ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
3. Economic Development

A. Trends and Conditions

1. Introduction

It is recognized that the economic development needs of each municipality and county of the Region are different. This holds true for the social and physical character of each community, which in turn influences their ability and desire to attract certain types of industry and employment. No one economic development strategy is completely applicable to all communities. What may work well for one community may fail or be inappropriate for another.

Not all economic development strategies suggested in the Council’s SRPP will be applicable or useful to each and every community in the Region. Efforts have been made, however, to develop a full range of short and long-term strategies, some of which every community in the Region will find useful in supporting their economic development efforts locally, and some which will help increase the power of the Region, both nationally and internationally, to attract and sustain economic development in all sectors.

2. The Role of the SRPP and Growth Management Policy in Expanding Economic Development

Fundamental to public and private sector efforts to bring sustainable economic development and prosperity to the Region, is the recognition that growth management policy at all levels influences the ability to achieve economic development goals and objectives.

Just as misdirected growth management policy has the potential to retard economic development and encourage inefficient patterns of development, growth management done properly has the potential to increase development efficiencies and expand economic development opportunities. As articulated by Nelson and others, growth management policy has the potential to expand and support economic development in the following ways:

a. **Informed investment decision-making.** Growth management plans inform developers where, when, and the extent to which significant public investments will be made to accommodate new development. This improves the certainty and predictability of the investment decision-making process and helps take some of the guesswork out of the development approval process.

b. **Protect the integrity of real estate investments.** The greatest concern of pension funds, insurance companies and everyday investors, such as
homeowners, is equity. One of the reasons equity may not improve in a given area is when far more land is designated for development purposes than projections would warrant. Good real estate investment strategy advocates steering away from areas that oversupply land for economic development.

c. **Protect against overbuilding.** In 1990, office space vacancy rates among many non-growth management states exceeded 30 percent, but were less than 2 percent in the “economic dynamos” of Germany, Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Indonesia, which all have sophisticated growth management policies. The United States economy will lose $500 billion in economic resources because of high vacancy rates resulting in the nation’s savings and loan bailout (Nelson, 1994).

d. **Protect against shortsighted losses of resource land.** Agriculture is the nation’s and this Region’s leading export sector. With the new General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT), many more agricultural markets are open to the United States. Yet, the best agricultural land is often most susceptible to negative impacts of low-density, suburban sprawl. Conservation of agricultural land in the short term will create agricultural opportunities in the future.

e. **Protect against unnecessary losses of open space and natural systems.** Travel and tourism has in the past and continues to play a major economic role in the Region. Travel and tourism has been predicted to be the leading industry in the United States and the world by the year 2000 (National Park Service, 1990). A poll commissioned by the President’s Commission on Americans Outdoors found that the natural beauty of open space was the single most important criterion for tourists. Florida growth management policy officially recognizes open space as a key element in improving “quality of life” and as the foundation of the multi-billion dollar tourism industry and economic growth. In Palm Beach County alone, tourism contributed approximately $1.5 billion to the local economy and $675 million to household earnings. It also helped support an estimated 70,787 jobs in all sectors. (Sunbelt Research Associates, Inc., 1995).

The value of protecting open space and natural systems goes far beyond the dollars and cents of the tourism and travel industry. The real economic benefits of protecting meaningful open space ranges from filtering, recharging, and reducing the cost of the water supply; cleaning the air, and channeling flood waters; to attracting large and small business, avoiding the increased costs of serving homes arranged in sprawling development patterns, or even influencing the bond ratings that govern the cost of long-term debt. Success in attaining and sustaining economic health depends on recognizing the economic contribution that undeveloped land already makes.
f. **Stimulate increase retail and service efficiencies.** The fastest growing sectors of the Region’s economy are retail trade and services. These opportunities are highly sensitive to thresholds based on distance and density. Too few people spread out over too much area will prevent expansion of many retail and service activities and reduce the number of viable sites for business and commerce. Yet, the same number of people closer to each other will stimulate those activities.

g. **Improve global competitiveness.** “Image is everything” - popular advertising slogan. Nothing could be more true. Image is everything. The success of all economic development goals and strategies will be predicated on how the world views the Treasure Coast.

By discouraging overbuilding, taxpayer and investor funds are available for economic development. By conserving the agricultural land base, expanded exports under GATT and expansion of value-added agricultural industry are possible. By making government and patterns of development more efficient, taxes are lowered and more capital is available for economic development. By protecting meaningful open space, several free but otherwise very expensive services are provided, quality of life and real estate values are bolstered, and the attractiveness of the Region to tourism and other industry sectors is improved. By stimulating retail and service industries, greater economic exchange occurs, generating more investment capital. By making cities into vibrant, efficient, world-class centers, more global investment will be attracted to regional and local economies (Nelson, 1994).

Efforts within the economic element of the SRPP are focused on identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the Region’s economy and existing growth management policy and suggesting short- and long-term solutions/strategies to address and correct them. Implementation of these strategies at the State, local, and regional level are intended to: 1) support public and private sector initiatives, 2) increase the Region’s competitiveness in the domestic and international marketplace; and 3) protect the quality of life for residents of the Region.

3. **Past Trends**

   a. **Early History of Economic Development.** Native Americans were originally attracted to the Treasure Coast and other areas of South Florida because it was one of the few places in the country where they could live the year round without planting crops or storing food. Subsequently, early settlers took up farming in the same area because it was one of the few places in the country where crops could be produced year round. Agriculture, therefore, became the original foundation of the Treasure Coast Region’s economy. In the western communities around Lake Okeechobee, sugarcane production became a major crop producer and remains the primary economic
Pineapple was established as one of the first cash crops in the eastern communities, highly encouraged by Henry Flagler who owned the Florida East Coast Railway. The Indian River Lagoon, as one of the most diverse estuaries in North America, Lake Worth, and other marine resource areas in the Region have historically provided excellent shellfish, commercial and sport fishing and recreation activities for residents and tourists. These resources continue to be important to the Region’s economy.

The building of Flagler’s Railroad along the east coast in the early 1900s gave birth to the older coastal communities of the Region, and provided settlers with a means of transporting their crops to the northern markets. It was the success of the railroad extending to Key West, however, which eventually caused the demise of pineapple production in the Treasure Coast Region. This extension in 1912 opened up competition from Cuba. Its growers were then able to ship their pineapples to Key West and on to the northeast by rail to sell at lower prices. Pineapple was then replaced with tomatoes as a cash crop in areas of Palm Beach County and pineapple canning factories were replaced with ketchup canneries. (McIver, 1988)

In the northern part of the Region, particularly St. Lucie and Indian River counties, citrus was established as the main cash crop, and continues to be an important contributor to the Region's economy today. Martin County was once one of the world's top producers of chrysanthemums until it lost its market to the lower prices of South American growers.

b. Asset of Climate and Location. The railroad linkage of the coastal communities, the warm seaside climate, excellent fishing, and 110 miles of sandy shoreline brought thousands of visitors and new residents to the Treasure Coast Region. Located along the south central area of Florida's east coast, the Treasure Coast area quickly became a popular tourist destination and seasonal address for the wealthy.

As more and more people poured into the Region annually, its seasonal and permanent populations increased substantially. In the sixty year period between 1930 to 1990 the Region's population grew from 70,673 to 1,204,797. Historically, the Region's population has increased at a faster rate than that of the state and the nation. This trend still continues. For example, between 1980 and 1990 the Region's population increased at a rate of 53 percent, as compared to the state's 33 percent.

c. Population Growth Drives Recent Regional Economy. Transportation linkages and continued population growth established an excellent setting for economic growth. Many communities in the Treasure Coast Region quickly changed from quiet farming villages to metropolitan areas. According to the 1993 population estimates, 9.4 percent of the State's total population reside in the Treasure Coast Region. The Fort Pierce and West Palm Beach-Boca
Raton areas have grown into Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) containing a large portion of the Region’s population and providing employment opportunities to neighboring and outlying communities. The close proximity of the larger metropolitan areas of the south, such as Fort Lauderdale and Miami, means easy access to these markets and, other employment opportunities.

FIGURE 3-1

![Population Change by Percentage](chart.png)

Graph: TCRPC

MIGRATION

In-migration rather than natural growth has traditionally accounted for most of the growth in the Region. Ninety-six percent of the population growth during the 1980s was due to in-migration. Tourism and in-migration have become the leading factors driving the Region's economy. These two elements have fueled the construction, services, and retail trade industries. During the 1980s, 416,842 persons were added to the Region (an average of over 41,000 persons per year or 800 persons per week). Based on the 1990 average household size of 2.34, 342 households were being added to the Region each week during this 10 year period. These households often require new housing, repairs and additions to existing housing, furniture, appliances and related products and services. Most of the growth in recent decades, however, has occurred outside the older coastal cities.

