# COMMUNICATION PACKAGE

## December 2019

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MONTHLY ACTIVITY REPORT: September 2019

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT/CAPACITY BUILDING and OUTREACH
- Organized and distributed the August 2019 Florida Regional Councils Association (FRCA) Newsletter, FRCA Forward. Began collecting articles and formatting the September 2019 Newsletter. Continued to update the FRCA Facebook page.
- Updated the email lists for newly elected local officials and maintain the email listserv for approximately 2,350 individuals who receive FRCA Forward.
- Maintained and updated the FRCA website: www.frregionalcouncils.org.
- To enhance partnerships and strengthen the relationship between regional planning councils and their state and federal partners, organized, participated in or attended the following meetings and shared information:
  - Florida American Planning Association, Florida Chapter Annual Conference
  - Rural Economic Development Initiative Meeting

ASSOCIATION MANAGEMENT
- Prepared for the December FRCA Executive Directors Advisory Committee and Partners meetings.
- Coordinated a meeting for the Executive Directors including developing a meeting agenda and preparing meeting materials.
- Began preparations for the Winter 2020 Policy Board meetings.
- Began initial organization of the 2018-19 FRCA Annual Report.
- Continued to coordinate logistics for the 2020 meeting and conference schedule.
- Distributed grant opportunities and information of interest from local, state and national organizations.
MONTHLY ACTIVITY REPORT: October 2019

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT/CAPACITY BUILDING and OUTREACH

- Organized and distributed the September 2019 Florida Regional Councils Association (FRCA) Newsletter, FRCA Forward. Began collecting articles and formatting the October 2019 Newsletter. Continued to update the FRCA Facebook page.
- Updated the email lists for newly elected local officials and maintain the email listserve for approximately 2,400 individuals who receive FRCA Forward.
- Maintained and updated the FRCA website: www.flregionalcouncils.org.
- To enhance partnerships and strengthen the relationship between regional planning councils and their state and federal partners, organized, participated in or attended the following meetings and shared information:
  - Rural Economic Development Initiative Meeting
- Compiled and submitted the July – September quarterly report to the Department of Economic Opportunity on economic development activities in each regional planning council area.
- Prepared and submitted House and Senate forms for funding to update the Regional Evacuation Studies.
- Facilitated a conference call with the Disaster Recovery Coordinators and the Economic Development Administration.

ASSOCIATION MANAGEMENT

- Prepared for the December FRCA Executive Directors Advisory Committee and Partners meetings.
- Continued preparations for the Winter 2020 Policy Board meetings.
- Supported development of the 2018-19 FRCA Annual Report.
- Facilitated a coordination conference call for the 10 regional planning councils.
- Continued to coordinate logistics for the 2020 meeting and conference schedule.
- Distributed grant opportunities and information of interest from local, state and national organizations.
MONTHLY ACTIVITY REPORT: November 2019

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT/CAPACITY BUILDING and OUTREACH

- Organized and distributed the October 2019 Florida Regional Councils Association (FRCA) Newsletter, FRCA Forward. Began collecting articles and formatting the November 2019 Newsletter. Continued to update the FRCA Facebook page.
- Updated the email lists for newly elected local officials and maintain the email listserv for approximately 2,400 individuals who receive FRCA Forward.
- Maintained and updated the FRCA website: www.flregionalcouncils.org.
- To enhance partnerships and strengthen the relationship between regional planning councils and their state and federal partners, organized, participated in or attended the following meetings and shared information:
  - Rural Economic Development Initiative Meeting
- Facilitated conference calls with the University of South Florida, the Florida Department of Transportation and the Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council regarding collaboration on the Statewide Regional Evacuation Study update.

ASSOCIATION MANAGEMENT

- Prepared for the December FRCA Executive Directors Advisory Committee and Partners meetings.
- Continued preparations for the Winter 2020 Policy Board meetings.
- Supported development of the 2018-19 FRCA Annual Report.
- Facilitated a coordination conference call for the executive committees of the Policy Board and the Executive Directors Advisory Committee.
- Continued to coordinate logistics for the 2020 meeting and conference schedule.
- Distributed grant opportunities and information of interest from local, state and national organizations.
Tampa Bay RPC to Host Resilience Leadership Summit

On January 7 - 8, 2020, the Tampa Bay Regional Resiliency Coalition will host the inaugural Resilience Leadership Summit in St. Petersburg. The Summit will feature national experts as well as leaders in counties and cities throughout the Tampa Bay region who will gather to discuss innovative programs, strategies, and policies.

The Summit will help to define the vision for transforming Tampa Bay communities over the next five to ten years as they address major economic, social, and environmental challenges. On January 8th, all attendees will participate in a facilitated session to define and prioritize goals for the Tampa Bay Regional Action Plan.

The Resilience Leadership Summit topics will include:
* New risks assessments, municipal ratings, and public finance
* New federal programs for pre-disaster mitigation
* Improving long-term recovery efforts
* Implementing large-scale innovative adaptation
* Reducing risks to housing and neighborhoods
* Increasing the use of clean energy

Formed in 2018, the Tampa Bay Regional Resiliency Coalition, an initiative of the Tampa Bay RPC, works to strengthen the region's ability to plan for the changing climate, reduce impacts and secure increased levels of funding. These activities help to support resilient infrastructure improvements and fund adaptation and mitigation programs, which protect communities, property, and economies. Participating in the Resilience Coalition enhances the ability for counties, cities and stakeholder organizations to understand the changing risks, best practices and policies for increasing resiliency. Please visit: [http://www.tbrpc.org/summit/](http://www.tbrpc.org/summit/) for more information about the event.
As the Apalachee Region continues to stabilize from damages caused by Hurricane Michael, the Apalachee RPC Council is focused on expanding economic diversification and cultivating new opportunities for local farmers. Florida's timber industry took a devastating hit from Hurricane Michael, with damages totaling $1.3 billion and approximately 75% - 95% of pine trees damaged or destroyed within the impacted area. It will take a decade or more for the timber industry to recover. Recent legislation surrounding industrial hemp opens a promising new market. Hemp can be used to create more than 25,000 products, from plastic replacements, construction and fiber materials and fertilizer but is most commonly associated with CBD, a non-euphoric cannabis chemical used as a medicine.

