, taking in music, art, exhibits and dining and learning more about other communities and cultures.

The events have taken place at the England Brothers Bandshell, a large gathering area that makes for easy mingling.

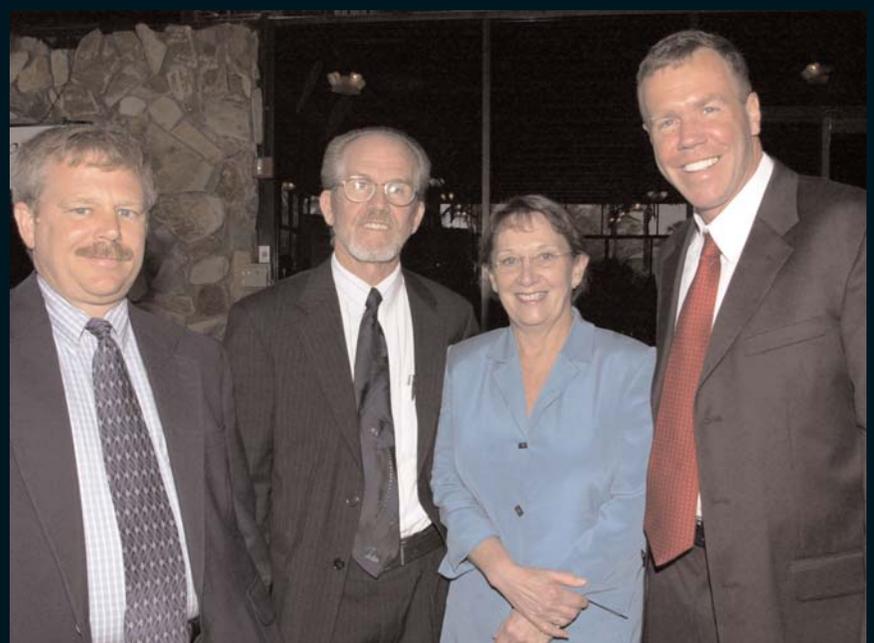
The city recently started expanding its offering to an even wider array of community groups and interests, said city

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Future of The Region Awards Luncheon Pictorial



Future of The Region Awards Luncheon Pictorial



Help A Child Focuses on Abuse and Neglect

PINELLAS PARK – Help A Child, Inc. operates six programs that provide assistance to families who may be experiencing child abuse, neglect, and exposure to violence or with special medical needs children.

The agency began in 1979 as a state funded program through a grant at All Children's Hospital. In 1988, it became independent, formed a corporation and eventually relocated to Pinellas Park where it is now neighbors to the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council.



Picture at left shows the ribbon cutting in January when Help A Child moved into the new facility in Pinellas Park.

The Child Protection Team Program is a multidisciplinary program based on the idea that child abuse and neglect cases involve complex issues and require the expertise of many professionals, in collaboration, to protect children.

The Team assists Child Protective Investigations and law enforcement in their investigations of child abuse cases with the provision of diagnostic services, case consultation, and assessment services.

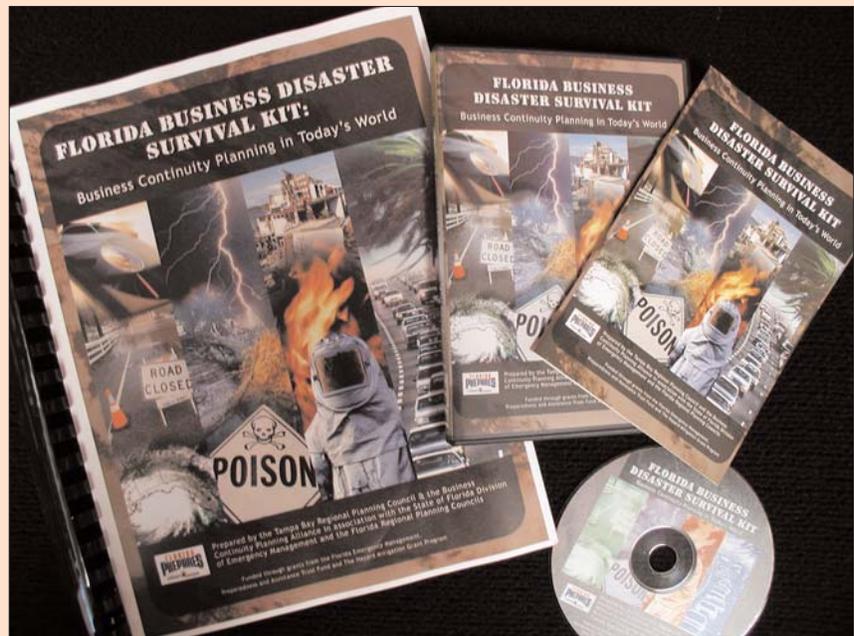
Small business survival kit available in CD form

