HUD Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program

Southeast Florida Regional Partnership

Sustainable Communities Inventory and Database Proposal

Nancy Schneider, Sustainability Consultant

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Southeast Florida Regional Partnership

Indian River - St. Lucie - Martin
Palm Beach - Broward - Miami-Dade - Monroe

PARTNERSHIP MEMBER GENERAL INFORMATION

Partnership Member	Nancy Schneider, Sustainability Consultant
Membership Status	General Partner
Address	303 Gleason Street #9, Delray Beach, FL 33483
Main Contact Name	Nancy Schneider
Telephone	305-720-4464
Email/Website	nschneider2015@yahoo.com
Name of Chief Executive Officer or Director	Nancy Schneider
Number of Years in Business	Five
Task/s (as defined in the Comprehensive Work Plan) Please list in bulleted form those task areas in which your organization is interested in performing paid work. Greater detail can be provided in the accompanying document.	• In order to collect baseline information for the Regional Sustainability Scorecard (RSS) and identify barriers to sustainability, a database would be established on which the RSS framework would be established and for the creation of the Sustainable Development Toolbox; 1. **Phone calls** to be made to each city to determine who is overseeing and/or conducting the work. This would be similar to the calls made during the TOD study a few years ago, where contact must be determined. a. A county and city sustainability **contact spreadsheet** to be compiled. 2. A **survey** to be created based on common practices/areas and feedback from cities. Surveys would be sent to contacts. 3. A **spreadsheet** to be developed listing ordinances, policies, practices, concepts, and ideas. Standardization would be noted including government standards (ICLEI, FGBC-LGG), certifications (LEED, Green Seal), and others such as EPEAT for electronics, and EnergyStar. 4. **Analysis** of common practices, patterns, easy, no/low cost prospects for cities identified for a decision tools matrix. This also ensures that data and reporting are accurate and comparable for Database. 5. A **written report** to be provided to the SFRPC, SFRP, and participating cities. The report provides standards or accepted procedures for cities and for reporting purposes. Opportunities for improvement would be teased out and highlighted in the report.

QUALIFICATIONS AND PROJECT UNDERSTANDING

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development awarded Southeast Florida $4.25 million from its new Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program in October 2010. The Southeastern Florida Regional Partnership will create a plan that will improve regional housing, land use, economic and workforce development and transportation.

A priority of HUD funding is *Sustainability* in the region, defined by HUD as "*activities actively promoting sustainability through energy-efficient, environmentally friendly, healthy design, including elements of visitability and universal design*".

To HUD, sustainability means ensuring that the land that we build on is clean or will be clean; the investments made in neighborhoods help residents lead healthy, safe, affordable, and productive lives; the buildings invested in are energy efficient and healthy; and the regions supported by HUD improve their economic strength and provide opportunities for all residents. Local climate change *adaptation* efforts reinforce HUD's mission to ensure regional- or metropolitan-level strategies are employed to increase disaster resiliency.

The SE FL Regional Partnership will develop a Regional Plan for Sustainable Development (RPSD) including a Regional Sustainability Scorecard (RSS). Elements include **Climate Resiliency**, which addresses sea level rise and climate change adaptation, and **Barriers to Sustainability**. The RSS will provide the primary framework for reporting progress on the developing RPSD and for measuring progress in implementation.

The first step in developing the RSS is conducting a **baseline city sustainability inventory**. This inventory is similar to the work conducted by Nancy Schneider as Chair of the Delray Beach Green Task Force and similar to conducting Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Framework Reports.

As Chair of the Task Force, Nancy built Collaborative Partnerships with FAU and the City of Boynton Beach, developed a list of Best Practices, which served as a Resource Library to the City, and led the Task Force to create the report matrix, which still serves as the City's Scorecard. In addition, The Task Force conducted public engagement through the outreach programs and developed the Blueprint for the City's sustainability efforts.

During her time at the SFRPC, Nancy developed her regional perspective to solving problems and that has served her well in developing alliances and moving forward collaborative efforts.
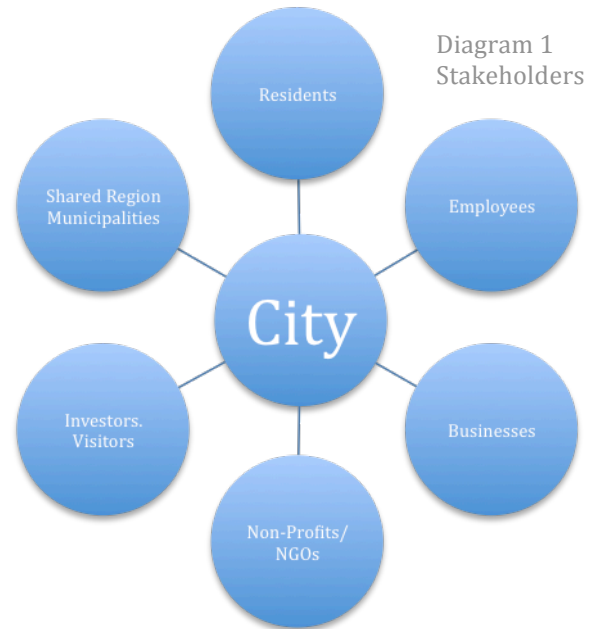