To help potential growers and processors, the Apalachee RPC brought together farmers, cultivation and production experts, economic development professionals and policymakers to discuss the challenges and opportunities of this emerging industry. The Apalachee RPC hosted two hemp summits within the region in October and November. The 850 Hemp Summits brought nearly 500 people together and covered a range of issues including current legislation, rules and regulations, research and development, as well as growing and processing hemp.

Now that the summits have concluded, many of the farmers who attended are planning to tour established hemp farms in Tennessee and Kentucky. "We're looking at whether there is opportunity to clear debris and plant a different crop," Leon County Commissioner and Apalachee RPC Vice Chair Kristin Dozier said, noting that bringing hemp into the fold could be a positive change. "Many people are talking about rebuilding. We're focused on building an economy. I think it's disruptive in a positive way and could be a huge benefit for our Region."
South Florida and Treasure Coast RPCs Host Joint Session

Continuing a long-standing tradition, the South Florida and Treasure Coast RPCs convened a joint meeting of the RPC Boards in West Palm Beach on October 25, 2019. With more than 175 persons in attendance, the RPC Boards received testimony and adopted resolutions in the areas of affordable housing, coral reef disease, human biosolids, water infrastructure funding, and re-authorization of the National Flood Insurance Program.

The Councils also received updates from the leadership of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the South Florida Regional Transportation Authority (SFRTA) on the Tri-Rail Commuter Rail, Brightline/Virgin Trains, and the Florida Department of Transportation on the Florida Transportation Plan 2020 Update. The Councils were recognized for their 2019 Regional Leadership and Excellence Award from the National Association of Regional Councils for work with the SFRTA on the Transit Oriented Development Educational Outreach Program.

Two joint sessions have been planned for 2020. "Our regular meetings with our colleagues from the Treasure Coast RPC provide a unique and invaluable opportunity to speak with one voice on the key regional issues impacting the Southeast Florida Region from Monroe through Indian River counties. We look forward to our continued conversation and partnership during the upcoming year," said Mayor Greg Ross, Chair of the South Florida RPC and Mayor of the City of Cooper City.
Lake Worth Beach sits on the Atlantic coast where the current is concentrated in a 60-mile wide channel between the state of Florida and the Bahamas, creating the perfect place to most easily access the Gulf Stream for research, development and testing of in-water generation equipment and devices. It also provides the closest place to connect ocean current electric energy into a grid for practical use by its customers.

In South Florida, the Gulf Stream Current flows from the Gulf of Mexico, around Florida then north along the United States up to Ireland.

The City of Lake Worth Beach is partnering with SNMREC to produce Gulf Stream energy incubator off Lake Worth Beach to deliver 20 MW of clean energy with an annual economic impact and job creation effect currently in early stages.

www.lakeworthbeachfl.gov

Funding for cabling and mooring field will be a combination of Federal, state and private sector. It is the City’s goal to have units in the water generating electricity to turn on a light bulb in Lake Worth Beach within 5 years.

SNMREC: Southeast National Marine Renewable Energy Center at FAU
The Miami Herald

This new plan will create affordable housing along South Florida’s rail path

BY RENE RODRIGUEZ AND ALEX HARRIS

October 30, 2019 12:00 PM

A grid design showing the possibilities for the protection and development of affordable housing near the Government Center transit hub in downtown Miami. SOUTH FLORIDA COMMUNITY LAND TRUST

A new collaborative of local, state and national nonprofit institutions has unveiled an ambitious plan aimed at creating and preserving affordable housing along the rail path throughout Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach counties.

The plan, titled “South Florida’s Housing Link Collaborative,” will use a three-year, $5 million investment by JPMorgan Chase & Co. to seed newly constructed rentals and upgrade existing units.

The $5 million investment is projected to leverage as much as $75 million of external capital from investors, lenders and government sources. Those may include the City of Miami’s $400 million Miami Forever resiliency bond, which has earmarked $100 million specifically towards housing, or the Miami-Dade County Affordable Housing Surtax.
The funds will be used to build 150 new affordable rental units and renovate another 150 existing affordable units. The money will also be used to buy vacant or underutilized land along the railway line. Also, 200 improvement loans will be granted to existing homeowners to upgrade their residences for energy efficiency and resiliency.

All of the new and renovated construction will feature climate-resistant design and materials.

The timeline for the plan allows for three years for land acquisition, with new construction completed in four to five years.

All will be located near current or future stations for Brightline express service, also known as Virgin Trains, and commuter Tri-Rail on the existing tracks owned by Florida East Coast Railway, which is built on some of the highest ground in South Florida.

The collaborative is a joint venture between the Broward-based South Florida Community Land Trust (SFCLT), the Community Land Trust of Palm Beach (CLTPBC), the Solar Energy Loan Fund (SELF), based in St. Lucie County; the national Enterprise Community Partners; and the state nonprofit Florida Community Loan Fund.

There are three criteria for any property or older buildings to qualify for the plan:

- A half-mile proximity to existing and future Brightline and Tri-Rail stations along the FEC, which would qualify the acquisition for transit-oriented development density and mixed-use bonuses;

- Proximity to Opportunity Zones, which are census-designated tracts designed to entice investors and developers with tax-gain deferrals to build in economically challenged areas;

- Proximity to Community Redevelopment Areas (CRA), or neighborhoods deemed by local government to be in dire need of adequate affordable housing and infrastructure improvements (water, plumbing, electricity).

Mandy Bartle, executive director of the SFCLT, said the group decided to focus on land and buildings along the rail because during more than a year of community outreach meetings, access to transit surfaced as the single biggest need of low-income households.
“Transport is the biggest expense after housing,” she said. “We decided to hone in on this corridor because the people who most need public transit are a lot of the folks who already live in these areas near the railway and are the most likely to get pushed out by gentrification.”

Bartle said the group used a study commissioned by the South Florida Regional Transit Authority to zero in on 27 proposed stops along the rail where its investment would have the biggest impact. The targeted locations are subject to change, depending on decisions by Virgin Trains or Miami-Dade County about future train stops.

A community land trust buys vacant land and retains ownership in perpetuity. Single-family homes or rental apartments built on the land can be sold or leased at prices lower than market-rate, because builders don’t have to factor in the added cost of the land purchase.

Home buyers in these areas pay lower deposits and monthly mortgage bills. When they decide to sell, they retain the equity generated by the price they initially paid. But the home returns to the market at an affordable price, because the value of the land itself is not a factor.

