

**EVALUATION & APPRAISAL REPORT  
OF THE  
STRATEGIC REGIONAL POLICY PLAN  
FOR SOUTH FLORIDA**

**(DRAFT)**

**SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL**

**MARCH 2000**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
<b>PART A: INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
I.    Background.....	1
II.   Purpose .....	1
III.  Approach .....	3
<b>PART B: OVERALL EVALUATION.....</b>	<b>4</b>
I.    Introduction .....	4
II.   Key Regional Trends.....	4
III.  Overall Findings from Evaluation .....	6
IV.   Overall Observations and Implications.....	7
<b>PART C: SPECIFIC EVALUATION BY REGIONAL GOALS.....</b>	<b>10</b>
I.    Introduction .....	10
II.   Land Use and Public Facilities .....	11
III.  Natural Resources of Regional Significance.....	21
IV.   Economic Development.....	35
V.    Regional Transportation.....	56
VI.   Affordable Housing .....	74
VII.  Emergency Preparedness .....	83
VIII. Human System .....	92

## **PART A: INTRODUCTION**

### **I. Background**

In August 1995, the *Strategic Regional Policy Plan for South Florida* (SRPP) was adopted and became effective. The SRPP was developed through a collaborative process with more than 200 people representing 130 entities participating throughout the plan development process. The SRPP is intended to guide the future physical, social and economic development of the region encompassing Broward, Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties.

*The overall vision of the SRPP is to transform the region into a livable, sustainable and competitive community, a community that provides opportunities for all residents to grow, prosper and enjoy life. The region is committed to economic prosperity balanced with environmental protection and restoration. Key regional goals and policy directions to move the region toward its vision include the following:*

- Achieve long-term efficient and sustainable development patterns;
- Revitalize deteriorating urban areas, ensure accessibility, the availability of affordable housing, and the adequacy of public facilities and services to enhance the livability of the region;
- Protect and manage natural resources of regional significance and manage growth and development to ensure the sustainability of the region;
- Achieve a competitive and diversified regional economy through the development of cutting edge human and technological resources and infrastructure; and
- Achieve coordinated strategies to address persistent and emerging regional issues.

The SRPP has been served as a framework to link various planning and implementation activities in the region. It is also the primary basis for all Council activities including, for example, review of local government comprehensive plans/amendments and Developments of Regional Impact.

### **II. Purpose**

Over the past five years, South Florida has continued to change in its human system, urban development, and natural resources, as well as its economy. Changes resulted from both external forces such as immigration as well as policy implementation activities such as land purchase for preservation. When assessing the SRPP, it is important to note that it is a plan for the region. Implementation of the SRPP is accomplished by many entities in addition to the Council.

**Key Policy Directions of the  
Strategic Regional Policy Plan (SRPP) for South Florida**

- Achieve long-term efficient and sustainable development patterns by guiding new development and redevelopment within the region to areas which are most intrinsically suited for development, including areas (1) which are least exposed to coastal storm surges; (2) where negative impacts on the natural environment will be least significant; and (3) where public facilities and services already exist, are programmed or, on an aggregate basis, can be provided most economically.
- Revitalize deteriorating urban areas, ensure mobility, accessibility, the availability of affordable housing, and the adequacy of public facilities and services to enhance the livability of the region through policies aimed to, for example:
  - give first priority to areas in need of redevelopment and secondary priority to areas within which adequate infrastructure and support services are either programmed or available,
  - promote transportation alternatives to reduce the reliance on single occupant vehicles, and
  - improve the job/housing balance and transportation linkages for affordable housing.
- Protect and manage natural resources of regional significance and manage growth and development to ensure the sustainability of the region through policies aimed to, for example:
  - restore and protect the ecological values and functions of the Everglades Ecosystem,
  - create incentives to direct inappropriate uses of land away from natural resources of regional significance,
  - enhance connectivity between the fragmented natural areas and the regional natural system, and
  - encourage optimized stormwater retention, freshwater utilization, and water conservation practices.
- Achieve a competitive and diversified regional economy through the development of cutting edge human and technological resources and infrastructure to proactively position the region in the global economy through policies aimed to, for example:
  - develop and support a skilled labor force, and
  - improve key economic development infrastructure (both physical and informational) and resources.
- Achieve coordinated strategies to address persistent and emerging issues in land use and public facilities (including education), natural resources, economic development, regional transportation, affordable housing and emergency preparedness.