The Council, in cooperation with its Business Continuity Planning Alliance, completed the "Florida Business Disaster Survival Kit" under a grant from the Florida Division of Emergency Management.

The new CD-ROM and companion website provides guidance for businesses to prepare for civil and technological emergencies in addition to natural hazards.

"We strived to provide business owners a viable tool to prepare for and minimize their risk from all types of hazards, natural or man-made," said Manny Pumariega, Executive Director.

The new product is available statewide through the Florida Regional



Councils, emergency management agencies, local governments and chambers of

commerce. For more information, go to www.fldisasterkit.com.

The Economic Analysis Program

Since 1998 Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council has offered its Economic Analysis Program to public and private sector clients throughout Florida and the Tampa Bay region.

The Council began its Economic Analysis Program to help communities predict how policy changes or economic events will affect the economy.

Event impacts which can be analyzed by the Economic Analysis Program include business activities, new housing subdivisions, economic development incentives and intergovernmental revenue changes.

The Economic Analysis Program can provide critical information for governments, policy-makers, public interest groups and businesses.

Economic impact analysis involves the use of historical data, input-output tables and equilibrium models to assess the impact of a particular event or industry on the local and/or regional economy. Our tools include Implan® (a basic input/output model), REMI Policy Insight® (a highly sophisticated econometric model) and extensive staff training.

Since January 2004, the Council's Economic Analysis Program has conducted six studies for public and private sector clients on subjects including transportation costs, industry impacts on state and regional economy and other issues.



Economic Development District

On April 30, 2003, the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council was designated as an Economic Development District (EDD).

Two primary benefits of belonging to an EDD for the region's counties will be an increase in the federal share of the cost of regional economic development projects under the Economic Development Administration's economic adjustment program, as well as the elimination of the need for the Tampa Bay region's counties to maintain a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) required for eligibility in most EDA programs.

A requirement for EDD designation is the maintenance of a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the region. According to EDA requirements, the Tampa Bay EDD updates the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) on an annual basis. Working with the EDD's economic development partners, TBRPC staff updated the CEDS during the last few months. At its April 12, 2004 meeting, Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council approved

the updated CEDS and authorized staff to transmit the CEDS to EDA.

The Council provided technical assistance to Hillsborough, Manatee and Pinellas counties in the development of their Local Mitigation Strategies (LMSs). The LMS identifies the jurisdiction's vulnerability to natural and man-made hazards and develops a strategy to minimize or eliminate the risk to citizens and property from those hazards.

"Mitigation is key to the safety of our residents; the protection of our homes, businesses and infrastructure and the economic recovery of our community after a disaster." stated Susan Mueller, Hillsborough County LMS Committee member and Tampa Electric Company representative.

The LMS identifies mitigation goals and policies which are incorporated into short- and long-term planning initiatives. Cost-effective programs and projects were listed and prioritized and an ongoing program was established to ensure the plan is maintained, updated and viable. For more information go online to the following websites:

- www.Tampabayprepares.org
- www.HillsboroughLMS.org
- www.PinellasLMS.org
- www.ManateeLMS.org

Continuity of business after a disaster

TBRPC assisted local governments with the development of their Continuity of Operations Plans (COOPs) for Pasco County, Pinellas County and the cities of Plant City, St. Petersburg, Clearwater and Temple Terrace.