**Climate proofing**

Another critical factor in this new plan: All the housing will be built or restored to be climate-change proof.

The Solar Energy Loan Fund (SELF), the St. Lucie-based community lender focused on sustainable home improvement, will administer the $5 million fund from JPMorgan.

SELF will also give out 200 loans to homeowners in the area looking to replace their roofs and air conditioners or even add solar to their homes.

The business model, explains SELF’s Chief Strategic and Financial Officer Duanne Andrade, is to offer loans to low and moderate-income people for upgrades like hurricane-resistant roofs, solar panels or efficient air-conditioning systems.

“Those are all expensive items that typically working-class people couldn’t afford easily,” she said. “It’s not fair for only the wealthy to be able to access those home improvements that would serve the low income the most and the best.”

Such improvements require a big upfront investment, but they save homeowners money over time in the form of lower electricity bills and cheaper home insurance.
The key to accessing these technologies, Andrade said, is affordable financing. Higher-income people can pay with cash or get a loan from a bank — an option often unavailable to those with lower income.

“Because they may not have great credit scores or high incomes, they’re going to be hit with high-interest rates,” she said. “Low-income populations pay much more, proportionally speaking, for housing costs and operating costs for their homes.”

Her organization fills the gap between banks and predatory lenders by lending to low and moderate-income homeowners and structuring the loan around what they can afford to pay.

Andrade said she’s “super proud” of her company’s 98.8 percent repayment rate. Since SELF started in 2010, it has loaned a total of $10 million to 1,300 people. The average loan is around $8,000, with an interest rate between 5% and 9%.

“The South Florida market is, first of all, probably the most vulnerable market, especially for moderate and low-income communities, for climate risks,” she said. “We know there is a huge need.”

**Vulnerability**

Miami is one of the most vulnerable cities in the world to the impacts of climate change, and the highest elevation land is already being valued higher than low elevation land, studies have shown. As a result of racist redlining policies that helped shape the city’s neighborhoods decades ago, those high elevation communities in Miami are often historically black or Hispanic.

The location of those flood-proof areas, such as Little Haiti, has kicked off a fierce debate about climate gentrification, which activists say is why investors choose low-income neighborhoods for big developments. Developers say they choose these areas because of their proximity to other urban areas and plead a case of regular gentrification.

Either way, low and moderate-income homeowners are being priced out of the areas targeted by the JPMorgan Chase grant.

“The affordability of housing throughout our country is a huge problem,” said Mel Martinez, chairman of the Southeast U.S. and Latin America for JPMorgan Chase and former Florida senator and Secretary of Housing and Urban Development. “It’s particularly acute in certain
parts of Florida because our economy is dependent on tourism, but that industry creates jobs that don’t keep up with the cost of living.”

Maria Escorcia, program officer for the JPMorgan Chase Foundation in Florida, said the banking giant allocates $350 million annually to promote neighborhood revitalization and small business expansion around the world.

“The other thing we are trying to tackle through this program is the impact of climate and what that does to the stock of housing that is available in Miami,” she said. “It has to be affordable to get in, but it also needs to be sustainable over time. Climate-related issues can be a setback to a family back trying to do repairs and keep their housing up to code. That’s particularly true in South Florida.”

This rendering shows the potential stops along the Florida East Coast Railway that could be developed and preserved as affordable housing areas using the new plan unveiled Monday. SOUTH FLORIDA COMMUNITY LAND TRUST
Brightline says it’s on time to open new South Florida stations by next year

By David Lyons
Nov 30, 2019 | 11:00 AM

A Brightline train passes the Boca Raton Community Garden in Boca Raton, where Brightline officials are proposing a possible Brightline station. (Carline Jean / South Florida Sun Sentinel) (Carline Jean / South Florida Sun Sentinel)

Brightline, the high-speed rail system, is poised to check off a critical box on its expansion checklist — adding three more stations across South Florida by next year. The rail service forecasts its new Boca Raton and Aventura stations will start serving passengers in October 2020, according to its most recent financial filing. A PortMiami station is expected to start service by the end of 2020.

Since earlier this year, company officials had listed them all as major priorities for the rail line as it started work on its 170-mile extension from West Palm Beach to Orlando International Airport. The company is evaluating sites in the Orlando area for additional stations, and is “in active negotiations” to establish one that would serve one or more local entertainment parks. But the filing makes no mention of any more South Florida stations beyond the new stops in Boca Raton and Miami-Dade County.
Brightline, which is expected to be re-branded as Virgin Trains USA next year, has been serving the downtowns of Fort Lauderdale, West Palm Beach and Miami since last year. It chose Boca Raton for a station — as it did Aventura and PortMiami — for their potential as rich sources of paying passengers. By adding the three locations to its station roster, Brightline says it expects to add 2 million passengers to its annual ridership once the stations become fully operational.

“Now you have a much more compelling story,” said William Humphrey, assistant professor of marketing at Florida International University in Miami. “You don’t have just three places on the north-south corridor, you have several.”

The Boca Raton City Council is scheduled to vote on the station Dec. 10. In an apparent effort to ensure the Boca Raton deal is sealed, the re-election campaign of Mayor Scott Singer distributed a Thanksgiving week newsletter Tuesday declaring the proposed deal just got “a lot sweeter for residents.” He wrote the plan “has moved in the right direction” as the high-speed rail line will contribute more than $25 million toward the station and parking garage. The city and company would share parking profits.

Singer also said the company agreed to the following:

- Lease the land from the city and pay all expenses, maintenance and insurance.
- Pay up to $300,000 to relocate a community garden adjacent to the railroad tracks.
- Keep parking for a nearby library free, with a dedicated entrance to the garage, while increasing the number of available spaces for library patrons.
- Extend the distance between the garage and a small group of residences neighboring the station.

“Brightline’s original proposal from months ago has changed after the City Council has pushed and pushed again to find an even better solution for residents,” the mayor declared.

In an email responding to questions from the Sun Sentinel, Singer said the city and Brightline “are still finalizing terms of the parties’ contributions for the garage. In any case, the amount to be contributed by the city is far less than Brightline’s anticipated costs for infrastructure.”