SOURCE: *Strategic Regional Policy Plan for South Florida*, August, 1995

This Evaluation and Appraisal Report is intended to address a fundamental question: whether and the extent to which the region has been moving toward the desired regional vision and goals contained in the SRPP. Findings of the evaluation provide an important basis for the effort to update the SRPP.

### **III. Approach**

The evaluation contains two parts: an overall evaluation and a specific evaluation by goals. The overall evaluation builds upon findings of the goal-specific evaluation to provide a larger picture. It also notes overall implications from the evaluation.

On the goal-specific evaluation, information regarding indicators was collected and analyzed regarding the progress or lack of with respect to a particular regional goal. In the case that information is not available for the original indicators, proxy indicators are proposed. It is important to note that though the evaluation focuses on outcome indicators, process indicators are also used when appropriate.

Though the primary focus of the period of evaluation is from 1995 to 2000, additional historical trend information is collected to provide a broader perspective. It should be noted that the lack of the 2000 Census information limits the extent for evaluation. It affects particularly, for example, the assessment regarding affordable housing as well as the specific trends of growth and development patterns in South Florida in the 1990s.

## **PART B: OVERALL EVALUATION**

### **I. Introduction**

The SRPP is striving to transform South Florida into a regional community that is livable, sustainable and competitive. Six strategic subject areas are selected to focus the planning efforts to achieve this vision including land use/public facilities, natural resources, economic development, regional transportation, affordable housing and emergency preparedness. Regional goals are developed in each of the six strategic subject areas.

In this overall evaluation, key regional trends affecting the performance of South Florida are reviewed first. The overall evaluation builds on the more detailed analysis contained in Section III Specific Evaluation by Regional Goals in the six strategic subject areas. In this sense, it provides a summary of the findings contained in Section III. In addition, broader implications of the evaluation findings are explored.

Though the evaluation considers changes in the conditions as reflected through outcome indicators, planning processes and plan implementation are also considered. Conditions of the region are changed partly through external driving forces as well as implementation of various plans. Since there is always a time lag between the development of plans, plan implementation, and actual changes created through implementation, pivotal planning efforts are highlighted since they are expected to impact the condition of the region in the future.

### **II. Key Regional Trends**

Key regional trends which affect the performance of the region include primarily the following:

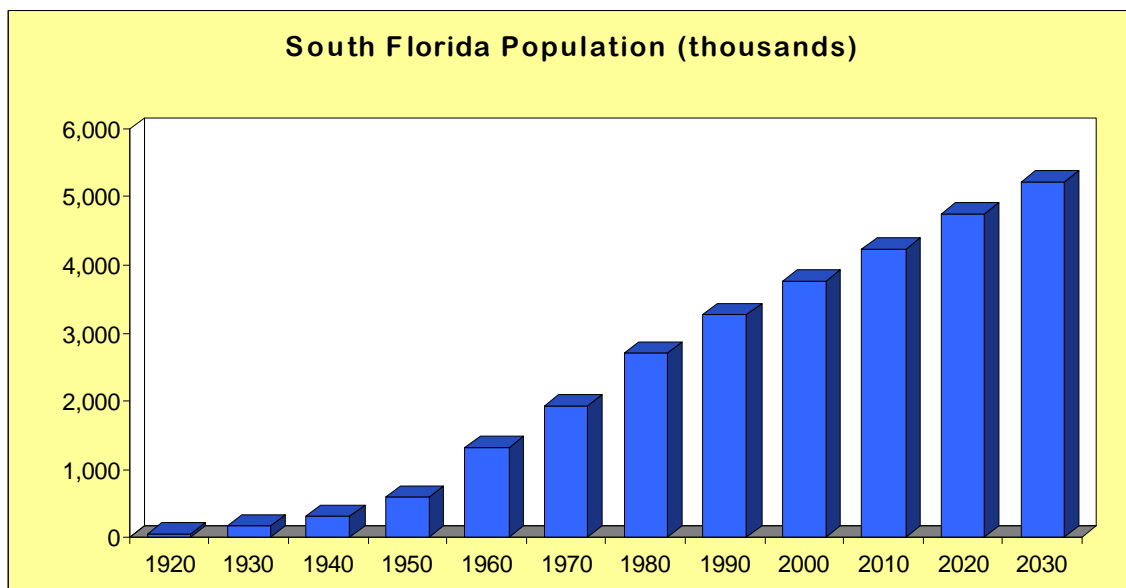
- South Florida continued its significant growth by adding approximately 270,000 people (from 3.46 million to 3.73 million) between 1995 and 2000. And the region expects an increase of almost another one million people in the next two decades (see the Chart below).
- International migration is the most significant source of population growth in the region, accounting for seven of every ten new residents. Latin America and the Caribbean continue to be the primary sources of international migration into South Florida.
- The ethnic and racial composition of South Florida's population continues to diversify.
- South Florida's population, overall, is getting younger, in contrast with the trend at the national level.