The COOP is basically a “business continuity plan” to ensure that government can stay in business even if the government itself is a target of a natural, technological or civil disaster.

A COOP was developed for each of the departments responsible for six critical services: emergency management, EMS, 9-1-1, fire rescue, law enforcement and public works.

“We believe that the final product is a comprehensive, implementable and realistic COOP Plan,” explained Pasco County Emergency Management Director, Michele Baker.



AWARD from Page 7

and Florida Avenue both two-way streets again. “It would slow traffic down and help businesses,” Cullen noted.

One member of the stewardship team overseeing the community plan, Lena Young-Green has lived in Tampa Heights since the early 1980s. As an activist, she has worked with governments local and statewide. She is a past president of the Tampa Heights Civic Association and current president of the Tampa Heights Junior Civic Association -- organized to attract more younger people, she said.

Young-Green, too, saw the community plan as a counterpoint to the approaching developers who “were bringing all kinds of ideas that didn’t complement the district. So we started

talking about a plan that everybody would have to adhere to,” she recalled.

Now there is a 10-point list – items that potentially can be completed by 2012 – everything from better maintained brick streets and more trees to increased affordable housing.

“It was a really good process,” Young-Green said. “We’re the first neighborhood in Tampa to have a plan. We’re pretty proud of that.”

Innovative plans include such things as inviting the University of South Florida to designate Tampa Heights as an official “research site,” thus assuring the community of long-term attention for future projects and innovative concepts.



Tampa Heights residents actively participated in the visioning process.

The stewardship team meets on the third Thursday of each month at the St. James House of Prayer. “We’re growing up now and it’s time for us to do this thing on our own,” Young-Green said.

“We still have a long way to go,” Henry said, “but you have to crawl before you can walk.” ❖

Telework Tampa Bay

Telework programs offer employees the opportunity to work from home or other remote locations near their homes one day a week, a couple of days a month or even full-time.

Telework provides a variety of benefits to employers and employees.

Organizations with active telework programs have experienced:

- Increased ability to attract and retain quality employees
- Improved productivity
- Reduced overhead
- Improved morale
- Greater flexibility and improved quality of life

Depending on the nature of the work, teleworking can be accomplished with as little technology as a phone, paper and pen, or may involve computers, networks and other technology.

Let us customize a program that suits your company. Telework can work for you!

For more information visit www.teleworktampabay.org or contact Jessica White at (727) 570-5151 ext. 38 or toll-free at 1-888-736-8640.

Large developments on the drawing board

Three new developments have



Many companies have experienced increased productivity with telework.

recently been introduced to the development review process: Epperson Ranch, Pasco Town Centre and Lake Hutto.

Two of the proposals, Epperson Ranch and Pasco Town Centre, are located in east-central Pasco County, east of Interstate 75, between State Road 52 and State Road 54.

The third proposal, Lake Hutto, is comprised of three separate parcels and is located adjacent to Fish Hawk Ranch in southern Hillsborough County.

As currently proposed,

Epperson Ranch and Lake Hutto will have an abundance of residential opportunities.

Pasco Town Centre is currently proposed to consist of 2.3 million square feet of retail use as well as a variety of other uses. This project is located less than 10 miles north (along I-75) of the Cypress Creek Town Centre DRI, which the Pasco County Board of County Commissioners will consider for Development Order adoption as early as July 2004.

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attendance numbers sunk.

Architects from the firm Harvard Jolly Clees Toppe Architects were given the task of bringing the building back to its 1920s appearance to the greatest extent possible.

Considering modern building codes, this wasn't an easy task, said architect Steve Johnson, who worked on the restoration of the main building and the design of the new entrance.

The Sunken Gardens remodel is

an important lesson in "understanding our history and embracing it," Johnson noted.