A Brightline spokesman did not address the mayor’s take on the company’s negotiating positions. “Brightline, soon to be known as Virgin Trains USA, continues working with Mayor Singer, the city council and city staff on a partnership that will deliver a Brightline connection to Boca Raton by the end of 2020,” spokesman Mike Hicks said Wednesday. “We’ve seen tremendous support from residents and business leaders throughout the process.”

Brightline is working with the city to identify funding sources for a pedestrian bridge that would span the tracks from the station to the downtown area. In his email, Singer said the lease of the city’s land for the station “does not require construction of a pedestrian bridge.” “The City Council has discussed our interest in pursuing transportation grants to assist with the cost of a bridge,” he said. “It is still something we are exploring.”

In the meantime, Brightline expects “design, permitting and early works” for the Boca Raton station to start by the end of this year, the company’s filing said.
In Miami-Dade, the county is kicking more than $80 million to fund the stations in Aventura and at PortMiami. The Orlando extension is expected to go active in 2022, the company’s filing said.

The line is still a short of the one million passenger mark for 2019 by slightly more than 200,000 passengers. Year-to-date through Oct. 31, ridership stood at 784,487, up 96% over the same period last year. Ticket revenue was $13.3 million, up 171% over the same period in 2018. “The strong year-over-year results are due to the addition of service to Miami in May 2018 as well as the continued adoption of our service by repeat customers over the past 12 months,” the company said.

The average fare per passenger is now $16.92, up from $12.25 last year. That is roughly double the price charged by the subsidized Tri-Rail commuter system, which runs along the CSX rail line west of I-95 between Palm Beach County and Miami International Airport.

Brightline has sought to expand its customer base. Among others things, it is cutting marketing deals with cruise lines to funnel passengers to the railroad. It is offering 20 percent commissions to travel agencies to sell tickets.

The railroad is holding northbound night trains in Miami for homeward bound Miami Heat fans who live in Broward and Palm Beach counties. To coincide with Art Basel and Miami Art Week, Brightline plans to wrap one of its trains with images from artist Keith Haring in conjunction with the Rubell Museum, and operate a promotional ride Monday from West Palm Beach to downtown Miami.

Although the line regards itself as a regional, inter-city train service, repeat travelers are making strong contributions to the business, the company filing said. “Daily trips by commuters and other frequent riders reached an all-time high in October.”

David Lyons
South Florida Sun Sentinel

David Lyons is a business writer for the South Florida Sun Sentinel. He is a past editor-in-chief of ALM’s Daily Business Review in Miami and formerly worked for the Miami Herald, Miami News, Fort Lauderdale News, Albany (N.Y.) Times-Union and Schenectady Gazette. He holds a degree in political science from Siena College in Loudonville, N.Y.
Brightline ramps up push to stop suicides

Patrick Goddard, president of Brightline; Steven Abrams, Tri-Rail director; and state Rep. Mike Caruso, R-Delray Beach, answer questions Wednesday at a news conference in Delray Beach. Brightline is providing money to the regional 211 that helps people in crisis across the area. Goddard said that 75% of the deaths caused by Brightline trains have been from suicide. [ALEN EYESTONE/PALMBEACHPOST.COM]

“We want the number to be zero, and we won't rest until we get there,” says Brightline President Patrick Goddard.

By Jeff Ostrowski
The Palm Beach Post

Lamenting “an epidemic” of deaths by people who jump in front of South Florida’s new fast-moving trains, Brightline President Patrick Goddard said the company is boosting its efforts to prevent suicides.

In an attempt to head off suicides by train, Brightline has tested infrared fences and installed warning signs along its tracks. The company also has hosted public-awareness events, Goddard said.

“In spite of this, the incidents are still occurring,” Goddard said at a news conference Wednesday in Delray Beach. “It’s not enough. We need to look to do more.”

State Rep. Mike Caruso, R-Delray Beach, last month introduced a bill seeking $500,000 in state money for efforts to reduce suicide by train. The money would support the 211 Palm Beach/Treasure Coast Helplines, a service for people suffering mental health issues.

See BRIGHTLINE, A9
Brightline said it would contribute $150,000 to 211.

"We want to look for a way to intercept people who are feeling low, are in a bad place, before they approach the train tracks," Goddard said.

Brightline operates the deadliest train among the nation's 821 railroads, according to an analysis of Federal Railroad Administration data by The Associated Press. Since the for-profit service began operating, it has experienced deaths at a rate of more than one a month — and about one for every 29,000 miles the trains have traveled.

None of Brightline's deaths were caused by crew error or faulty equipment, according to law enforcement and federal reports. The majority have been suicides, while most others involved impatient motorists, pedestrians or bicyclists who misjudged the trains' speed and ignored bells, gates or other warnings. Drugs, alcohol or both have been found in many victims' systems.

The company is working with suicide prevention groups and will experiment with infrared motion detectors and drones to patrol tracks. The drones will have cameras to spot people lingering, as those contemplating suicide often do, and speakers through which drone monitors can speak with them. The monitors also will alert police and warn engineers.

Brightline also is erecting fences and plant barriers in problem areas, putting up four-way gates at major road crossings and talking with cities about eliminating side-street crossings. Signs advertising suicide prevention hotlines will be posted.

Suicides are devastating for Brightline's crews, Goddard said. A moving train needs at least 1,500 feet to stop, and operators have no hope of avoiding a collision with a suicidal person.

The trauma of driving a train used in a suicide leaves crews the "walking wounded," Goddard said. After suicides, Brightline offers counseling and gives engineers and conductors three days off.

Goddard vowed to make suicide prevention a priority.

"We want the number to be zero, and we won't rest until we get there," Goddard said.

Brightline, which is rebranding as Virgin Trains USA in partnership with British billionaire Richard Branson, runs about 17 trains each way daily between Miami and West Palm Beach — 67 miles — and plans to expand another 170 miles to Orlando by 2022. On the new stretch, trains will reach speeds of 125 mph when they travel through less densely populated farmland.

Also in 2020, Virgin Trains plans to open a line connecting Southern California and Las Vegas, with speeds of 150 mph. It hopes to add service in Texas and other states.

Brightline is a subsidiary of Fortress Investment Group LLC. New York-based Fortress has a management contract with Gannett Co. Inc., the ultimate parent of the publisher of The Palm Beach Post.