CHALLENGE OF THE ELDERLY

The warm climate, lower taxes, and low densities have also lured large numbers of retirees from the northeast to the Treasure Coast. As a result, the elderly population group has steadily increased in proportion to the rest of the population over the past several decades. Table 3.1 indicates that the 0-24
age group, makes up less of the total population in 1993 than it did in 1980. The data also shows that the 65 and older population makes up a greater share of the Region's total population than in 1980, increasing from 22.5 percent to 24.2 percent. The proportion of the population in the Region which is elderly is significantly higher than for the State as a whole, 24.2 percent and 18.5 percent, respectively (1993). The increase in the median age in the 1980s provides evidence of the Region’s aging population. The most noticeable change is seen in Indian River County where the median age increased from 39 to 44 years (Table 3.2). This is 7.6 years higher than the median age of the State as a whole.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3.1 Population Composition by Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-44</td>
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<tr>
<td>45-64</td>
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<tr>
<td>65 +</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The advanced elderly population, the 75 + group, grew even more dramatically during the 1980's, increasing by 102 percent, Table 3.3. This age group made up only 7 percent of the Region's population in 1980, but represented 10 percent by 1990.

Table 3.2 Median Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>IRC</th>
<th>MC</th>
<th>PBC</th>
<th>SLC</th>
<th>FLA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>39.0</td>
<td>43.0</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>34.0</td>
<td>35.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>44.5</td>
<td>39.9</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>36.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The advanced elderly population, the 75 + group, grew even more dramatically during the 1980's, increasing by 102 percent, Table 3.3. This age group made up only 7 percent of the Region's population in 1980, but represented 10 percent by 1990.

Table 3.3 Treasure Coast Region, 75 + Age Group Growth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REGION</th>
<th>1980</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>787,955</td>
<td>1,204,797</td>
<td>+53</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 75 +</td>
<td>61,918</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>124,882</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>+102</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Demands for public services by elderly dependents will become an increasing burden to the public if these trends continue. There was a 34 percent increase of persons 65 years and older who have incomes below the poverty level between 1979 and 1989 (Table 3.4). As costs for medical and other needs and services increase beyond an individual's ability to pay, the public will be called upon to make up the difference.
For example, it currently costs over $10 million a year for the Area Agency for the Aging, (AAA) a non-profit organization, to provide homebound care services (transportation, homemaker, meals, adult day care) to over 10,000 homebound elderly in The Treasure Coast Region. According to the AAA, the Treasure Coast Region’s Planning & Service Area 9 (PSA9), has more elderly than any of the other ten PSA’s in the State. In the last three years there has been approximately a 20 percent increase in the demand for services, and a continuous waiting list of 2,500-3000 requests that are not met because of lack of funds.

Because of the vastness of the Region, and the distribution of the elderly throughout the Region, transportation is noted as the greatest barrier to providing services to the elderly. A rapid growth in requests for homebound elderly services is being experienced in the largely sparsely developed western sections of the Region. With continued cuts in federal programs, more of these costs will fall at the local and state level, if services are to continue. Based on the waiting list information, estimated increases in requests for services, and other factors, it is estimated by the year 2000 that homebound services for the elderly could easily exceed $15 million a year (AAA 1995 and AAA personal correspondence, June, 1995).

In the Treasure Coast Region in 1994 there were approximately 7000 patients in nursing homes. Of these patients, Medicaid and Medicare covered costs for 54.4 percent and 11.4 percent, respectively. Based on the average cost for care of a patient of $38,690 per year, the total costs for nursing home care for the elderly covered by Medicaid and Medicare is over $178 million a year in 1994. With an average increase in demand and costs of 2 - 5 percent per year, by the year 2000, these costs could increase to $200-$240 million a year (Treasure Coast Health Council, personal correspondence, June, 1995).

The concentration of a large elderly population also has a number of positive effects on the regional economy, such as the development of a number of health-related businesses. The medical and health care industry are among the fastest growing service industries in the Region.
4. Description of Region’s Economy

In-migration and tourism have traditionally been key components of the Region’s economy. Most of the tourism is seasonal in nature, therefore, much of the Region’s employment is seasonal, resulting in high seasonal unemployment rates. Because of its reliance on agriculture, construction and service industries for jobs, unemployment in the Region is generally higher than the nation during periods of national recession. An over-dependence on construction and a weak industrial base often prolongs the effects of recession, as was experienced in the 1970s and the early 1990’s.

Services and Retail, the two fastest growing employment sectors in the Region, are highly reliant on tourism and in-migrating population for continued growth. This dependency causes fluctuating employment, and makes the local economy susceptible to economic cycles. Durable goods manufacturing industries are also susceptible to economic cycles as demonstrated by the recent recession. A more diverse economy is needed to provide year round employment to help stabilize the Region’s economy.

Despite the fact that large corporations and manufacturing industries tend to be more visible, nine out of 10 jobs in Florida are created by small firms. This pattern is also reflected in the Region where small businesses make up over 97 percent of the total commercial establishments, and provide over 56 percent of the total employment (BEBR, 1994). There is a certain degree of instability associated with small businesses because they have difficulty in obtaining capital and remaining solvent. As most of the small business jobs are in the service sector, it makes this particular job market especially susceptible to seasonal and economic cycles.

A diversified employment base is needed to support the Region’s large labor force and to stabilize the job market. A diversified economy is better able to withstand recession, provide a steady increase in the number and types of jobs available and increase personal income. It also lessens the seasonality and spatial clustering of economic activity, lowers and stabilizes the unemployment rate, and provides for a stabilized tax base.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas</th>
<th>1979</th>
<th>1989</th>
<th>Percent Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>REGION</td>
<td>15,772</td>
<td>21,021</td>
<td>+34</td>
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<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>209,330</td>
<td>247,426</td>
<td>+18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census Handbook, 1980, Table 7.11, U.S. Census, 1990, Table 149
Table: TCRPC
a. Employment

LABOR FORCE. Figure 3-1 and Table 3.5 indicate that the Region's labor force has grown steadily. In recent years, the labor force has grown at a faster rate than the overall population. In 1990, the Region's labor force made up 48 percent of the total population, and the labor participation rate was 59 percent (U. S. Census, 1990). Unemployment rates in more recent years, however, have been higher in the Region than the State. This is particular true in Indian River and St. Lucie counties where the average unemployment rates range between 3-5 percentage points higher than the State (Table 3.6). The most consistent cause for high unemployment rates in these two counties is associated with the seasonal employment cycle of the citrus industry. This industry continues to be an important employer in St. Lucie and Indian River counties, but routinely has high and low activity periods, similar to the tourist industry.

JOBS CREATED. There were 247,854 jobs added in the Treasure Coast between 1980 and 1992 (369,092 to 616,946), or an increase of 67 percent (BEBR, 1994). This translates to an average of 20,655 jobs per year, or a 5.6 percent increase annually. The three largest employers, services, retail trade and government, make up 65 percent of the Region's total employment.

| Table 3.5 Labor Force and Employment |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Labor Force | 185,693 | 248,963 | 338,808 | 540,271 | 583,873 | 591,635 |
| Employed | 180,006 | 223,642 | 320,055 | 500,824 | 540,634 | 536,751 |
| Unemployed | 5,687 | 25,321 | 18,753 | 39,446 | 43,240 | 54,883 |

| FLORIDA |
| Labor Force | 2,666,000 | 3,424,000 | 4,271,010 | 5,343,104 | 6,451,770 | 6,627,868 |
| Employed | 2,551,000 | 3,059,000 | 4,020,336 | 5,023,404 | 6,068,254 | 6,166,354 |
| Unemployed | 115,000 | 365,000 | 250,675 | 319,700 | 383,517 | 461,508 |

Source: Regional Profile, 1979, Regional Description, 1985, TCRPC; BEBR 1994
Table: TCRPC

<p>| Table 3.6 Annual Unemployment Rate |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>IRC</th>
<th>MC</th>
<th>PBC</th>
<th>SLC</th>
<th>REGION</th>
<th>FLA</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>5.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
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Source: Regional Profile, TCRPC, 1979 County Perspective, BEBR, 1994
Table: TCRPC
Table 3.7 Major Economic Sectors, 1980, 1992