While it may not be easy to restore historic buildings, the end result in this case was more than worth it. ❖

Meet the officers

CHAIR



Commissioner **Steve Simon**, Chair, was elected to the Pasco County Commission in 1998; he served as Vice-Chair in 2000 and Chair in 2001. He was a member of the Clean Fuel Florida Advisory Board, the Metropolitan Planning Organization and is a former board member of Tampa Bay Water.

Commissioner Simon has held licenses in real estate and mortgage brokering. He has taught adult education courses for state licensing in insurance, securities, mortgage brokerage, real estate and appraising for over 20 years.

Commissioner Simon's community service includes serving as president of the Nature's Hideaway Homeowners Association for four years. He has also served as treasurer and board member of the West Pasco Girls Softball Association. He volunteers as coach and umpire for girl's softball.

Commissioner Simon attended Queens College and has been married to Lillian Simon for over 31 years; they have two daughters. The Simons moved to Florida from New York City more than 30 years ago.

Management & Acquisition Committee (ELMAC).

Commissioner von Hahmann's community involvement includes the District 3 Advisory Board, SAC at Sugg Middle School (Chair 1999/2000) and Cortez Waterfronts Florida (Chair).

A graduate of the University of Central Florida, she is a native Floridian. She is married and has three sons. She is also an active member of Saint Peter and Paul Catholic Church, for which she serves as a choir member, a liturgical reader and a Eucharistic minister.

SECRETARY/TREASURER



Mr. **Robert Kersteen**, Secretary and Treasurer, is a gubernatorial appointee who holds degrees in both business and law.

He retired in 1999 from GTE after a 37-year career in various executive management positions.

Mr. Kersteen, a former councilman for the City of St. Petersburg, has volunteered on the City's Environmental Development Commission for 14 years with 10 years as chairman or vice chairman, also as a former member of Workforce of Pinellas and is currently a member of the Sierra Club.

Mr. Kersteen has served numerous years as President of Westgate Elementary (one year) and Tyrone Middle Schools' (three years) PTAs and SAC Committees (10 years).

He further involved himself as President of the Azalea Youth Soccer League and the Azalea Youth Sports Foundation. Mr. Kersteen has been a resident of St. Petersburg since 1963.

VICE CHAIR

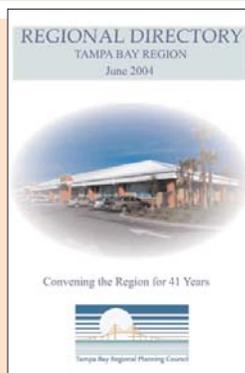


Commissioner **Jane W. von Hahmann**, Vice Chair, is currently the Chair of the Manatee Board of County Commissioners. She has served as the First Vice Chair of the Civic Center Authority and Chair of the Manatee County Port Authority. Other affiliations include the Sarasota/Manatee Metropolitan Planning Organization, the Manatee River Fair Board, and the Environmental Lands

Regional Directory – a goldmine of contacts

The Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council produces an annual publication called the Regional Directory of the Tampa Bay Region.

The Directory contains phone numbers, addresses, website addresses, departments, and contact persons in local and state government.



The Directory also includes news media listings, chambers of commerce, election information, and environmental agencies.

The Directory will be available in mid-June and can be purchased for \$15.00 per copy through the Council's Regional Information Center. If you would like to be notified when the directories are available, please send your name and address, or your e-mail address, to rebeca@tbrpc.org.

spokesman Tim Caddell.

The Hispanic Family Festival was new this year and was an outreach program to showcase community services available for new residents.

The Pagan Pride Festival was also a first-time event for Pinellas Park, although it has been held in other areas in the past. It attracted approximately 600 people and featured entertainment and displays representing several pagan religions.

"It was an opportunity for residents of all religious and cultural backgrounds to explore and acknowledge the true diversity that makes up our community," Caddell said.

There was also an International Harvest Festival presented by the St Petersburg International Folk Fair Society, a Good Friday service in the park and there are plans for an Asian festival next year and wide variety of concerts, Caddell said.

