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Contact: Kate Haigh
Title: Communications Specialist
Phone: 904-279-0880
Email: khaigh@nefrc.org

P R E S S R E L E A S E :

NEFRC Receives EDA CARES Act Funding for Coronavirus Response, Recovery, and Long-Term Economic Resilience Planning

Jacksonville, FL – The Northeast Florida Regional Council (NEFRC), a government agency that serves seven counties and 26 municipalities, recently received \$400,000 in Federal funding from the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) to support economic resilience efforts across the region directly related to the coronavirus pandemic.

Moving into the next few years, the concept of “Economic Resilience” will be a target priority for the NEFRC and its programs. Economic resilience refers to the ability of local economies to “bounce back” to normal conditions after losing function because of an uncontrollable event. In the face of a disaster, such as a public health crisis or hurricane impact, resilient economies have the capacity to quickly respond to, withstand, and recover from adverse situations.

The funding will enable the NEFRC to focus staff resources, over the next two years, towards priorities related to coronavirus response, recovery, and long-term planning. In responding to the current disaster, staff will work with stakeholders on the ground to assess incurred economic damage; and will conduct quantitative research focused on understanding impacts felt by specific industries. Once context is established, an “Economic Resilience Taskforce” for Northeast Florida will be established, so that efforts are informed by local perspectives.

“Through this unique funding opportunity, the NEFRC will be able to directly assist local governments in the long-term recovery process that lies ahead,” said Beth Payne, Chief Executive Officer of the NEFRC. “More importantly, given the unprecedented nature of the times we are facing, establishing a meaningful plan for economic resilience will be vital to Northeast Florida in the years to come.”

The NEFRC, which serves as the designated Economic Development District for Northeast Florida, will work closely to align the priorities of this funding opportunity with the goals and objectives of the region’s Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). In addition to efforts to be carried out under this specific funding source, staff will continue to assist local partners in applying for EDA funding to support construction and economic development related projects.

The Regional Council, which was established in 1977 by Florida Statute, is accustomed to policy and planning work related to natural disasters and public health crises. Through its programs, which include emergency preparedness, planning and policy, and a healthcare coalition, the NEFRC looks to



harmonize existing efforts at the regional level with the goals and objectives of this award. For more information, please contact Sean Lahav, NEFRC Resiliency Coordinator, at slahav@nefrc.org

The NEFRC is an independent, regional government agency serving Baker, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Putnam, Nassau and St. Johns counties. It provides a regional perspective toward growth management, economic development, emergency preparedness, resiliency and community development to enhance the quality of life of Northeast Florida residents. For more information about the Northeast Florida Regional Council, visit www.nefrc.org

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