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>95,464</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>215,825</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>126.1</td>
<td>1,193,573</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>1,958,115</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>34.7</td>
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<td>Retail Trade</td>
<td>70,276</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>122,077</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>73.7</td>
<td>677,491</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>1,958,115</td>
<td>12.5</td>
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<td>Fin/Insurance</td>
<td>45,349</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>59,047</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>39.7</td>
<td>392,322</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>1,461,890</td>
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<td>Real Estate</td>
<td>42,863</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>67,576</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>64.1</td>
<td>535,916</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>1,855,427</td>
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<td>Government</td>
<td>36,704</td>
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<td>38,565</td>
<td>6.3</td>
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<td>646,447</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>1,032,763</td>
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<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>36,158</td>
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<td>778,064</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>1,824,279</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Forest/Fish</td>
<td>15,308</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>29,024</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>89.6</td>
<td>110,106</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>425,933</td>
<td>2.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trans/Com/Util</td>
<td>13,575</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>22,265</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>64.1</td>
<td>273,719</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>818,509</td>
<td>5.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wholesale Trade</td>
<td>12,705</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>21,515</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>69.3</td>
<td>206,516</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>800,666</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>690</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>1,094</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>58.6</td>
<td>86,401</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>29,673</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Employment</td>
<td>369,092</td>
<td>616,946</td>
<td></td>
<td>67.2</td>
<td></td>
<td>$4,900,555</td>
<td></td>
<td>$15,619,602</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>

Source: BEBR, 1994 Perspective
Table: TCRPC

b. Major Economic Sectors

The following is a summary of the role of each economic sector on the Region’s economy:

1. **Services** continue to be the largest employment sector. It is the fastest growing sector in the Region, with employment increasing by 126 percent between 1980 and 1992. Services provide 35 percent of the jobs in the Region and generated over $5.4 billion in earnings in 1992. Tourism and immigration have contributed to the success of the service industries. Services provide a wide range of full time professional, skilled and unskilled jobs as well as parttime and entry level positions. In addition, service industries provide numerous jobs for retirees who supplement their income. Motion pictures, business services, medical and health services are among the rapidly growing industries within this sector.

2. **Retail Trade** is another fast growing sector of the economy in the Treasure Coast and makes up 20 percent of the total employment. Employment in retail trade has increased 74 percent in the last 12 years and currently contributes almost $2 billion dollars to the local economy. Much of the employment is at the six regional malls located in the Treasure Coast Region, and at countless strip shopping centers.

3. **Finance/Insurance/Real Estate**. This sector dropped from third to fourth place in employment in the Region between 1980 and 1992. It provides
nearly 60,000 jobs in the Region and contributes almost $1.5 billion to the local economy.

4. **Government** provides over 67 thousand jobs in the Region and contributes $1.85 billion to the local economy. It jumped from fourth to third place in employment between 1980 and 1992. In a Region that has experienced rapid population growth over the past several decades, it is not surprising that government has become a major employer. In order to meet the greater demands of a rapidly growing population, more personnel are needed to administer increased services such as infrastructure, law enforcement, fire, health, solid waste and associated services. (See Issues Section for further discussion.) The top employers in this sector include the Palm Beach County School District (14000), Palm Beach County Government (7000), the Martin County School District (1800), Martin County Government (1290), St. Lucie County School District (2850), and St. Lucie County Government (1200), and the Indian River County School District (1600).

5. **Construction** has traditionally been an important industry to the Region. It is fueled by high growth due to in-migration, and contributes over $1 billion to the local economy yearly. Although it makes up only six percent of the total employment in the area, it contributes directly, as well as indirectly, to the job market by supporting jobs in other employment sectors. Construction appears to be much more sensitive to cyclical changes than other economic sectors. Data shows that employment in construction drops very rapidly during economic lows, and recovers very quickly as the economy turns upward. During the recent recession (1988-1991) for example, there was a loss of 9,000 construction jobs in Palm Beach County (BEBR, 1994). Compared to other employment sectors, construction had the smallest increase (5%) in employment between 1980 and 1992, reflecting the recent recession.

6. **Manufacturing** makes up 6.5 percent of the Region's employment, and contributes $1.8 billion to the local economy. Because of the high value-added activities and potential for new jobs associated with manufacturing, this industry is highly sought after, particularly light, clean manufacturing type activities. Durable goods manufacturing, however, is also very susceptible to recessional cycles and experiences high layoffs. For example, during the early 1990's recession, high levels of layoffs were experienced by Northorp Grumman (-33%) in Martin County and Pratt & Whitney (-23%), as well as IBM (-45%) in Palm Beach County. These layoffs in turn slowed down the economic growth in the Region. Piper Aircraft Corporation in Indian River County is again becoming a major employer after recovering from recent bankruptcy. It plans to increase its employment to 525 this year.

Currently, eighty-two percent of the manufacturing employment is located in Palm Beach County. Large manufacturers in the Region include: Pratt &
Whitney, jet engines (6200); IBM, personal computers (4500); Siemans Information, communication devices (1750); Motorola, Inc, electronic pagers (1750); Palm Beach Newspapers, Inc., newspaper publisher (1330); Northrop Grumman, aviation (450); Piper Aircraft, aviation, (475); Tropicana Products, Inc., citrus juice (275). Manufacturing is less prevalent in the Region than in the State as a whole, where it makes up 10 percent of the total employment.

7. Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing provide 29,000 jobs and make up 4.7 percent of the Region's total employment. Agriculture, however, continues to be the most important industry in this sector. Compared to other employment industries, it is somewhat unique. While supporting relatively small employment it contributes substantially to the Region's economy through cash receipts from product exports. In addition, it creates multiple jobs in primary and secondary markets (St. Lucie County, 1994) Cash Receipts from the marketing of agricultural products in 1992 were $1.9 billion (BEBR, 1994). Large agriculture employers include: U.S. Sugar Corp., (2100) Sugar Cane Growers Co-op (2900); South Bay Growers Corp. (2000); and Dole Citrus (200)

8. Transportation, Communications and Utilities. This sector grew by 64 percent in the 1980s with the highest increases in Martin and Palm Beach Counties. The Port of Palm Beach ranks second among Florida's 14 deep water ports in the number of containers handled (Palm Beach County, 1993). With the anticipation of the Cuba market opening up, both the Port of Fort Pierce and the Port of Palm Beach are preparing to expand and or improve their facilities. These improvements will be useful to the Florida East Coast Railroad which hopes to capture a larger share of the freight market.

Palm Beach International Airport is the only major commercial service airport and continues to be the fifth most active commercial service airport in the State with 2.4 million enplanements in 1993, a 26 percent increase over 1983. There are 11 airports located in the Region. Florida Power & Light Co., is the major electric utility provider in the Region and employs 4000 persons.

9. Wholesale Trade provides 3.5 percent of the total employment in the Region and contributes about $8 million to the local economy. This sector had one of the highest increases in employment (69%) since 1980, ranking fourth in employment growth, from 12,705 to 21,515 jobs.

10. Mining had a 58 percent increase in jobs between 1980 and 1992, but, contributes less than $300 thousand to the local economy and provides the smallest number of jobs.

c. Tourism
Tourism has in the past and continues to play a major economic role in the Region. Many residents who live in the area year round came initially as tourists or as seasonal residents. Many of these visitors ultimately brought businesses and sometimes large corporations with them, such as IBM.

According to surveys, beaches remain one of the top attractions enjoyed by visitors to Florida. Of the 110 miles of shoreline in the Region, 30 percent are dedicated for public use and access. Both Martin and Palm Beach Counties have substantial frontage on Lake Okeechobee, the second largest fresh water body in the nation. The Indian River Lagoon is designated as an estuary of national significance, and the Loxahatchee River is designated as a wild and scenic river. The Region contains a wealth of opportunities and facilities for boating, fresh and salt water fishing, tennis, golf and other recreational pursuits.

Studies also show that most visitors from outside the state come from the Northeast, and more and more are coming from the international market. For example, of 3.5 million tourists visiting PBC in 1992, 14 percent were international visitors. Out of these, 50 percent were from Canada, England and Germany (Palm Beach County, 1992-93).

The 1993 Florida Visitor Study, shows that $9.7 million was collected in "bed taxes" in the Region, and over $178 million was generated through tourist recreational sales tax receipts. There are 322 hotels and motels and 3477 food service establishments located in the Region. In Palm Beach County alone, tourism contributed approximately $1.5 billion to the local economy and $675 million to household earnings. It also helped support an estimated 70,787 jobs in all industries. (Palm Beach County, 1993). St. Lucie County included outdoor recreation activities with traditional tourism measures in estimating the effects of tourism on its local economy. Based on a study of outdoor recreation activities in the county, the net tourism/recreation sales tax generated in 1990 was $11.6 million (St. Lucie County, 1994). Trends identified from studies suggest that over 60 percent of the visitors come during the winter months.