**SOUTH FLORIDA REGION  
RESIDENT POPULATION ESTIMATES AND PROJECTIONS  
1920 - 2030**

YEARS	BROWARD	MIAMI-DADE	MONROE	REGION	FLORIDA	SF/FL(%)
<b>RESIDENT POPULATION</b>						
1920	5,135	42,753	19,550	67,438	968,470	6.96
1930	20,094	142,955	13,624	176,673	1,468,211	12.03
1940	39,794	267,739	14,078	321,611	1,897,414	16.95
1950	83,933	495,084	29,957	608,974	2,771,305	21.97
1960	333,946	935,047	47,921	1,316,914	4,951,560	26.60
1970	620,100	1,267,792	52,586	1,940,478	6,791,418	28.57
1980	1,018,257	1,625,509	63,188	2,706,954	9,746,324	27.77
1990	1,255,531	1,937,194	78,024	3,270,749	12,938,071	25.28
1995	1,364,168	2,013,821	83,401	3,461,390	14,149,317	24.46
2000	1,515,997	2,151,653	88,020	3,755,670	15,594,326	24.08
2005	1,640,042	2,270,834	92,745	4,003,621	16,882,836	23.71
2010	1,758,484	2,384,796	97,319	4,240,599	18,121,253	23.40
2015	1,880,711	2,502,420	102,096	4,485,227	19,400,594	23.12
2020	2,007,001	2,623,943	107,018	4,737,962	20,725,021	22.86
2025	2,129,474	2,741,814	111,766	4,983,054	22,014,106	22.64
2030	2,241,359	2,849,546	116,101	5,207,006	23,197,994	22.45

<b>AVERAGE ANNUAL RATES OF GROWTH (%)</b>						
1920/30	14.62	12.83	-3.55	10.11	4.25	5.62
1930/40	7.07	6.48	0.33	6.17	2.60	3.49
1940/50	7.75	6.34	7.84	6.59	3.86	2.63
1950/60	14.81	6.57	4.81	8.02	5.98	1.93
1960/70	6.38	3.09	0.93	3.95	3.21	0.72
1970/80	5.08	2.52	1.85	3.38	3.68	-0.28
1980/90	2.12	1.77	2.13	1.91	2.87	-0.94
1990/00	1.90	1.06	1.21	1.39	1.88	-0.48
2000/10	1.49	1.03	1.01	1.22	1.51	-0.29
2010/20	1.33	0.96	0.95	1.12	1.35	-0.46
2020/30	1.11	0.83	0.82	0.95	1.13	-0.42

Sources: US Bureau of the Census (1920-1990)  
Bureau of Economic and Business Research, Florida Population Studies (February, 2000).



Continuing population growth has increased competition for freshwater resources.

- The pattern of development continues to be characterized by a persistent low density, auto-dependent sprawling development, but is somewhat offset by emerging urban core revitalization.
- The regional economy is getting more service oriented with stronger linkages to the global economy. The value of the region's international trade almost tripled during the 1990s. However, economic disparities also persistent throughout the 1990s.
- Housing costs are rising faster than incomes, particularly for low-income households.