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News Service of Florida

SAFETY MEASURES ORDERED AT RAIL CROSSINGS
December 5, 2019
Jim Turner

TALLAHASSEE --- Rail crossings throughout Florida, including one west of Jupiter where three members of a family were recently killed by an Amtrak train, will be upgraded for safety under a directive issued by the state transportation secretary.

Department of Transportation Secretary Kevin Thibault on Thursday ordered “unprecedented” rail safety measures for more than 4,000 crossings, with an expected cost of almost $60 million to complete by March 2022.

“One fatality on our rail crossings is one too many, and I am committed to doing everything I can as secretary to prevent additional tragedies from occurring across our state,” Thibault said.

The order directs installation of what are known as “dynamic envelopes,” essentially roadway pavement markings in areas where cars are not supposed to stop, at every existing and future rail crossing on Department of Transportation roads and state-owned land.

Thibault made the announcement at the Pompano Beach Service Plaza along Florida’s Turnpike.

Department spokeswoman Beth Frady said one of the first crossings to get the “dynamic envelope” work will be on state-owned land west of Jupiter, where a West Palm Beach woman and her two grandsons were killed less than two weeks ago when hit by an Amtrak train.

The crossing, which is on a street off the Beeline Highway leading into the 62,000-acre J.W. Corbett Wildlife Management Area, has yield and railroad crossing signs but no railway gate.

Thibault said in a statement the “directive not only exceeds industry safety standards, but it also designates Florida as a nationwide leader in rail safety."

A release from the transportation department said 2014 and 2017 pilot programs in South and Central Florida employing “dynamic envelope” designs reduced the number of vehicles stopped on rail crossings or too close to crossings by 15 percent.

But Sen. Debbie Mayfield, a Rockledge Republican who has fought plans to extend the Brightline passenger-rail service north from South Florida, said more safety measures are needed.

“While increasing visibility is a step in the right direction, I still believe we need gates at crossings, fencing along high-risk corridors, and increased training of local emergency service providers to assure the public is protected,” Mayfield said in an email. “These are the key safety deficiencies that were identified in the Florida Passenger Rail System Study and remain vital to protect the public as high speed rail operations continue to expand throughout the state.”
Thibault’s order also establishes a social- and digital-media safety program called “Operation STRIDE,” which stands for Statewide Traffic and Railroad Initiative using Dynamic Envelopes.

In addition to the Amtrak crash, an Associated Press report recently said the Brightline rail service, which is being rebranded Virgin Trains USA, had the worst per-mile death rate of the nation’s 821 railroads. Brightline operates in South Florida and is expanding to Orlando.

On Wednesday, Brightline President Patrick Goddard backed a $500,000 legislative funding request (HB 4195) by Rep. Mike Caruso, R-Delray Beach, to help combat suicide through the non-profit agency 211 Palm Beach/Treasure Coast Helpline.

The program, which will be partly funded by Brightline, includes a crisis intervention campaign called Buzz Boxx, a mobile barber shop that will visit homeless shelters, community events and schools to provide free haircuts in exchange for signing a rail safety pledge.

“Suicide by rail is an industrywide issue and the nationwide statistics are startling,” Goddard said in a statement. “We believe a partnership with 211 is a critical next step in our efforts to help those who are vulnerable to mental health or who may be seeking assistance.”

With the 2020 legislative session starting next month, Mayfield and Rep. Tyler Sirois, R-Merritt Island, have reintroduced the “Florida High-Speed Passenger Rail Safety Act,” which in part would give the state Department of Transportation oversight of issues not preempted by federal law.

The proposal (SB 676 and HB 465) would require the state to exert its authority about rail corridors and railway operating equipment, pedestrian and road crossings, fencing for high-risk corridors and training for local emergency service providers.

Somewhat similar legislation filed in the 2018 session drew legal questions from Brightline and did not pass.

In October 2018, the Legislature’s Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability issued the Florida Passenger Rail System Study and expressed concerns the Department of Transportation wasn’t using its authority to regulate high-speed rail.

The office suggested ideas such an independent regulatory body to oversee railroad safety in Florida; updating rules on state-of-the-art railroad crossings and corridors; requiring a multi-jurisdictional law enforcement effort on trespassing enforcement; establishing “harsher” penalties for people caught trespassing on grade crossings; and conducting a review of statewide suicide prevention activities.
News Service of Florida

GROUPS GEAR UP TO FIGHT TOLL ROAD PROJECTS
December 5, 2019

Jim Turner
TALLAHASSEE --- Critics of toll-road projects in rural areas from Collier County to the Georgia state line have combined efforts to try to halt plans for the new pavement.

Members of the No Roads to Ruin Coalition held a news conference Thursday at the Capitol and outlined plans to lobby lawmakers and build opposition to the three multi-use corridors, which are a top priority of Senate President Bill Galvano and are being reviewed by state task forces.

“We’re not saying no to progress, we’re just trying to define progress in a different way that more reflects what the communities on the ground want,” said Ryan Smart, executive director of the Florida Springs Council.

The coalition says it has more than 50 organizations and businesses, from the Center for Biological Diversity, Bear Warriors United and the Conservancy of Southwest Florida to the Farmworker Association of Florida, the League of Women Voters of Florida and Physicians for Social Responsibility. It argues the roads will result in sprawling development and environmental degradation and waste billions of tax dollars rather than assisting the state’s rapidly growing population.

Smart said the state should repair existing roads and bridges, along with establishing alternative modes of transportation such as high-speed rail, which would put less stress on the environment and people living in rural communities.

“While the Florida Legislature may think that highway interchanges, fast-food chains and suburban sprawl equals progress, the communities in the path of these roads have different values and must be heard,” Smart said.

Galvano, R-Bradenton made a priority of the projects during the 2019 legislative session and has received backing from groups such as the Florida Chamber of Commerce, Associated Industries of Florida, the Florida Ports Council and the Florida Trucking Association.

The projects would expand the Suncoast Parkway from the Tampa Bay area to Jefferson County at the northern end of Florida; extend the Florida Turnpike west to connect with the Suncoast Parkway; and add a new multi-use corridor, including a toll road, from Polk County to Collier County.

Galvano has described the roads as a “new approach” in planning the state’s future, reducing congestion, providing alternate hurricane evacuation routes and offering a way to “revitalize” rural communities through the expansion of broadband, water and sewer infrastructure.
Speaking to reporters in October at an event hosted by the Associated Press, Galvano challenged lawmakers to focus on needed water, sewer and broadband infrastructure as part of the road planning.