The seasonal cycle of tourist activities causes large employment gaps that affect the local economy and contribute to high unemployment rates. There is a need to extend the tourist season and reduce the employment gap to help stabilize the local economy.
d. Income

Palm Beach and Martin Counties rank 1st and 2nd in the State on per capita income and Indian River County ranks 5th. The Region’s per capita income has increased dramatically since 1980 (Table 3.8). Although St. Lucie County’s per capita income has been consistently below that of the State’s, its median household income is above the State average (BEBR 1994). St. Lucie County also contains the highest proportion of households below the poverty level in the Region (BEBR 1994).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IRC</td>
<td>$11,295</td>
<td>$25,028</td>
<td>122 %</td>
<td>$15,101</td>
<td>$28,961</td>
<td>92 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MC</td>
<td>12,585</td>
<td>28,443</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>15,749</td>
<td>31,760</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBC</td>
<td>12,820</td>
<td>29,103</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>16,665</td>
<td>32,542</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLC</td>
<td>9,276</td>
<td>14,959</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>13,878</td>
<td>27,710</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REGI</td>
<td>12,488</td>
<td>27,201</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>15,425</td>
<td>28,961</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florid</td>
<td>9,835</td>
<td>18,785</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>14,675</td>
<td>27,483</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Florida Statistical Abstract, 1994
County Perspectives, BEBR, 1994
Census Handbook: FL Counties, 1980
Table: TCRPC

As the above discussion indicates, the Region includes some of the most wealthy communities in the State and also areas that are well below the state average income levels. There is a very uneven distribution of wealth found within the Region's boundaries. There is a growing need to see that the poorer communities improve their income levels.

B. Important Regional Issues

1. Distressed Communities

While certain areas of the Region continue to prosper, others have lagged behind or have declined as important economic centers and become secondary places of economic activity.

Many older cities and towns in the Region are among those that have lagged behind, or have lost their standing economically. A certain amount of urban decline has been caused by basic society-wide forces and government policy, rather than by the traits of individual places. Among these forces are the decline of in-migration from farms to urban areas in the 1970s, tremendous increases in the use of cars and trucks, the building of thousands of new suburban housing units and thousands of miles of highways, and the abandonment of mass transit systems. These influences attracted households and businesses out of older cities and towns, made remote areas more accessible, and urban areas less desirable. These factors combined to slow the overall rate of population growth and economic development.
of urban areas. They also caused continuation of suburbanization and sprawl away from established cities and towns, and encouraged disorganized and unfocused economic development in the Region (Brookings Institute, 1982).

Other noticeable distressed areas are rural communities located in the western part of the Region. Many of these communities have not progressed economically. Often the community's economic base is reliant on one industry, such as agriculture. Agricultural activity is seasonal and employs seasonal labor that is mostly transient. The fluctuating employment cycles, transient labor force, and low wages are not very attractive to outside businesses.

2. The Importance of Agriculture

The importance of agriculture can be seen in the Region's contribution to food production for the State and for the nation. Palm Beach County ranks first in the State for producing sugarcane and first in income derived from all agricultural products sold (BEBR, 1994). The Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA) contains the largest known contiguous body of organic soils in the world. A large portion of the EAA is located in western Palm Beach County, and a small area of western Martin County. The rich organic or muck soils and the subtropical climate permits year round farming of sugarcane, sod, winter vegetable, and rice. Fresh fruits and vegetables are produced in the EAA throughout the winter months, which are distributed throughout the country. The agricultural output supported by the EAA has an economic impact worth hundreds of millions of dollars annually to the Region (SFWMD, 1992). The Agricultural Reserve area in Palm Beach County is also a prime producer of winter vegetables that are distributed throughout the country. St. Lucie County is the State's leading producer of grapefruit and a major producer of oranges as is Indian River County, ranking second and fourth in the State, respectively.

Because agricultural activities are seasonal, employment in agriculture peaks during the winter months and declines in the summer. During the off season, some workers find employment in construction and lawn services, while others become temporarily unemployed. This cycle is reflected in the fluctuating unemployment rate that can be seen in Figure 3-2.
The agricultural issue is a complex one. The farmers themselves continually face challenges that can affect their economic existence. The uncertainty of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), competition from Central and South America, changes in production and seasonal output, plus the uncertainty in the marketplace are some of the economic challenges faced by farmers today. These and other reasons often motivate farmers to convert their land to uses other than farming (St. Lucie County, 1994). Many food and crop producing farms become locations for new suburban developments. Table 3.9 demonstrates the demands being place on farmlands for development and other uses. The change is most noticeable in the amount of land that has been removed from the farmland category and reclassified. For example, in less than ten years there has been a net loss of over 137 thousand acres (214 square miles) of farmland in the Region (BEBR, 1982, 1994).

Table 3.9 Change in Farmland Acreage 1981-1990

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>1981</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>Change in Acreage</th>
<th>Change in Square Miles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IRC</td>
<td>223,000</td>
<td>210,161</td>
<td>-12,839</td>
<td>-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MC</td>
<td>300,000</td>
<td>278,000</td>
<td>-22,000</td>
<td>-34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBC</td>
<td>640,793</td>
<td>569,135</td>
<td>-71,658</td>
<td>-112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLC</td>
<td>325,000</td>
<td>294,158</td>
<td>-30,842</td>
<td>-48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REGION</td>
<td>1,488,793</td>
<td>1,351,454</td>
<td>-137,339</td>
<td>-214</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: BEBR 1982, 1994
In most cases the agricultural industries in the area have not developed beyond crop production. With the competition caused by NAFTA, it is essential for the local agricultural industry to find a special niche in order to remain competitive in the marketplace. For example, a recent effect on local farmers caused by NAFTA has been having to deal with the large amounts of produce shipped from Mexico that are flooding the domestic markets (National Public Radio, May, 1994). To remain competitive, other markets need to be opened up and explored to take advantage of the surplus produce to the benefit of the local farmer and farming communities. One strategy that should be studied is the potential for local farmers to take on the roles of food processors, product brokers and distributors. With the availability of lower cost produce being shipped from outside the country (given that the source is reliable and steady), it may be more cost effective to process the raw produce locally and distribute the value-added products to local and distant markets.

A recent agricultural economic study done by the American Farmland Trust for Palm Beach County suggested that specialty foods development, processing of South Florida and Caribbean Basin food products, and the expansion of the equine industry should be explored to strengthen and diversify the county's agricultural industry for long term sustainability. These recommendations could help provide economic flexibility, expand and sustain the agriculture industry, strengthen the economic base of distressed agricultural communities, create jobs and help stabilize the industry's job market.

Agricultural conservation programs could help sustain, expand, and promote the farming industry in the Region. A Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easement (PACE) program is being considered in Palm Beach County to compensate property owners for their willingness to accept a deed restriction on their property that perpetually limits it to agricultural uses. The Agricultural Reserve (20,000 acres), which accounts for more than $200 million per year in economic output and more than 4,000 jobs is the focus of the PACE program. It is recognized that all land is not created equal, that our food cannot be grown just anywhere and the land on which we grow our food may be some of the most important land we have. PACE will provide capital to make farms more productive, reduce debt, allow farmers to compete more effectively with foreign imports, open up new markets, convert to alternative high-value crops and improve compliance with environmental regulations. PACE provides farms with a way to get cash out of their land without borrowing against it and without selling it for development or nonfarm uses. It also keeps farmland affordable for young farmers who want to enter the business and for farmers who want to expand their operations.

3. The Importance of Tourism

Tourism has traditionally provided strong economic support to the Region. This industry contributes billions of dollars to the local economy. The 110 miles of oceanfront beaches have traditionally been a strong regional attraction, and continue to lure thousands of tourists and residents to the Region.
As one of the most desirable locations for recreational, residential and commercial development to occur, the Region’s beaches front on some of the highest ranking commercial and residential real estate in the country. As a limited natural resource it is essential that the Region’s beaches remain a viable economic asset to the Region.

The seasonal pattern of more winter than summer visitors, however, creates gaps of low activity similar to agriculture. This cycle in turn affects a number of associated industries and their employment cycles. (See Figure 3-2). To close this gap, there is a need to expand the tourist season and capture a larger share of the international market.

Eco-tourism is an emerging tourist interest that focuses on marketing of the environment. The intent of eco-tourism is to become educated of the natural resources and to experience an unspoiled natural environment that can be enjoyed without the environment being threatened (Teller 1993). The Region contains large areas of pristine natural habitats which could provide ideal settings for establishing eco-tourism outposts. This presents a unique opportunity to attract an eco-tourism market. Developing this special niche with activities such as backpacking, birding, horseback riding, canoeing, camping, and fishing will help expand the tourism season and also reduce the unemployment gap.

Eco-tourism is an option to explore for development in western rural communities. All counties in the Region have multiple opportunities for ecotourism to occur. A number of such areas have already been identified. For example, the rural pastoral setting around Lake Okeechobee provides an excellent setting to develop nature-oriented tourism. Another obvious regional eco-tourism opportunity presents itself in the natural corridor area stretching along the borders of Palm Beach and Martin Counties, between the Indiantown-Lake Okeechobee and Jupiter-Hobe Sound area.