### III. Overall Findings of Evaluation

From 1995 to 2000, important strides are being made in **natural resources** protection, while some sources of stress to the environment continue unabated. For example, surface water quality and air quality have shown signs of improvements. Successes have also been made with regard to land acquisition and habitat preservation planning. Also through both federal and state leadership, a blueprint for Everglades Ecosystem restoration has been crafted. This is particularly through the collaborative efforts of the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force and the Governor's Commission for a Sustainable South Florida (and after December 1999, the Governor's Commission for the Everglades). However, funding for Everglades restoration is still not certain.

Also over the past five years, the effective boundaries for **urban development** in Miami-Dade and Broward Counties have remained unchanged. Within these urban development boundaries, the majority of development generally occurred westward and away from the historic urban core communities. Some of the basic public facilities such as a sewer system still do not exist in some urbanized parts of the region. With the many efforts under the Eastward Ho! Initiative, there are signs of increasing attention to the urban core area. The amount of development in Monroe County is limited by the County's Rate of Growth Ordinance.

The prevailing sprawling development pattern is also reflected in a deteriorated *transportation* condition with more people driving alone and at longer distance. And the share of alternative modes (transit/carpooling/bicycle) has been decreasing. These are contrary to the desired direction established in the SRPP. In particular, Miami-Dade County was identified as the 3<sup>rd</sup> most congested metro area nationwide. While Broward County increased its dedicated sources of funding for mass transit in 1999, a similar effort in Miami-Dade County during the same year remained unsuccessful.

As to the *emergency preparedness* in the region, modest progress has been made regarding the regional goals since 1995. Most importantly, funding from federal and state levels has been increased to plan for and implement local mitigation strategies (LMS). The LMS process, which includes updated vulnerability analyses, has also become the central mechanism for local governments with respect to hazard mitigation.



In addition, more hospitals have been structurally modified to withstand hurricane winds. Shelter capacity within the region has been increasing though a deficit persists.

The lack of the year 2000 census data made the evaluation regarding regional *affordable housing* goals particularly difficult. Housing costs have risen faster than incomes particularly with respect to low and very-low-income households. In addition, between 1990 and 2000, based primarily on projected information, the percentage of very low-income households with a housing cost burden of 30% or more of the household income increased from 71.0% to 71.4%, and from 54.4% to 54.8% for low-income households. In short, challenges of affordable housing in South Florida are expected to persist.

South Florida's **economy** has continued to be more service oriented. The region has also been strengthening its economic and cultural links with other regions of the world, resulting in an increasing interdependence with the global economy. For the past five years, continuing national economic expansion has improved the region's overall economic performance in terms of, for example, increasing per capita income and decreasing unemployment rate. However, throughout the 1990s, South Florida had consistently higher unemployment rates than that of the State of Florida and the nation. In addition, average growth of wages throughout the South Florida counties appeared to have grown well below the national average.

Also economic disparity continues to mark the South Florida landscape. Estimates of the number of people in poverty in South Florida for 1993 and 1995 suggest that poverty levels increased after the 1990 census, and are now declining, but are still higher than at the time of the last census. Also, South Florida poverty rates (18.7 percent) are higher than those for the rest of the state - almost 670,000 persons were members of households in poverty in 1995.

All of the above raise important questions regarding the preparedness of our workforce as well as the availability of quality jobs when the regional economy is expanding and diversifying. Within the past few years, Broward, Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties were encouraged to initiate major efforts to reexamine their desired economic bases for the future. A regional framework to integrate each county's effort is essential.

#### **IV. Overall Observations and Implications**

For the past five years, South Florida has made progress with respect to some regional goals while conditions have persisted or worsened for others. A few overall observations and implications are provided below to provide additional input into the upcoming update of the SRPP.

- **Uneven progress (or lack of) among the natural, urban and economic systems in South Florida**

There is uneven progress (or lack of) among the natural, urban and economic systems in South Florida. As to the natural system, efforts in the past five years

culminated in the development of a blueprint for ecosystem restoration in the region. There are also improvements with respect to, for example, air quality and water quality. The next five years are expected to see major implementation of restoration activities.