SEMINOLE COMMUNITY LIBRARY

The first city/college library in the Tampa Region arose with much fanfare – and many fans – when St. Petersburg College and the city of Seminole collaborated on a joint venture library.



The idea saves space and combines resources, earning the project the top prize in the Public Education category.

Both the citizens and the college students get to treat themselves to the latest technology and the most popular trends in library design.

Namely, multiple room configurations, including classrooms, conference rooms and study rooms, an outstanding children's area and a "teen zone."

And in a tip of the hat to convenience, there's also a cafe, art gallery, a Friends of the Library Store with used books, magazines and other merchandise for sale, and a drive-through book return. ❖

Tampa Bay is getting better ...
YOU CAN HELP!



Reel in your tarpon tag today and help keep Tampa Bay on the road to recovery. Please request a Tampa Bay Estuary license tag the next time you renew your auto registration. Be a part of an environmental success story – the restoration of Florida's largest open-water estuary. When it comes time to renew your car, motor home or boat trailer license plate, or even before, choose the Tampa Bay Estuary specialty plate. You will be contributing directly to projects that restore Tampa Bay's natural habitats and improve water quality – ensuring the survival of inhabitants like the spectacular Silver King Tarpon that's pictured on the plate.

Tarpon illustration by Russ Sirmons



Bay Soundings enters third year of publication

July begins the third year of the *Bay Soundings* environmental journal. This quarterly publication of the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council focuses on topics related to Tampa Bay and the region's natural resources.

The eight editions of the first two years have covered myriad issues, including habitat restoration, water supply, beach-nesting birds, Piney Point, stormwater, invasive species, bioluminescence, applications of marine technology, environmentally-sensitive landscaping, marine stock enhancement, manatee protection and much, much more.

The editors have done an outstanding job of explaining the issues, involving the experts, informing the community, educating students, enticing volunteers, and entertaining all with a great variety of articles in each edition.

Funding for the first two years was provided by the Council, the Pinellas County Environmental Foundation, Tampa Bay Estuary Program, the Hillsborough River and Pinellas-Anclote Basin Boards of the Southwest Florida Water Management District, Tampa Port Authority, Port Manatee, Florida Power & Light, Cargill Industries, CF Industries, and Richard Davis, PA.

Since its first edition, production of *Bay Soundings* has increased from 15,000 to 19,000 printed copies per edition and web site visits (www.baysoundings.com) have increased from 2,000 to over 25,000 per month! The web site has all the back issues archived and is very

easy to access. Distribution sites have increased from 20 to over 150, and compliments about the journal are effusive.

The editors have also assisted in developing a marketing package to help secure more stable funding for *Bay Soundings*. The third year will be supported by the Council, the Tampa Bay Estuary Program, the Southwest Florida Water Management District, and the Florida Department of Transportation District Seven. Additional sponsors are being sought, to meet the annual budget of \$90,000.

If you have not yet seen *Bay Soundings*, look for it at your public library and throughout the region; call Suzanne Cooper, project manager (727-570-5151 x 32); go online to www.baysoundings.com; or send a subscription request to circulation@baysoundings.com.

Low Impact Development: A tool for Tampa Bay?

Stormwater is an important component of the freshwater flow into Tampa Bay. Its quality, volume and frequency affect the health of the estuary in dramatic ways.

"Low Impact Development" is the broad term for an evolving set of alternative land development methodologies intended to soften the effect of land development.

At of the workshop held by the Council on May 25th, alternative techniques which have been implemented in various parts of the United States for dealing with stormwater were presented and

discussed for their potential in Florida's rapidly-developing watersheds.

Nationally-recognized experts Larry Coffman from Prince George's County, Maryland, and Dr. James Heaney from the University of Florida generously shared their vast experience with more than 65 participants.