Cultural tourism and ecotourism are the most rapidly growing segments of the travel industry today. The character and charm of small cities is a major factor in attracting tourism. People travel in large part to visit the past or to experience a form of rural or small town life unavailable in their own home area. In certain areas of the country, over half of the tourist industry is from travelers seeking cultural and historic attractions.

4. The Importance of Public Infrastructure

The lifestyle enjoyed by a community and its ability to attract and sustain economic development is predicated on the quality of its public facilities. Public facilities are the skeletal structure which supports community life and economic development. These basic supporting structures are often referred to as “infrastructure.” A community’s infrastructure includes buildings; roadways and bridges; airports; electrical generation and transmission systems; drainage and stormwater facilities; water and wastewater systems; solid waste collection,
transfer, recycling and disposal facilities; schools; parks; prisons and any other facility that is basic in daily life.

Density, land use and distance are the three basic factors of urban development patterns generally considered to affect public facility and service delivery costs. Studies have shown that the more dense and compact a development, the less expensive it is to provide services on a per unit basis. Compact and contiguous mixed-use development patterns are more cost effective than growth patterns of a linear or scattered nature. The more cost-effectively we can deliver infrastructure and services the more efficient and diverse the Region’s economy will become.

New public facilities will have to be built as the Region’s population increases. Ideally, existing infrastructure will be used to its best and fullest capacity, given the cost and time required to build new facilities. A more cohesive link between land use planning and public facilities must be developed. Comprehensive growth management and fiscal policy should be used to channel new growth into areas where underutilized infrastructure capacity exists. This technique, exemplified by the concept of infill development, produces additional tax and usage fee revenues while limiting the expense for public services provision. Infill development policies must encourage adaptive reuse of vacant and underutilized buildings as well as undeveloped lots in built-up areas.

Related to the encouragement of infill is the discouragement of suburban sprawl. Suburban sprawl is characterized by scattered, unplanned, low density development which is not functionally related to adjacent land uses. This type of development increases the cost of service delivery to the Region’s citizens. The Region must encourage the development of vibrant and functional towns, cities, villages, downtowns, and fiscally efficient suburban areas. The public and private sectors must plan for and build more efficient development patterns in order to address current infrastructure backlogs and provide for future services concurrent with the impacts of the developments using those services.

The issues of equity and fairness in how we spend public infrastructure dollars should also be reexamined and challenged, especially related to their effects on maintaining and increasing small business development. For example, when public roads are expanded and built to the extent that the public is encouraged to bypass existing and planned local markets, such markets will never develop as planned and where they exist are sometimes blighted or destroyed. This frequently occurs when public infrastructure funds are spent in ways that make it easy and convenient to drive past small neighborhood businesses in favor of more distant regional discount facilities. These facilities only exist where they are supported and subsidized by road building and taxes, paid for in part by the small businesses and the people who now drive past them. The true costs of needed infrastructure to support small business vs. large regional retailers (i.e., a two lane road vs. a six- or eight-lane facility) are not accounted for in existing growth management and concurrency regulations.
Capital improvement programs (CIPs) should promote the redevelopment of existing systems as opposed to supporting new public facilities. The Capital Improvement Elements (CIE) of local government comprehensive plans identify what projects must be provided by a certain year in order to maintain the adopted level of service standards. It is important that the multi-year CIP implement the schedule of capital improvements contained in the CIE to meet current and projected demands on public services and facilities. Coordination of public services and facilities with current and projected demands has resulted in a close linkage between the CIE of the comprehensive plans, CIPs, and Concurrency Management Systems.

A basic tenet of the 1985 Growth Management Act is the “concurrency” provision. Concurrency requires that development only be approved when adequate infrastructure exists to serve that development or can be provided concurrently with the demands. What constitutes “adequate” infrastructure is established in the local government comprehensive plans (except for state road standards set by FDOT).

Under current practice, “concurrency” is often a disincentive to infill, redevelopment of existing infrastructure and buildings, expansion of existing business, and revitalization of our downtowns. The theory behind concurrency is sound. A reexamination of how we implement it is needed.

Local governments should provide assistance in meeting concurrency requirements where we are trying to encourage preferred forms of downtown and neighborhood redevelopment or the creation of new areas of sustainable and economically beneficial forms of development. For this to happen, local and State capital improvement programs will have to be refocused to lean heavily towards redevelopment and rebuilding of existing infrastructure.

5. The Importance of Downtowns and Existing Towns and Cities

Downtowns have been the major economic centers of the Region since their emergence as urban areas. Millions of dollars have been invested in these areas on infrastructure, commercial businesses, housing, and associated services. A strong, healthy downtown can be a city’s centerpiece. In many ways it is the heartbeat of a community. It is the place where business, commerce, culture and higher educational opportunities collide and create a focus for economic development. It is also typically the center for entertainment and a variety of leisure and special retail activities which influence the attractiveness of the entire community. If a downtown is allowed to decay, the surrounding neighborhoods normally follow suit, with crime and a host of other problems following behind. A thriving downtown can generate a good and positive feeling throughout the community which is a powerful attraction to business and economic development (Rigsby 1995). Investors and developers often judge a community’s vitality by the quality and character of its downtown.
Some urban communities in the Region have been more successful than others in maintaining a stable and reliable economic base. Other previously thriving areas have declined. Some of the older coastal cities that once provided the economic pulse for the Region have experienced extensive deterioration. After losing their economic tenants to the suburbs, these once thriving cities have been left with a number of problems, including deserted central business districts.

The rapid development that has been driving the Region's economy over the years has become lower in density and moved westward. This has severely impacted the economic base of the older communities, straining government budgets and public infrastructure needed to support it. Unless there are public policy changes that will allow older urban areas to compete on an equal basis, these communities may continue to deteriorate.

Another concern associated with the westward trend of growth and development is the impact on land use. Urban development covered approximately 339 square miles in 1973. By 1993, 851 square miles in the Region had been converted for urban development. Continued use of the Region’s land resources at this rate for urban development purposes may interfere with achieving other regional goals such as maintaining agriculture as an important industry, efficiently using infrastructure, protecting large natural systems and securing a sustainable water supply.
Figure 3-3 illustrates that, although the population is expected to grow at a slower pace (66%) between 1990 and 2015, there will still be almost 800,000 people added to the Region. This is almost twice the population of 1980. Based on an average household size of 2.34 persons, approximately 260 households per week will be added to the Region within the 25 year period. If the current trend in development patterns continues, unnecessarily large sums of public monies will need to be spent expanding highways and other infrastructure that could otherwise be spent for enhancing the economic development climate of the Region (e.g., improving schools, cultural facilities, damaged natural systems, transit systems, etc.). Huge parcels of additional land will also be removed from natural and agricultural uses. Conversion to suburban type development could reduce agriculture's important input to the Region's economy, jeopardize the Region's ability to be self sufficient, and also reduce the potential to develop eco-tourism activities that require large areas of land and natural systems to be sustainable.

Several studies have demonstrated that low density, sprawling development patterns disproportionately cost more to serve and that higher costs to the taxpayer for services are directly related to sprawl-type development Downs, 1992: Ewing, 1993, et. al). These studies also help explain the significant increase in government expenditures and higher per capita costs to residents. Table 3.9 identifies large increases in government expenditures to provide public services, and the per capita cost increase to residents between FY 1979-80 to FY 1992-93. These studies also
help to explain why the Government sector has become a major employer in the Region.

Table 3.10 Municipal/County Government Expenditures - Costs Per Capita
FY 1979-80, FY 1992-93

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Expenditures Municipal and County</th>
<th>IRC</th>
<th>MC</th>
<th>PBC</th>
<th>SLC</th>
<th>REGION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FY 1979-80</td>
<td>$54,560,469</td>
<td>$23,404,763</td>
<td>$454,185,162</td>
<td>$66,602,961</td>
<td>$598,753,355</td>
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<tr>
<td>FY 1992-93</td>
<td>$226,510,999</td>
<td>$188,345,936</td>
<td>$2,476,520,322</td>
<td>$279,151,929</td>
<td>$3,170,529,186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenditures Percent Change</td>
<td>315%</td>
<td>705%</td>
<td>445%</td>
<td>319%</td>
<td>430%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costs Per Capita</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 1979-80</td>
<td>$911</td>
<td>$366</td>
<td>$787</td>
<td>$764</td>
<td>$760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FY 1992-93</td>
<td>$2,368</td>
<td>$1,764</td>
<td>$2,697</td>
<td>$1,711</td>
<td>$2,469</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per Capita Percent Change</td>
<td>160%</td>
<td>382%</td>
<td>243%</td>
<td>124%</td>
<td>225%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: State of Florida Local Government Financia Report FY 1979-80; FY 1992-93
Florida County Atlas & Municipal Fact Book, 1994
Table: TCRPC

Money that is needed to pay taxes reduces the amount residents have to fuel the economy, enhance the business climate, and add to the quality of life of the Region. These and other impacts must to be factored in when measuring the real impact of growth as a stimulus to the Region's economy.