As to the future of urban development, the Eastward Ho! Initiative has been undergoing discussions throughout the regional community for the past few years. What is needed in the next couple years is a regional consensus and regional action plan for urban core revitalization. An important component of that action plan is to realign a constructive relationship between land use and transportation to foster the use of public transit. Continuing reliance on the single-occupant automobile/highway system, which generates maximum impacts among all transportation modes, will only push South Florida further away from its desired goals.

In regards to our economic future, a sense of the need for regional economic development planning is emerging and should be encouraged. The next five to ten years may turn out to be the last opportunity for the region to fundamentally address its work force preparedness issues to maintain its competitive advantage in the global economy.

- **Qualitative human system diversity demands capacity for adaptability and expanding options**

In addition to the continuing significant growth, the continuing qualitative changes of the region's human system have become another driving force affecting our future. To begin with, international migration is the primary source of population growth in the region, accounting for seven of every ten new residents. Other qualitative changes are in terms of, for example, an overall younger population, more non-family households and more diverse population regarding ethnic and racial composition. The qualitative diversification of our population also demands an enhanced regional capacity for more adaptable and diversified planning strategies. Capabilities to expand options for choices to address diverse needs and promote community well-being will become essential. In addition, to reach a general consensus and action plan to both respect and capitalize on our diversity for our social futures remains to be a fundamental challenge to the region.

- **The need for implementing a comprehensive and coordinated regional strategy**

It is important to note that overall, it seems that most of the improvements made during the past five years rely more on specific individual program efforts and are less the results of a comprehensive and coordinated regional strategy. To be sure, individual programs are important to provide targeted resources and efforts. However, without implementing a coordinated regional strategy, the fruits of individual programs may only be a short-term phenomenon and their effectiveness reduced. For example, the continuing increases in vehicle-miles driven may eliminate recent improvements in air quality. Failure to revitalize the urban core may push development further westward into environmentally sensitive areas.

Fortunately, some of the components of a coordinated regional strategy for achieving the region's vision are already in place at different levels of maturation. These include, for example, the upcoming implementation of the Restudy, the formation and progression of the Regional Transit Organization (recently broadened into a Regional Transportation Organization), the emerging recognition of a regional economic development approach and a coordinated approach to human service issues. Those initiatives require continuous nourishment and linkages with other components to realize their potential.

- **Increasing importance of cumulative impacts of small projects**

With the exception of a few subareas such as south Dade, the region is beginning to run out of large pieces of vacant land within the urbanized area. Numbers of new large-scale developments of regional impact will become fewer and fewer. Hence, the cumulative impacts of large number of small development/redevelopment projects will play an increasingly important role in shaping the future of the region.

## PART C: SPECIFIC EVALUATION BY REGIONAL GOALS

### **I. Introduction**

Within the SRPP, six strategic subject areas are selected to focus the planning efforts. Regional goals were developed in each of the six strategic subject areas contained in sections II to VII. For each regional goal, indicators were also developed to measure the changes of the region with respect to the goal.

On the goal-specific evaluation, information regarding indicators was collected and analyzed regarding the progress or lack of with respect to a particular regional goal. In the case that information is not available for the original indicators, proxy indicators are proposed. When appropriate or in the case that systematic quantitative information is not available, efforts were made to provide qualitative assessment of the changes in the region. It is important to note that though the evaluation focuses on outcome indicators, process indicators are used when appropriate.

For each indicator associated with a Regional Goal, when appropriate, the assessment has been conducted in two parts: analysis vs. implication. The *Analysis* part of the assessment provides an analytical explanation of the empirical trend information. In the *Implication* part of the assessment, the meanings of the indicator information are explored. For example, in light of how the region has been changing, what kind of policies should be considered?

The current SRPP does not have a separate Human System subject area. Issues dealing with human system were dealt with partially throughout the plan. Section VIII provides a general assessment regarding how the human system issues may be addressed through the update of the SRPP.