“We have to live in a state and have to plan in the state for the future. We cannot continue just to remediate. We have to anticipate the future needs of this state,” Galvano said.

“With the numbers that we have here in the state of Florida, the population growth, and the difficulties that we experienced during Hurricane Irma with the evacuations, these corridors need to exist,” he added, referring to a massive 2017 hurricane.

The current timeline is for construction to begin by the end of 2022, with the roads open to traffic before Dec. 31, 2030.

Lawmakers designated $45 million toward work on the projects in the current year, with annual funding expected to grow to $140 million. However, $90 million expected to further the road planning next fiscal year, along with all future funding, must be approved annually by the Legislature.

That requirement of annual funding is what drives hope for opponents.

Lindsay Cross of the Florida Conservation Voters called the road planning “a very archaic way of developing, where you are doing this green fill development through essentially these pristine natural areas and ag lands.”

“It does not address our current infrastructure needs, but rather creates a taxpayer-funded scheme to pave over and pollute what is best about our state; our natural beauty, our freshwater resources and our cultural heritage,” Cross added.

The state’s Southwest-Central Florida Connector Task Force, which is working on the plans from Polk County to Collier County, will meet Monday in LaBelle and will host a town hall Dec. 12 in Naples.

The Suncoast Connector Task Force, which is working on the extension of the Suncoast Parkway, will meet Dec. 17 in Perry, while the Northern Turnpike Connector Task Force, which is working on the turnpike extension, will meet Dec. 18 in Ocala.
Governing Board Meeting Dates and Committee
Meeting Dates - 2019 - 2020

Unless otherwise indicated, Governing Board meetings begin at 9 a.m.; Audit & Finance Committee
meetings follow Governing Board meetings; Governing Board Workshops begin at 1:00 p.m.; and,
Lunch & Learn Workshops begin at 11:30 a.m. and can be viewed online at

Public Forums such as the Water Resources Accountability and Collaboration (WRAC), and SFWMD
Recreational are held at the call of the Executive Director.

For the latest meeting information, check the SFWMD Calendar or Public Meetings and Forums.

2019

DECEMBER 3, 2019 - WRAC
• Tuesday in West Palm Beach, District Headquarters

DECEMBER 16, 2019 - SFWMD RECREATIONAL FORUM
• Monday in West Palm Beach, District Headquarters

2020

JANUARY 29 – GOVERNING BOARD ONLINE LUNCH & LEARN
• View online at https://www.sfwmtd.gov or https://www.youtube.com/sfwmtdtv

JANUARY 31 – GOVERNING BOARD
• Friday TBD, Martin or St. Lucie County

JANUARY 31 – AUDIT & FINANCE COMMITTEE (IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING GOVERNING BOARD)
• Friday TBD, Martin or St. Lucie County

FEBRUARY 1 – GOVERNING BOARD WORKSHOP
• Saturday TBD, Martin or St. Lucie County

FEBRUARY 1 – GOVERNING BOARD
• Saturday TBD, Martin or St. Lucie County

FEBRUARY 27 – WRAC
• Thursday in West Palm Beach, District Headquarters

MARCH 12 – GOVERNING BOARD
• Thursday in West Palm Beach, District Headquarters

MARCH 16 – SFWMD RECREATIONAL FORUM
• Monday in West Palm Beach, District Headquarters

APRIL 8 – GOVERNING BOARD WORKSHOP
• Wednesday in West Palm Beach, District Headquarters

APRIL 9 – GOVERNING BOARD
• Thursday in West Palm Beach, District Headquarters

APRIL 9 – AUDIT & FINANCE COMMITTEE (IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING GOVERNING BOARD)
• Thursday in West Palm Beach, District Headquarters

APRIL 29 – GOVERNING BOARD ONLINE LUNCH & LEARN
• View online at https://www.sfwmtd.gov or https://www.youtube.com/sfwmtdtv

MAY 13 – GOVERNING BOARD WORKSHOP
• Wednesday TBD, Monroe County

Updated November 21, 2019b
MAY 14 – GOVERNING BOARD
  • Thursday TBD, Monroe County

MAY 14 – SFWM LEASING CORP.
  • Thursday TBD, Monroe County

MAY 28 – WRAC
  • Thursday in West Palm Beach, District Headquarters

JUNE 11 – GOVERNING BOARD
  • Thursday in West Palm Beach, District Headquarters

JUNE 15 – SFWM RECREATIONAL FORUM
  • Monday in West Palm Beach, District Headquarters

JULY 8 – GOVERNING BOARD WORKSHOP
  • Wednesday in West Palm Beach, District Headquarters

JULY 9 – GOVERNING BOARD
  • Thursday in West Palm Beach, District Headquarters

JULY 9 – AUDIT & FINANCE COMMITTEE (IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING GOVERNING BOARD)
  • Thursday in West Palm Beach, District Headquarters

JULY 29 – GOVERNING BOARD LUNCH & LEARN
  • View online at https://www.sfwd.gov or https://www.youtube.com/sfwmdtv

AUGUST 12 – GOVERNING BOARD WORKSHOP
  • Wednesday TBD, Okeechobee County

AUGUST 13 – GOVERNING BOARD
  • Thursday TBD, Okeechobee County

AUGUST 27 – WRAC
  • Thursday in West Palm Beach, District Headquarters

SEPTEMBER 10 – GOVERNING BOARD
  • Thursday in West Palm Beach, District Headquarters

SEPTEMBER 10 – TENTATIVE MILLAGE & BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING
  • Thursday in West Palm Beach, District Headquarters

SEPTEMBER 14 – SFWM RECREATIONAL FORUM
  • Monday in West Palm Beach, District Headquarters

SEPTEMBER 22 – FINAL MILLAGE & BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING
  • Tuesday in West Palm Beach, District Headquarters

OCTOBER 7 – GOVERNING BOARD WORKSHOP
  • Wednesday in West Palm Beach, District Headquarters

OCTOBER 8 – GOVERNING BOARD
  • Thursday in West Palm Beach, District Headquarters

OCTOBER 8 – AUDIT & FINANCE COMMITTEE (IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING GOVERNING BOARD)
  • Thursday in West Palm Beach, District Headquarters

OCTOBER 28 – GOVERNING BOARD ONLINE LUNCH & LEARN
  • View online at https://www.sfwd.gov or https://www.youtube.com/sfwmdtv

Updated November 21, 2019
Employment Summary - Treasure Coast Region
November 15, 2019

Highlights

- Unemployment in the Region decreased to 3.1 percent in October, down from 3.5 percent in October of the previous year.
- The Region gained 17,700 new non-agricultural jobs year over year from October 2018 to October 2019.
- Job gains were primarily in government, education and health services, and leisure and hospitality.