6. The Importance of Downtown Redevelopment and Historic Preservation

Historic preservation projects have been found to be very far-reaching. They touch many areas of the local economy such as finance, real estate, government, and affect retailing, employment and tourism. They are more labor intensive and create more new jobs than new construction. They contribute to the quality of life, improve the image of a community and in turn attract businesses and industrial development while fostering tourism. Restored historic buildings also serve well as locations for incubator businesses and provide stability to a neighborhood and community. In weighing relocation decisions, businesses place increasingly more value on quality of life considerations. Historic preservation provides a safeguard of our heritage, revitalizes neighborhoods and makes communities better places in which to live. Structural costs on an older building usually make up 5 to 20 percent of the total project cost, which is half the average expenditure of new construction. Investors and developers often judge a community’s vitality by the quality and character of the central business district. It has been found that even when a firm is going to locate in the suburbs, its image of
the area is formed largely by the appearance of the downtown area (National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1994).

Over the past few years Council staff has worked with 17 cities, towns and villages in the Region. These communities have blighted downtowns, commercial districts and neighborhoods. Master plans have been prepared which are designed to reverse the deterioration, instill new hope and expectations and reopen these areas for new economic development opportunities.

For example, since the planning charrette in 1987 and with the ongoing efforts of its Main Street Program, the City of Stuart has had several millions of dollars in public and private monies invested in its downtown area. The City of West Palm Beach has made multiple improvements to its downtown area resulting from a combination of a planning charrette, strategy development, financing and action planning of its Downtown Development Agency. Likewise, the City of Lake Worth has received large grants from the State and has secured local public and private funds for improvements to its downtown as a result of the planning charrette master plan done in 1993. The City of Boynton Beach has already begun to see investment ventures and serious inquires for more development based on the recent charrette master plan in 1994, and follow-up by its Downtown Development Agency. Most recently, the City of Fort Pierce has received commitments of several million dollars of public and private funds to do several projects based on the charrette master plan done in January 1995 and follow-up support of its Main Street Program.

7. Importance of Linkages

The Region's ability to efficiently move people, goods, and services is an important component of economic development. The Region has good transportation access to larger markets. The FEC and CSX railroads traverse the entire Region as do the Florida Turnpike and Interstate I-95. There are also two deep water seaports and a major regional airport. St. Lucie County International Airport has the potential to become another important commercial airport in the Region, increasing transportation linkages further. A State University and a number of community colleges and private and technical schools are located in the area. Still, the linkages of transportation within the Region to outside markets and to educational facilities can be improved.

Maintenance of the Region's existing roadway network, and expansion of airside, waterside, rail and other mass transit opportunities are needed to increase the mobility of the population, and the movement of goods. Continued improvement is needed in order to enhance the Region's attractiveness and competitive edge for economic development.

8. Developing Economic Clusters
Studies indicate that similar companies tend to locate together and form "clusters" of industries that have similar characteristics and require similar types of employees, products and services (Indian River County 1995). This is somewhat evident in southern Palm Beach County where high-tech companies have clustered (IBM, Siemens, Motorola, Northern Telecom Electronics, Philips Components). Pratt & Whitney, Northrop Grumman, Piper Aircraft are all aviation related industries located within a 25-50 miles radius of each other. An honors university and other higher educational facilities nearby create the potential for providing an education-aviation linkage that could establish a sound marketing foundation to attract related industries. Marine-related and aquaculture industries are in their early stages of development at St. Lucie County International Airport and represent a potential cluster opportunity. Such industry clusters should be capitalized upon in marketing the Region and linked to the Region's educational systems. With the institution of the net ban in the State of Florida, the aquaculture industry may increase in importance and presence in the Region. Clustering means all related industries as well as industries sharing their own products and benefiting from being located near related industries.

9. The Importance of Quality of Life

The Treasure Coast Region as a whole is perceived as having excellent quality of life. While this topic is subjective to a certain degree, there are commonly used criteria to describe quality of life components. These include the natural environment, recreation, culture, safety, education, housing and health services.

The large amounts of open space, strong efforts to expand educational and cultural facilities, public safety programs, and increasing health-related services, suggest that maintaining the quality of life is a high priority in the Region. The perception of an area having a good quality of life is critical for many businesses when determining whether or not to invest in an area. Studies indicate that cultural and natural assets form the basis for economic development in communities. The greatest attractions for economic growth are quality of life, natural environment, historic legacy and cultural context. These qualities and the character of a city influence a wide range of business and residential location decisions and can serve as either a dampener or catalyst for tourism and other economic and cultural activities. In relocation decisions, businesses place increasingly more value on quality of life considerations. Continuous investment in infrastructure as well as in various amenities (museums, theaters, sports, entertainment, recreation) are necessary to maintain a competitive posture. The arts, culture, and historic resources are big factors in a city’s quality of life and provide it with something more tangible - a leveraging tool. If a community wants to attract capital and investment, it must be prepared to call attention to its diversity, identity, and individuality. In addition, a continued effort should be made to maintain, improve and/or expand these amenities to sustain a quality of life that is enjoyed by the Region's residents and found attractive to outside businesses.
10. Youth Out-Migration

“None of the kids ever come back here to live after they’ve gone away to school.” A common concern voiced by many smaller communities across the country including the Region. Young people often go on to find jobs in industries or businesses far from where they grew up, or they go away to college or technical school and get the kind of training for which a small town, with its limited opportunities, simply cannot offer a demand. Out-migration of the young adults from smaller communities has been a trend intensified over time with the influence of television, catalogs, telephones, and other factors (Fremn & Wilson, 1976). Studies indicate that education is frequently related to youth out-migration. That is, people with some college education are considerably more migratory overall than those with only an elementary education, and nearly four times as likely to migrate across the state line. Generally, the higher the education level, the higher the rate of migration (McNeill, Adams, 1976). These factors continue to account for the out-migration of youths today, along with advances in telecommunications, computers, and other high tech activities which provide easy access to outside ideas and opportunities.

Out-migration of the youth is being viewed by many communities as a drain on their economic base and per capita income growth potential. Based on results of a focus group study that looked at the effects of youth out-migration on a community, it was estimated that the cost of care and education to a community for one child over a period of twenty years is at least $156,000. Consequently, a community with an out-migration of 100 youths per year would lose $15.6 million investment in one year or $156 million in a decade (Luke, 1995).

According to the study, those who migrate to other places are frequently a community’s “best and brightest,” leaving behind a larger percentage of the unskilled and less educated youths to develop the community’s future economic base and its income potential. To reduce this out-migration, communities need to begin to acknowledge and nurture their youth in their early working years by providing summer and part time jobs, and continually plan for their future as young adults who will one day have growing families. As an incentive for youths to remain in an area, there should be a continual surplus of quality jobs provided. There should be more emphasis placed on developing education-business partnerships that would provide the education to service high quality jobs needed to retain the youth and support a productive workforce.

With tighter budgets, community colleges and businesses are beginning to recognize the need to develop partnerships. With their own survival being threatened more aggressive community college administrators are seeking ways to make themselves more valuable to business, and businesses are relying more and more on community colleges to improve the skills of their employees and to retain high school graduates for the workplace (Florida Trend, Sept. 1995). Having realized that traditional educational methods of teaching are not meeting the
challenges being faced by today’s workforce as well as growing and established businesses, there has been a willingness by some educational institutions to bring the professor to or near the workplace to provide continued education programs or training needed to support companies (National Public Radio August, 1995). These types of efforts are crucial if communities, businesses and educational institutions in the Region are to remain viable and compete successfully with other regions in the nineties.

11. Establishing an Economic Development District.

Ongoing healthy economic growth is important if the Region is to remain competitive in national and global markets. To achieve this objective, a coordinated regional approach is needed to promote economic development in the Treasure Coast. This approach would establish the direction and support needed to meet multiple challenges produced by competitive, expanding economies. One method to achieve the objective is to have the Treasure Coast Region designated as an Economic Development District. This designation would increase the power of the Region to promote and help implement State, regional, and local economic development goals throughout the Region.

12. Incentive Programs

Incentive programs have become a popular method utilized around the country to attract companies to relocate. This trend has intensified over the last few years because of a reduction in the number of relocations in this country. According to NPR, an average of over 400 companies were relocating annually in recent years. In the last year, only approximately 200 companies have located/relocated within the United States. Due to labor costs and other factors, more and more companies are “going off shore.” This reduction makes competition among communities extremely severe.