GENERAL DESCRIPTION – BASELINE SUSTAINABILITY INVENTORY

The Southeast Florida Regional Partnership program provides the collective region of Palm Beach, Indian River, St. Lucie, Martin, Broward, Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties an opportunity to advance sustainability at the regional and municipal level. In order to maximize this juncture, a **baseline city sustainability inventory** would:

➢ Provide the vital baseline information for the Regional Sustainability Scorecard (RSS), *"The inventory of existing conditions and needs will provide the scorecard baseline"* and for participation in the ICLEI Star Community Index Demonstration Project;

➢ Identify barriers to sustainability (*Plan element 3A2.4(d)(1) Barriers to Sustainability);*

➢ Establish a database on which the RSS framework would be established and for the Sustainable Development Toolbox

➢ Help communities embrace a more sustainable future, a specific HUD priority (page 8 of Notice);

➢ Provide a shared *Livability Principles* standard for those in the region and a model for others including stakeholders (see Diagram 1);

➢ Enhance economic competitiveness of the Region;

➢ Coordinate policies providing transparency;

➢ Create a single source of the region's sustainability solutions for and by local governments (*Subgoal 4E: Support knowledge sharing and innovation by disseminating best practices, encouraging peer learning, publishing data analysis and research, and helping to incubate and test new ideas*.);

➢ Double as an education resource which could be built on for other prospects (toolbox, training, certifications, webinars);

➢ Provide value to and support communities;

➢ Serve as a collective "Best Practice" resource for local governments;

➢ In itself, act as a "Best Practice" model of information sharing;

➢ Position the Planning Councils as the regional driver of sustainable practices.

The database supports HUD's Strategic Plan Subgoal 4B to *"promote energy-efficient buildings and location-efficient communities that are healthy, affordable, and diverse"* and foster collaboration between municipalities and counties in the region, supporting more regional thinking and problem solving.

Supporting Information
Previously, in conducting research on municipal sustainability practices in Florida and around the country, the following was determined.

The "silo effect" is evident between cities and between departments within local governments. Sustainability efforts help bridge those gaps. Unfortunately, there is widespread lack of information and education and oftentimes inaction is due to lack of knowledge, but cities have their heart in the right place. Cities enjoy a bit of friendly competition and chance to "out do" each other regarding sustainability!

In Southeast Florida, sustainability work runs from A to Z. Cities, such as Miami, Doral and Boynton Beach have a Sustainability Plan developed themselves or by consultants. Very few cities have in place a Climate Action Plan (CAP), addressing vulnerabilities of our coastal cities

due to climate change, particularly sea level rise. Cities, such as Delray Beach, have a "green team" or Green Board. http://www.sustainabledelray.org/index.htm

A handful of cities only have dedicated individuals who are trying to make a difference, and several cities are already doing sustainability work but have not identified it as such thereby not getting the recognition they deserve.

> **Did you know?**
> **The term sustainability can be seen as a liability. When working with governmental planners, the term "livability" is more meaningful and better accepted.**

Understanding Sustainability

Cities can be compared to consumers in understanding sustainability and "going green." In a survey of consumers' understanding by UL Environment and GreenBiz, the following statements were found to be true:

CONSUMERS	COMPARED TO MUNICIPALITIES/COUNTIES
We motivate mainstream consumers to make sustainable choices.	Elected officials, city staff, residents and businesses can be motivated to make sustainable choices through education, outreach and policy-making, thereby also creating change with stakeholders.
Consumers know less than you might think they do about how to "go green" and what constitutes green.	City staff, department heads and elected officials are overwhelmed by daily responsibilities and do not have the time, money or resources in many circumstances to understand how to go green, what sustainability means or why it is important.
They're skeptical about green claims.	The green world is like the wild west with snake oil salesman among legitimate vendors – how can a city know which is which?
Key areas of concern: Need to define "sustainable".	Sustainability is *"A way of living that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."* (United Nations Commission on Environment and Development, 1983)
Lack of credibility or trust by consumers and end-users.	City officials oftentimes are not as knowledgeable as the private sector and lack resources. Residents can become skeptical of leadership.

Confusion regarding green or sustainable product claims.	Confusion exists with elected officials on definitions and the value of programs the city has taken.
Reputational risk from "misleading claims".	Policy makers lack sustainability education to understand value and make proper policy or establish appropriate ordinances.
Risk of "greenwashing". *Green-wash - verb: the act of misleading consumers regarding the environmental practices of a company or the environmental benefits of a product or service.*	Cities are at risk of greenwashing if labeling changes as green or sustainable, when there may be hidden tradeoffs, the lesser of two evils, requirements to make the changes anyway, or making irrelevant or vague claims.

Sustainability = Livability

The "Livability Principles" which guide the work of the Southeastern Florida Regional Partnership are as follows:

1. Provide More Transportation Choices.
2. Promote equitable, affordable housing.
3. Enhance Economic Competitiveness.
4. Support Existing Communities.
5. Coordinate Policies and Leverage Investment. Value Communities and Neighborhoods.
6. Enhance community resiliency to the impacts of Climate Change

All of these Livability Principles are incorporated into the Baseline Inventory.