- This unemployment summary is derived from: Local Area Unemployment Statistics prepared by the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Overview of the CareerSource Research Coast Region (Indian River, Martin, and St. Lucie counties) and Overview of CareerSource Palm Beach County Region (Palm Beach County) prepared by the two workforce development boards in the Treasure Coast Region. The CareerSource reports follow this regional summary.

- The unemployment rate for the Treasure Coast Region was 3.1 percent in October 2019, down 0.4 percentage points from the October 2018 rate of 3.5 percent. The Region’s unemployment rate was 0.2 percentage points higher than the state’s unemployment rate of 2.9 percent and 0.2 percentage points lower than the national unemployment rate of 3.3 percent. Out of a labor force of 1,036,691 there were 32,184 unemployed residents in the Treasure Coast Region in October 2019.

- The Treasure Coast Region contains three metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs): the Port St. Lucie MSA (Martin and St. Lucie counties), the Sebastian-Vero Beach MSA (Indian River County), and the West Palm Beach-Boca Raton-Delray Beach MSD (Palm Beach County). In October 2019, non-agricultural employment in the combined metropolitan areas of the Region was 859,300, an increase of 17,700 jobs over the previous year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geographic Area</th>
<th>October 2019</th>
<th>September 2019</th>
<th>October 2018</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Indian River County</td>
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<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Martin County</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palm Beach County</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Lucie County</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasure Coast Region</td>
<td><strong>3.1</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.5</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Local Area Unemployment Statistics.
*Not seasonally adjusted.
In the combined metropolitan areas, job gains were primarily in government (+4,000), education and health services (+3,300), and leisure and hospitality (+3,100).

Job losses were in other services (-600) and information (-600). Other services includes, but is not limited to, businesses such as: automotive repair; personal household goods repair; dry cleaners; hair salons and barber shops; funeral homes; pet care services; and religious organizations.

Port St. Lucie Metro Area:

- The Port St. Lucie MSA had the second fastest annual job growth rate compared to all the metro areas in the state in manufacturing (+5.6 percent) and government (+3.5 percent) in October 2019.

Sebastian-Vero Beach Metro Area:

- The Sebastian-Vero Beach MSA had the fastest annual job growth rate compared to all the metro areas in the state in leisure and hospitality (+8.8 percent) in October 2019.

West Palm Beach-Boca Raton-Delray Beach Metropolitan Division:

- The West Palm Bch-Boca Raton-Delray Bch Metro Division had the second highest annual job growth compared to all the metro areas in the state in government (+3,200 jobs) in October 2019.
Overview of the CareerSource Research Coast Region
Not Seasonally Adjusted
November 15, 2019

- The unemployment rate in the CareerSource Research Coast region (Indian River, Martin, and St. Lucie counties) was 3.3 percent in October 2019. This rate was 0.5 percentage point lower than the region’s year ago rate of 3.8 percent. The labor force was 291,039, up 5,758 (+2.0) over the year. There were 9,697 unemployed residents in the region.

- Martin County had the lowest unemployment rate (2.7 percent) in the CareerSource Research Coast region followed by Indian River County (3.4 percent) and St. Lucie County (3.6 percent).

- The CareerSource Research Coast region contains two metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs): the Port St. Lucie MSA (Martin and St. Lucie counties) and the Sebastian-Vero Beach MSA (Indian River County). In October 2019, nonagricultural employment in the combined CareerSource Research Coast metro areas was 213,200, an increase of 5,600 jobs (+2.7 percent) over the previous year.

- In the combined CareerSource Research Coast metro areas, the major industries that gained jobs over the year were: leisure and hospitality (+1,600 jobs); education and health services (+1,300 jobs); mining, logging, and construction (+900 jobs); government (+800 jobs); manufacturing (+400 jobs); trade, transportation, and utilities (+400 jobs); financial activities (+300 jobs); and other services (+200 jobs).

- The professional and business services (-300 jobs) industry lost jobs over the year.

- The information industry was unchanged over the year.

Port St. Lucie Metro Area

- The majority of the nonagricultural employment in the CareerSource Research Coast region was in the Port St. Lucie metro area. This metro area accounted for 157,600 jobs in October 2019, an increase of 3,500 jobs from October 2018 (+2.3 percent).

- The Port St. Lucie MSA had the second fastest annual job growth rate compared to all the metro areas in the state in manufacturing (+5.6 percent) and government (+3.5 percent) in October 2019.

Note: All data are subject to revision.
Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Workforce Statistics and Economic Research.
• The mining, logging, and construction (+5.8 percent); manufacturing (+5.6 percent); leisure and hospitality (+4.5 percent); financial activities (+3.6 percent); government (+3.5 percent); and other services (+2.4 percent) industries grew faster in the metro area than the statewide over the year.

• The industries gaining in jobs over the year were: education and health services (+1,000 jobs); leisure and hospitality (+900 jobs); mining, logging, and construction (+700 jobs); government (+700 jobs); manufacturing (+400 jobs); financial activities (+200 jobs); and other services (+200 jobs).

• The trade, transportation, and utilities and information industries were unchanged over the year.

Sebastian-Vero Beach Metro Area

• In October 2019 nonagricultural employment in the Sebastian-Vero Beach MSA was 55,600, an increase of 2,100 jobs (+3.9 percent) over the year.

• The Sebastian-Vero Beach MSA had the fastest annual job growth rate compared to all the metro areas in the state in leisure and hospitality (+8.8 percent) in October 2019.

• The Sebastian-Vero Beach MSA was tied for the third fastest annual job growth rate compared to all the metro areas in the state in trade, transportation, and utilities (+3.9 percent) in October 2019.