There are extensive incentive programs offered by the State and local governments and used to attract businesses to an area. Most communities in the Region feel a need to provide incentives to remain competitive in today’s shrinking business relocation market. These programs frequently have direct or indirect impact on local citizens and should have local approval for successful implementation. Tax exemptions, abatement programs, business and employee relocation cost assistance, up-front cash investment, job creation investment vouchers, tax credits, local bond financing, utility deposit waivers, and tax avoidance programs, Downtown Development Authorities, and Community Redevelopment Agencies are examples of such programs utilized by communities. To the extent that the incentives used to attract economic development into the Region make fiscal sense, such incentives should be encouraged. Having the Region designated as an Economic Development District is an additional incentive and will complement existing incentive programs.
13. **Targeted Industries**

Counties in the Region have targeted certain industries they would like to foster, retain, expand, or relocate to the Region. The matrix below is a compilation of targeted industries identified by each county as desirable to have as job providers.

**Table 3.11 Targeted Industries**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Targeted Industries</th>
<th>Indian River</th>
<th>Martin</th>
<th>Palm Beach</th>
<th>St. Lucie</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aerospace/Engineering</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture/Aquaculture/</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food Processing</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boats and Marine Related Manufacturing</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business/Financial Services (Back Office Operation)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic Related Industries (Computer/Communications)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical Utility-related Industries</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Environmental Improvement Industries</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Fabricated Metal Products</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Film Industry</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruments Related Products</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Trade</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machinery</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Industries</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation Hub Development Multi-modal Distribution</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmaceutical</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plastics Manufacturing</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing/Publishing</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Sports</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research &amp; Development</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism/Entertainment</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: IR Planning Dept; MC Business Development Board; PBC Economic Planning; SLC Chamber of Commerce*
14. Establishing and Increasing Better Locations for Economic Development

Renovating and creating new locations for economic development and businesses in existing cities, towns, and villages is of highest priority. While it is likely that land outside these central locations will be sought for economic development, well-defined cities, towns, and villages provide fertile ground for business and commerce because of good transportation networks, dense infrastructure, close proximity of neighborhoods (employees) to workplace, high density of customers and support businesses, and proximity to cultural, recreational, and educational opportunities. In fact, there is evidence that corporate employers, as well as small business, seek these same attributes when scouting locations for relocating or establishing a base of operations.

Finding such locations outside of established central cities, towns, and villages is becoming increasingly difficult in the Region because of the unplanned, unfocused, and uncoordinated way it has recently developed. This kind of pattern of development does not create good and prestigious addresses for business. It limits economic development sites to a relatively thin layer of land which hugs the interstates and other large highways. It increases congestion and limits sites for those businesses that would like to become part of a close-knit community and play a positive, philanthropic role in its growth and development. This is of special concern because this is exactly the kind of economic development that should be highly sought for the Region.

More thoughtful local land use planning, zoning, and fiscal policy is needed to encourage patterns of development that will foster redevelopment and infill of existing cities, towns, and villages and cause new ones to form in a way that will increase good locations for economic development.
C. Significant Regional Resources and Facilities

1. Cultural Facilities and Historic Attractions
   All historical sites and structures on the State’s Historical Register list
   All archeological resources on the State’s Historical Register list
   Flagler Estate
   House of Refuge
   Raymond F. Kravis Center for the Arts
   Lyric Theater
   Elliot Museum
   Norton Museum
   Sunrise Theater
   Vero Beach Center for the Arts
   Old School Square Theater and Museum

2. Educational Facilities
   Public and private school, college and university systems

3. Regional Organizations
   Area Chambers of Commerce
   Areawide Agency on Aging and Its Contract Agencies in the Region
   Councils on Aging
   Economic Forum of the Treasure Coast
   Private Industry Councils
   St. Lucie River Initiative
   Treasure Coast Builders Association
   Treasure Coast Job Training Center

4. Recreation/Natural Resources
   Beaches
   Atlantic Ocean Beaches
   Natural freshwater lake systems
   Major sports arenas and complexes
   Blue Cypress Marsh Conservation Area
   Blue Cypress Lake
   Florida Intracoastal Waterway
   Ft. Pierce Inlet State Recreation Area
   Indian River Lagoon
   Johnathan Dickinson State Park
   Lake Okeechobee
   Lake Okeechobee Scenic Trail
   Loxahatchee River
   Sebastian Inlet State Recreation Area
   St. Lucie Inlet State Preserve
   St. Lucie River including North and South Forks
Atlantic Ocean  
Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge  
St. Lucie Inlet State Park  
Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge  
Rotenburger Area  
Holey Land Area  
Dupuis Reserve  
Pal-Mar Area  
Savannas State Reserve  
Sea Branch Reserve  
MacArthur State Park  
West Palm Beach Water Catchment Area  
Old Indiantown Grade/Trail  
Corbett Wildlife Management Area  
Hobe Sound National Wildlife Refuge

5. **Special Agricultural Resource Areas**  
   Agriculture Reserve Area  
   Glades Mucklands

6. **Transportation Infrastructure**  
   Regional airport facilities  
   Florida intrastate highway system  
   Intracoastal waterway  
   Regional mass transit and railway systems  
   Port of Fort Pierce  
   Port of Palm Beach  
   Regional Roadway Network
D. Goals, Strategies and Policies

Regional Goal 3.1

An improved economy for the Region’s distressed communities.

**Indicator:**

*Increase in per capita income.*

*Percent change in public and private investment in distressed communities.*

**Strategy 3.1.1:** Carry out activities designed to assist distressed neighborhoods to share in the overall prosperity of the Region.

**Policy 3.1.1.1:** Attract investors to help broaden the economic base and strengthen the job market.

**Policy 3.1.1.2:** Encourage redevelopment projects which will promote economic opportunities.

**Policy 3.1.1.3:** Develop a preapproval program for projects in order to encourage investment and assist developers in the approval process.

**Policy 3.1.1.4:** Give a high priority to infill projects which are consistent with redevelopment plans for the area.

**Policy 3.1.1.5:** Support local efforts to address the problems of distressed communities. For instance, assist the Glades redevelopment efforts by supporting the development, enhancement and promotional activities of the Glades area that include eco-tourism development, potential establishment of a regional version of the Main Street program and the launching of a promotional campaign and procurement of funds to support these programs.
Regional Goal 3.2

An extended agricultural season, expanded agricultural activities, and a sufficient agricultural land base to increase the sustainability, expansion, and diversification of agricultural activities throughout the Region.

**Indicator:**

*Percent change in agriculture land acreage.*

*Change in types of agriculture activities.*

**Strategy 3.2.1:** Extend the agricultural season.

**Policy 3.2.1.1:** Expand the agricultural season by producing value-added goods for distribution throughout the nation and the Caribbean basin.

**Policy 3.2.1.2:** Develop specialty foods, farmers market products, and food processing industries to increase and diversify the agricultural economic base and extend the agricultural employment season.

**Policy 3.2.1.3:** Develop an organic vegetable market to offset competition from international imports, meet the increasing public demand, and extend the agricultural season.

**Strategy 3.2.2:** Expand agricultural and aquaculture activities.

**Policy 3.2.2.1:** Develop alternative crop potential in the Region to help diversify the agricultural economic base.

**Policy 3.2.2.2:** Encourage, maintain and expand industries such as equine and aquaculture to increase and diversify agricultural activity and encourage continued agricultural land use.

**Policy 3.2.2.3:** Encourage and support agricultural and aquaculture research and development activities.

**Strategy 3.2.3:** Maintain a sufficient agricultural land base.

**Policy 3.2.3.1:** If local governments determine that the redesignation of agricultural land is necessary to meet urban needs, new future land use map designations should require preferred forms and patterns of development.
Policy 3.2.3.2: Implement voluntary programs such as Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easement (PACE) or other conservation easement programs and incentives that would help sustain, expand, and promote the agricultural industry in the Region.

Regional Goal 3.3

Maintenance and expansion of the tourism sector of the Region’s economy.

Indicator:

Percent change in number of tourists visiting the area.

Strategy 3.3.1: Maintain and improve existing features which are attributes to the attraction of tourists.

Policy 3.3.1.1: Protect the Region’s natural resources and countryside to ensure their continued existence for the benefit and enjoyment of future generations.

Policy 3.3.1.2: Protect and, where appropriate, adaptively reuse the Region’s historic sites and buildings to preserve its heritage, promote economic development, enhance quality of life, and add to the tourist experience. Sites and buildings should be restored using appropriate State and federal guidelines.

Policy 3.3.1.3: Support local initiatives to preserve the Region’s art, architecture, natural heritage and cultural heritage.

Policy 3.3.1.4: Beautify and landscape major transportation corridors to promote the image and natural beauty of the Region.

Strategy 3.3.2: Initiate marketing efforts and seek new opportunities to promote tourism.

Policy 3.3.2.1: Market the Region as a vacation destination with multiple outdoor recreation and natural amenity resources, historic sites, cultural activities and facilities.