METHOD - Conducting The Baseline Inventory

The inventory would begin with compiling a list of cities in the region. Cities such as Miami or West Palm Beach have an Office of Sustainability. However, in most cities, *sustainability* is not handled by any one specific department. It could be designated to the Operations Department, Planning, City Manager, Public Information Officer or any other department.

I.   Initially, **phone calls** should be made to each city to determine who is overseeing and/or conducting the work. This would be similar to the calls made during the TOD study a few years ago, where contact was established.
   a.   A county and city sustainability **contact spreadsheet** would be compiled.

II.   A **survey** would be created based on common practices/areas and feedback from phone calls. Surveys would be sent to contacts.

III.   A **spreadsheet** to be developed listing ordinances, policies, practices, concepts, and ideas.

Standardization would be noted including government standards (ICLEI, FGBC-LGG), certifications (LEED, Green Seal), and others such as EPEAT for electronics, EnergyStar, Forest Stewardship Council for wood products, and organics for produce.

IV.   **Analysis** of common practices, patterns, "low hanging fruit" (easy, no/low cost) prospects for cities can be used for a decision tools matrix. This also ensures that data and reporting are accurate and comparable for Database.

V.   A **written report** would be provided to the SFRPC and the Southeast Florida Regional Partnership, as well as participating cities.   The report provides standards or accepted procedures for cities and for reporting purposes. Opportunities for improvement would be teased out and highlighted in the report.

CONCLUSION

Work to be completed by Nancy Schneider. Highlights of Florida experience for this project include experience at the South Florida Regional Planning Council, Member of the Florida Green Building Coalition Local Green Governments Standards Committee, Chair of the City of Delray Beach Green Advisory Taskforce and Member of the City's Green Advisory Board. http://www.sustainabledelray.org/report.htm, Certified Collins Center - Sustainable Florida Associate, trained in conducting sustainability assessments, as well as work conducted for the Florida Public Health Institute regarding climate change and public health.

Project work to be streamlined, as a similar model was previously utilized.   This previous experience assures knowledge to determine relevant information and most accurate information in the spreadsheet and report.

Partners needed to complete this project are the cooperation of the Planning Councils, input from Cities in the Region.

Tools/Resources needed: copying, paper, postage, possible office space at the RPC to conduct phone calls and establish project.

Summary of examples of successfully completed projects of a similar nature if applicable to the proposed work include research conducted for the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Projects at the SFRPC in 2006, Delray Beach Sustainability Recommendation Report http://www.sustainabledelray.org, and other sustainability framework report experience, including the Wal-Mart Supplier Sustainability Assessment.

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Sustainability management professional with over fifteen years experience developing solutions including sustainability initiatives for business and local government, leveraging rare blend of public sector and commercial knowledge and skills in roles and responsibilities of sustainability reporting, communications, implementation, marketing and public relations, as well as team building, stakeholder engagement, and collaboration. Project experience focuses primarily on local agencies and regional issues. Her services include research of best practices suitable to clients' needs, assessment of sustainability practices, and creating green/sustainability programs. Nancy possesses strong creative problem solving, including evaluation, "on the ground" understanding of issues and application of solutions.

Florida Based Accomplishments:
- As member of the City of Delray Beach Green Board, Nancy saved the City of Delray Beach over $200K through an arrangement she orchestrated for a student to conduct the City's Green House Gas (GHG) inventory managed by a Florida Atlantic University professor.
- Recommended to the Delray Beach City Commission to create a Green Task Force, to which she was appointed and served as Chair. As part of the Task Force, Nancy and the other Task Force members created a recommendation report saving the City over $250K which then was utilized when applying for Federal funding, receiving over $600K in federal funding including $100K for a sustainability officer. (http://www.sustainabledelray.org/report)
- Assisted with writing a grant application for the City of Miami Department of Transportation for a car sharing demonstration project, which was awarded July 2009.
- Initiated car-sharing dialogue between Flexcar and City of Miami, University of Miami, and Florida Dept. of Transportation-Commuter Services, resulting in a successful 400+ member car-sharing program at University.

Relevant Experience

Independent Sustainability Consultant 2007-present
Consultant to **Earth People, Dallas, TX,** http://www.earthpeopleco.com; and the **Florida Public Health Institute (FPHI), Lake Worth, FL**. http://www.flphi.org.

Planning Technician – South Florida Regional Planning Council, Hollywood, FL 2006-2007

Education and Certifications

GRI (Global Reporting Initiative) Sustainability Reporting Certification, New York, June 2011
M.A. Geography Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, FL
MBA Keller Graduate School, Chicago, IL

Professional Affiliations

International Society of Sustainability Professionals
City of Delray Beach Parking Board (2008-2009) and Parking Study Committee (2009)
Sustainable Florida Associate – Collins Center
Florida Green Building Coalition, Local Green Government Committee Member (2008-2009)