• The leisure and hospitality (+8.8 percent); professional and business services (+4.7 percent); trade, transportation, and utilities (+3.9 percent); financial activities (+3.8 percent); and government (+1.9 percent) industries grew faster in the metro area than statewide over the year.

• The industries gaining in jobs over the year were: leisure and hospitality (+700 jobs); trade, transportation, and utilities (+400 jobs); professional and business services (+300 jobs); education and health services (+300 jobs); mining, logging, and construction (+200 jobs); financial activities (+100 jobs); and government (+100 jobs).

• The manufacturing, information, and other services industries were unchanged over the year.

Note: All data are subject to revision.
Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Workforce Statistics and Economic Research.
### Unemployment Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Oct-19</th>
<th>Sep-19</th>
<th>Oct-18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CareerSource Research Coast</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian River County</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin County</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Lucie County</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
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### Nonagricultural Employment by Industry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Oct-19</th>
<th>Oct-18</th>
<th>change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Employment</td>
<td>157,600</td>
<td>154,100</td>
<td>3,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining, Logging, and Construction</td>
<td>12,800</td>
<td>12,100</td>
<td>700</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>7,300</td>
<td>7,100</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade, Transportation, and Utilities</td>
<td>31,200</td>
<td>31,200</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale Trade</td>
<td>4,900</td>
<td>4,900</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Trade</td>
<td>21,700</td>
<td>21,900</td>
<td>-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities</td>
<td>4,400</td>
<td>4,500</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Activities</td>
<td>5,800</td>
<td>5,600</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional and Business Services</td>
<td>20,400</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>-400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and Health Services</td>
<td>25,800</td>
<td>27,900</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure and Hospitality</td>
<td>20,700</td>
<td>19,900</td>
<td>800</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Services</td>
<td>8,500</td>
<td>8,800</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>20,700</td>
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### Combined Metropolitan Statistical Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Oct-19</th>
<th>Oct-18</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Employment</td>
<td>213,200</td>
<td>207,500</td>
<td>660</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>17,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trade, Transportation, and Utilities</td>
<td>41,900</td>
<td>41,500</td>
<td>400</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wholesale Trade</td>
<td>5,800</td>
<td>5,800</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Trade</td>
<td>30,600</td>
<td>30,900</td>
<td>300</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities</td>
<td>5,500</td>
<td>5,400</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>5,400</td>
<td>1,800</td>
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<tr>
<td>Financial Activities</td>
<td>8,300</td>
<td>8,200</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional and Business Services</td>
<td>20,400</td>
<td>20,400</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>Education and Health Services</td>
<td>35,700</td>
<td>38,400</td>
<td>1,900</td>
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<td>Leisure and Hospitality</td>
<td>25,400</td>
<td>27,800</td>
<td>1,400</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Services</td>
<td>11,300</td>
<td>11,100</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>25,200</td>
<td>23,400</td>
<td>800</td>
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### Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2018</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CareerSource Research Coast</td>
<td>639,453</td>
<td>627,506</td>
<td>11,947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian River County</td>
<td>127,413</td>
<td>124,814</td>
<td>2,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin County</td>
<td>160,912</td>
<td>159,992</td>
<td>1,020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Lucie County</td>
<td>82,228</td>
<td>81,340</td>
<td>888</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>21,993,235</td>
<td>20,976,812</td>
<td>1,016,423</td>
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### Average Annual Wage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>change</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CareerSource Research Coast</td>
<td>$42,011</td>
<td>$40,869</td>
<td>$1,142</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indian River County</td>
<td>$42,881</td>
<td>$41,572</td>
<td>$1,309</td>
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<tr>
<td>Martin County</td>
<td>$42,210</td>
<td>$41,251</td>
<td>$959</td>
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<tr>
<td>St. Lucie County</td>
<td>$41,013</td>
<td>$40,049</td>
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<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>$40,090</td>
<td>$38,860</td>
<td>$1,230</td>
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Note: All data are subject to revision.
Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Workforce Statistics and Economic Research.
Overview of the CareerSource Palm Beach County Region
Not Seasonally Adjusted
November 15, 2019

- The unemployment rate in the CareerSource Palm Beach County region (Palm Beach County) was 3.0 percent in October 2019. This rate was 0.4 percentage point lower than the region's year ago rate of 3.4 percent. The labor force was 745,652, up 10,692 (+1.5) over the year. There were 22,487 unemployed residents in the region.

- In October 2019 nonagricultural employment in the West Palm Bch-Boca Raton-Delray Bch Metro Division was 646,100, an increase of 12,100 jobs (+1.9 percent) over the year.

- The West Palm Bch-Boca Raton-Delray Bch Metro Division had the fastest annual job growth rate compared to all the metro areas in the state in government (+4.9 percent) in October 2019.

- The West Palm Bch-Boca Raton-Delray Bch Metro Division had the second fastest annual job growth rate compared to all the metro areas in the state in financial activities (+4.0 percent) in October 2019.

- The West Palm Bch-Boca Raton-Delray Bch Metro Division had the second highest annual job growth compared to all the metro areas in the state in government (+3,200 jobs) in October 2019.

- The West Palm Bch-Boca Raton-Delray Bch Metro Division had the third highest annual job growth compared to all the metro areas in the state in financial activities (+1,700 jobs) in October 2019.

- The government (+4.9 percent) and financial activities (+4.0 percent) industries grew faster in the metro area than statewide over the year.

- The industries gaining in jobs over the year were: government (+3,200 jobs); professional and business services (+2,400 jobs); education and health services (+2,000 jobs); construction (+1,700 jobs); financial activities (+1,700 jobs); leisure and hospitality (+1,500 jobs); trade, transportation, and utilities (+700 jobs); and manufacturing (+300 jobs).

- The other services (-800 jobs) and information (-600 jobs) industries lost jobs over the year.

Note: All data are subject to revision.
Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Workforce Statistics and Economic Research.
### Unemployment Rates

<table>
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<th>Source</th>
<th>Oct-19</th>
<th>Sep-19</th>
<th>Oct-18</th>
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<td>CareerSource Palm Beach County</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
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### Nonagricultural Employment by Industry

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Total Employment</td>
<td>646,100</td>
<td>634,600</td>
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### Population

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### Average Annual Wage

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**Note:** All data are subject to revision.

**Source:** Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Bureau of Workforce Statistics and Economic Research.