Policy 3.3.2.2: Promote and market entertainment and sports activities in the Region domestically and internationally to increase the Region’s tourism market.

Policy 3.3.2.3: Increase cooperation between public agencies and private organizations to present a unified positive image of the Region, for example
through beautification programs along highly traveled highways and major entrances to the Region.

**Policy 3.3.2.4:** Develop eco-tourism opportunities to help extend the tourist season in the Region, help sustain large areas of open space, preserve natural habitat, discourage sprawling, low-density development, and broaden the Region’s economic base.

**Policy 3.3.2.5:** Encourage and strengthen the role of sports activities in economic development by attracting and soliciting amateur and professional multi-sports events throughout the Region.

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**Regional Goal 3.4**

Patterns of development which are proportionately less costly to provide with public services and facilities, and the redevelopment and revitalization of older communities into important and viable economic centers of the Region.

**Indicator:**

*Number of communities which adopt redevelopment and revitalization plans.*

*Percent change in public and private investment in older communities.*

**Strategy 3.4.1:** Promote patterns of development which allow public services and facilities to be provided more cost effectively.

**Policy 3.4.1.1:** Encourage the use of compact, mix-use development and redevelopment projects that are less costly to serve, have less impact to the natural environment, and help strengthen the economies of existing urban areas.

**Policy 3.4.1.2:** Coordinate land use planning and the provision of public facilities to assist the private sector in building preferred forms of development and to create infill and redevelopment opportunities.

**Policy 3.4.1.3:** Non-preferred forms of development which occur in undeveloped areas should be responsible for and bear the full and true infrastructure costs to support the development through buildout.

**Policy 3.4.1.4:** Develop a tiered system of impact fees which recognizes cost differences of providing public services to development based on the size, type, form, location, and service demands of the development proposed.
**Strategy 3.4.2:** Return older communities to their historic prominence as important and viable economic centers through redevelopment and revitalization.

**Policy 3.4.2.1:** Give high priority to infill projects in order to discourage suburban sprawl and encouraging sustainable economic development.

**Policy 3.4.2.2:** Simplify and shorten the review process which applies to infill, redevelopment, and preferred forms of development to the extent that the public’s health, safety and welfare are not compromised.

**Policy 3.4.2.3:** Provide assistance to developers who propose infill, redevelopment and other preferred forms of development.

**Policy 3.4.2.4:** Local governments should provide concurrency assistance for redevelopment, infill, and new economic development projects that meet preferred development form criteria.

**Policy 3.4.2.5:** Provide financial incentives for infill, redevelopment, and new economic development projects that meet preferred development form criteria.

**Policy 3.4.2.6:** Provide a menu of tax incentives to be offered to infill, redevelopment, and new economic development projects which follow preferred development form criteria.

**Policy 3.4.2.7:** Increase public investment and assistance to foster infill, redevelopment, and refurbishing of infrastructure in existing urban areas.

**Policy 3.4.2.8:** Utilize appropriate business incentive programs that would attract outside businesses and assist retention and expansion of existing businesses.

**Strategy 3.4.3:** Recognize and support the value of historic properties.

**Policy 3.4.3.1:** As a viable option to new construction, restore and rehabilitate historic sites and districts as an efficient usage of existing infrastructure (roads, water, sewer, gas, electricity and telephone lines).

**Policy 3.4.3.2:** Fund historic preservation projects to help safeguard community heritage, contribute to the quality of life, revitalize older communities, and promote local economic development and diversification.

**Policy 3.4.3.3:** Establish tax abatement ordinances that will grant tax relief to qualified historic restoration properties.
Regional Goal 3.5

Improved transportation and education linkages throughout the Region.

Indicator:

Increase in number of commuter transportation services linking education and workplace facilities.

Strategy 3.5.1: Support and encouraged better transportation linkages to service residence, the workforce and students in the Region.

Policy 3.5.1.1: Improve multimodal transportation opportunities throughout the Region in order to provide better access to educational and workplace facilities.

Policy 3.5.1.2: Provide better transportation linkages between workplace and educational facilities.

Policy 3.5.1.3: Provide commuter and long distance passenger service on the FEC right-of-way throughout the Region and beyond.
Regional Goal 3.6

Diversification of the year-round economy and establishment of an economic climate that will allow the Region to compete effectively in the global economy.

Indicator:

Percent change in foreign trade activity.

Strategy 3.6.1: Support efforts to diversify the Regional Economy and to make the Region an effective competitor.

Policy 3.6.1.1: Local governments should develop areawide land use plans that will increase opportunities for business and commerce.

Policy 3.6.1.2: Recruit desired businesses that would provide year-round employment opportunities.

Policy 3.6.1.3: Identify locations for and encourage development of economic clusters for business that would benefit from being located near related industries in the Region.

Policy 3.6.1.4: Support the development of clean industry clustering (e.g. aerospace, marine, aquaculture) at appropriate locations in the region, as identified by county and local economic/business development organizations.

Policy 3.6.1.5: Local economic councils and organizations should prepare and maintain an inventory of preferred business programs, housing stock and available sites to accommodate future businesses in the Region.

Policy 3.6.1.6: Support public/private communications, and provide an atmosphere for international trade to occur in the Region.

Policy 3.6.1.7: Local governments should work with economic councils and business and community developers to determine ways in which regulatory (permitting) processes could be made more user friendly.

Policy 3.6.1.8: Establish a Treasure Coast International Trade task force or consortium to contact and work with international trade business agencies to help develop and promote international trade in the Region.
Policy 3.6.1.9: Promote development of foreign trade zone services to the Region.

Policy 3.6.1.10: Encourage synergy among manufacturers in the Region to share technology and knowledge with each other.

Policy 3.6.1.11: Provide incentives to encourage and enhance film industry and cluster development in the Region.

Strategy 3.6.2: Establish procedures and tools to encourage business development and assist economic development in the Region by including an Economic Development Element in local comprehensive plans.

Policy 3.6.2.1: Establish a point-person or interagency-inter-department permit team within local government whose purpose is to assist in facilitating the movement of preferred economic development projects through the regulatory process.

Policy 3.6.2.2: Local economic development organizations should establish an Economic Development Program to assist start-up incubator businesses.

Policy 3.6.2.3: Establish a program to assist developers/businesses in locating appropriate facilities for their relocation needs. Provide information on those who are willing to build to the specifications of such businesses.

Policy 3.6.2.4: Encourage a public/private partnership to build the necessary infrastructure that will support expansion of clean industries, and will attract higher income industries to the area.

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Regional Goal 3.7

Education/business cooperative programs which foster economic growth in the Region.

Indicator:

Number of new education/business partnership programs.

Strategy 3.7.1: Provide appropriate educational opportunities, programs and facilities to meet business needs.
Policy 3.7.1.1: Develop more vocational and higher educational facilities to encourage outside investors to locate in the Region.

Policy 3.7.1.2: Cultivate education/business partnerships to encourage and develop education/training support programs that will benefit existing businesses and employees, and encourage high-tech, and research and development businesses to locate in the Region.

Policy 3.7.1.3: Work closely with school officials and the media in order to present a positive image of the Region’s educational system.

Policy 3.7.1.4: Attract industry and continually provide a surplus of jobs that will allow the Region’s educated youth in the Region to stay and work in the Region.

Policy 3.7.1.5: Market the Region as a whole as a way to attract large, new employers to the Region.

Policy 3.7.1.6: Establish an introductory and annual refresher education program on economic development for local elected officials and planning staff. The program should include the basic strategies associated with economic development in the Region and those initiatives being supported by local economic development councils and boards.

Policy 3.7.1.7: Encourage and support research and development opportunities provided by the Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute, USDA Laboratory, IFAS, Smithsonian Institute, and Florida Atlantic University, etc., to encourage and enhance clustering of high tech businesses, and to support expansion of manufacturing agriculture/aquacultural, marine and tourism industries in the Region.

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Regional Goal 3.8

Establish the Treasure Coast Region as a Regional Economic Development District.

Indicator:

Establishment of the Treasure Coast Regional Development District

Strategy 3.8.1: Initiate efforts necessary to support regional economic development.
**Policy 3.8.1.1:** The TCRPC should prepare a Regional Overall Economic Development Plan in cooperation with local economic development agencies and submit it for approval. The Regional Plan shall support and be a complement to county Overall Economic Development Plans.

**Policy 3.8.1.2:** Maintain economic development staff to carry out regional economic development initiatives and to support local economic development efforts consistent with the Strategic Regional Policy Plan.

**Policy 3.8.1.3:** Local governments should prepare and adopt economic development elements as part of their comprehensive plans.

**Policy 3.8.1.4:** The Regional Planning Council should support regional coordination among chambers of commerce and other economic development agencies to promote regional economic development.