

Isabel Cosio Carballo
Director, Public Affairs
South Florida Regional Planning Council



Isabel Cosio Carballo serves as the Director of Public Affairs at the South Florida Regional Planning Council (Council), a planning and public policy agency serving Broward, Miami-Dade and Monroe counties. Prior to becoming the Council's legislative and public affairs coordinator in 2000, Ms. Carballo served as the "Eastward Ho!" regional coordinator from 1996-2000. She was responsible for program management of this nationally recognized six-county urban redevelopment and revitalization initiative undertaken in partnership with the Florida Department of Community Affairs and other federal, state and regional stakeholders. A key success was designation of Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach counties as one of the nation's original 16 "Brownfields Showcase Communities" in 1998. This designation has resulted in substantial resources for the assessment, remediation, and redevelopment of brownfields in Southeast Florida.

Beginning in January 2010, Ms. Carballo spearheaded and organized, in partnership with the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council and other regional partners, the Southeast Florida Regional Partnership, a seven-county partnership spanning from Monroe County northward through Indian River County, and its successful application to U.S. HUD's Inaugural Sustainable Communities Planning Grant Program. In October 2010 the Southeast Florida region was named one of only 45 "Sustainable Communities" in the nation securing Southeast Florida \$4.25 million, one of the top four planning grants in its category, for the development of a long-term "Regional Vision and Blueprint for Economic Prosperity." The Sustainable Communities designation brings with it "Preferred Sustainability Status" and extra grant points for Partnership member applications to a range of discretionary federal funding programs pursuant to certification by Ms. Carballo.

Ms. Carballo has been directly responsible for several program areas at the Council. In addition to representing the Council as public affairs liaison in diverse settings, much of her professional efforts have focused on the creation of broad-based partnerships and collaborative efforts. In addition to her legislative and general staff responsibilities, since 2002 she has provided staff and administrative support to the South Florida Regional Business Alliance (RBA), a regional coalition of private sector CEOs working collaboratively across jurisdictional boundaries to address regional issues such as transportation, affordable and workforce housing, and education. Through her efforts, the RBA secured \$300,000 in MacArthur Foundation funding to support their regional initiatives. Ms. Carballo works directly with many of the region's stakeholders including federal, state, and locally elected leaders; key business leaders and organizations; local governments; and nonprofit partners to create awareness of the Council's work and new and enhanced partnerships. A seasoned public speaker, Ms. Carballo frequently speaks at local and national conferences and public forums.

Prior to joining the Council in 1996, Ms. Carballo was chief of staff to now Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart of Miami from 1988 – 1993, serving four years in the Florida House of Representatives and a year and a half in the Florida Senate. Following her service with then State Senator Diaz-Balart, Ms. Carballo worked with Broward County's Office of Intergovernmental Affairs as a legislative consultant and lobbyist from 1993 – 1996 with particular expertise in environmental issues.

Ms. Carballo has a BA in International Business from the University of Texas at Austin and has completed additional coursework at Florida International University and Florida Atlantic University. She has served on numerous state and local boards including the state's GAP Commission and Affordable Housing Study Commission; South Florida Regional Transportation Authority's Citizen Advisory Committee; South Florida Water Management District's Water Resources Advisory Committee; and as Chair of the City of Hollywood's Public Facilities and Infrastructure Improvements Task Force (City-wide Master Plan). She is U.S. HUD's designated liaison for the Sustainable Communities program and Secretary of the Board of "The Good Government Initiative" created by Katy Sorenson, former Miami-Dade County Commissioner, District 8.