Mr. Robert Brownell of Bielinski Homes in Waukesha, Wisconsin, provided the viewpoint of a highly-successful developer who has been (profitably) incorporating environmentally-sensitive land development techniques for many years. Also explored were actual and perceived obstacles to utilizing such alternative techniques in our region.

Co-sponsored with the Tampa Bay Estuary Program and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the workshop attracted local government planners, stormwater regulators, private sector land use experts, and community leaders.

Many recommendations came forward on how to determine which techniques would work best with our rainfall patterns, topography, soil types and popular development patterns.

The speakers' presentations, as well as the participants' input, the results of the facilitated discussion information, and a significant amount of reference material on low impact design are being synthesized on CD-Rom. The material will be provided to the workshop participants, local governments and interested individuals. To get a copy, please contact Suzanne Cooper, TBRPC Principal Planner, at 727-570-5151 x 32 or suzanne@tbrpc.org.

Future of the Region Award Nominees

Community Service

Sunken Gardens Restoration
Planning to Stay Element of the Pinellas County Comprehensive Plan
Tarpon Springs GRO Group
Dunedin Adult Service Center Partnering Project, City of Dunedin
Friday Night Films in the Park, City of Dunedin
Largo's Day of Good Deeds, City of Largo
Mardi Paws, City of Dunedin
Reclaimed Water Improvements, City of Largo

Cultural/Sports/Recreation

Cultural Diversity Outreach Program
Tarpon Springs Sponge Diver Exchange Project
Production of "School House Rock Live!" as a collaboration between the Largo Cultural Center and John Hopkins Middle School

Development

Sunken Gardens
City of Tarpon Springs Sponge Dock Restoration Project

Environmental

Port Manatee Spoil Island Restoration
Starkey Environmental Education Center
Fantasy Island: A Cooperative Conservation and Education Project
Cotee River Park Project, City of New Port Richey
James E. Grey Preserve, RMPK Group
Pasco County Conservation Strategy
POCTS Program, City of Largo
Sunset Vista Trailhead Park, City of Treasure Island

Infrastructure

PSTA Route 300X
Melburne Boulevard Pond Stormwater Retrofit
City Trails-Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan
Largo Public Works Streets and Drainage Building/Emergency Operations Center
Tampa Electric Company Emergency Management Program

Public Education

Seminole Community Library at St. Petersburg College-Seminole Campus
Manatee Viewing Center
Southwest Florida Water Management District WaterDrops Grades 3-5 Newsletter
Southwest Florida Water Management District's Community Education Grant Program
Creating a Virtual Classroom for Transportation Education, Pinellas County
2003 Disability Independence Day, City of Dunedin
I Know the Way, PSTA
St. Petersburg Shines, City of St. Petersburg,
Tampa Bay Water 2003 Newspaper Insert
Tampa Bay Water 2003 Water Wise Awards



Who are we and what we do

The Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council offers a wide variety of services and products. Can we provide a service to you?

Among the services and programs the Council offers: economic modeling and analysis; community visioning and charette planning; spatial growth modeling; environmental technical assistance and analysis; hurricane and hazard preparedness planning; the official Hurricane Guide; the Small Business Disaster Kit; GIS mapping; and technical assistance to local governments.

Our Regional Information Center is open to the public from 9 a.m.- 4 p.m. weekdays. The center serves as a Florida State Data Center; official U.S. Census affiliate; provides technical Assistance; and is a clearinghouse for technical assistance and administrative materials related to planning and development in the Tampa Bay Region.

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Community Visioning

Gerald Smelt, Principal Planner, x28

Developments of Regional Impact (DRI)

John Meyer, Principal Planner, x29

Economic Analysis Program

Randy DeShazo, Senior Planner, x31

Emergency Preparedness and Planning: Hurricane Guide, Small Business Disaster Kit

Betti Johnson, Principal Planner, x39

Regional Information Center

Rebeca Searcey, Communications Planner, x41

Telework Tampa Bay

Jessica White, Senior Planner, x38

Tampa Bay Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC)

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All organizations that entered this year's Future of the Region Awards Program.

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