

## Application Abstract – East Central Florida Sustainable Communities Consortium

The East Central Florida Regional Planning Council (ECFRPC), on behalf of the East Central Florida Sustainable Communities Consortium (Consortium), is pleased to submit this application to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for funding under the Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program. This application is for Category 2, Detailed Execution Plans and Programs.

(1) Project Name	Transit as an economic catalyst: planning for sustainable and inclusive growth around East Central Florida’s SunRail stations
(2) Lead Applicant	East Central Florida Regional Planning Council (ECFRPC)
(3) Point of Contact	Elizabeth Rothbeind elizabeth@ecfrpc.org (407) 262-7772
(4) Population Level and Total Population	Large; 3,172,389
(5) Category of Application: 1 – Regional Plans for Sustainable Development, or 2 – Detailed Execution Plans and Programs	2
(6) Total Budget, including the HUD Requested amount and Applicant Match,	HUD Requested Amount: \$2,841,000 Local Match: \$568,200
(7) Locations included as part of the Consortium	Brevard County, Lake County, Orange County, Osceola County, Seminole County, Volusia County.  City of Daytona Beach, City of DeBary, City of Deltona, City of Longwood, City of Orlando, City of Palm Bay, City of Sanford
(8) Congressional Districts Covered.	U.S. Districts 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12, 15, 24

### OBJECTIVES and EXPECTED RESULTS

Consortium members participated in the development of *How Shall We Grow?*, a 50-year shared regional vision, in 2007. The Central Florida Regional Growth Vision was adopted through a voluntary Regional Growth Compact signed by representatives of 7 counties and 86 cities. In 2010, the ECFRPC adopted the East Central Florida 2060 Plan (ECF 2060 Plan), which meets state statutory requirements as the region’s Strategic Regional Policy Plan and constitutes the Regional Plan for Sustainable Development. The ECF 2060 Plan is intended to guide local decision-making in a manner that leads toward the implementation of the Regional Growth Vision and Regional Growth Compact. The Consortium is pursuing this grant opportunity to build on the momentum created by these prior efforts and to begin implementation of the ECF 2060 Plan.

The Consortium will use the grant to develop and prepare for implementation of sustainable and inclusive community development plans around the future station locations for East Central Florida’s

SunRail commuter rail system, which is anticipated to begin operation in 2014. SunRail represents a historic opportunity to transform the communities using the commuter rail service as a catalyst for sustainable and inclusive growth, particularly in minority and/or low-income neighborhoods adjacent to several of the committed stations. The grant funding will support detailed station area planning for 6 out of the 12 Phase I SunRail stations, affordable housing assessments for all 12 stations, and regional collaboration to share best practices and to guide future transit planning in East Central Florida.

The Consortium will apply the grant resources to further develop and sustain regional and community partnerships to:

- Attract high-quality, higher-paying jobs and provide residents the opportunity to access these jobs using public transit;
- Promote social equity and access to opportunity by revitalizing minority and/or low-income neighborhoods adjacent to the SunRail stations;
- Provide more transportation choices, improve public health and safety, and reduce energy use by providing local transit, bicycle, and pedestrian connections to SunRail stations;
- Plan for affordable and energy efficient housing around the SunRail stations;
- Encourage sustainable, compact urban development surrounding the SunRail stations; and
- Integrate and leverage investments among state, regional, and local transportation, economic development, housing, community development, and other agencies, as well as the private and nonprofit sectors.

This project is consistent with the goals of the Sustainable Communities Partnership as well as Florida's state agency plans for transportation, economic development, and environmental protection. The grant activities will produce the following outcomes:

- Adoption of station area plans for six SunRail stations, which will be consistent with the ECF 2060 Plan and the six Livability Principles;
- Assessment of affordable housing needs near all 12 Phase I SunRail stations, as well as the development of strategies for encouraging the provision of needed affordable housing;
- Alignment with economic and workforce development strategies to ensure the overall station area plans improve access to jobs and incentivize further investment in these communities;
- Alignment with state, regional, and local transportation plans to provide appropriate local transit, bicycle, and pedestrian connections to the SunRail stations;
- Identification of changes needed to local comprehensive plans and land development regulations to encourage sustainable, compact urban development in places identified in the station area plans;
- Development of specific strategies to help revitalize minority and/or low-income neighborhoods adjacent to the SunRail stations and provide equitable outcomes for all residents; and
- Capacity building among Consortium members to share the lessons learned from this project and extend sustainable and inclusive development practices to other communities in the East Central Florida region.

## **Transit as an economic catalyst: planning for sustainable and inclusive growth around East Central Florida's SunRail stations**

The East Central Florida Regional Planning Council (ECFRPC), on behalf of the East Central Florida Sustainable Communities Consortium (Consortium), is pleased to submit this application to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for funding under the Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program. The application is for Category 2, Detailed Execution Plans and Programs.

The Consortium would use the grant to develop and prepare for implementation of sustainable and inclusive development plans around the future station locations for East Central Florida's SunRail commuter rail system, which is anticipated to begin operation in 2014. With capital investment estimated at \$357 million in Federal, state, and local funding for its first phase, SunRail will catalyze a "Corridor of Commerce" to transform communities and encourage sustainable growth, particularly in minority and/or low-income neighborhoods adjacent to several of the committed stations. The grant would support detailed planning for 6 out of the 12 Phase I SunRail stations, affordable housing assessments for all 12 stations, and regional collaboration to share best practices and to guide future planning in the region.

This grant application is organized according to the five rating factors specified in HUD's Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA).

### **1. Rating Factor 1: Capacity of the Applicant and Relevant Organizational Experience**

#### ***a. Organizational Capacity and Qualifications***

The Consortium builds on nearly a decade of regional cooperation in East Central Florida:

- 2001 – the ECFRPC established a partnership with *myregion.org*, a public/private/civic coalition associated with the Orlando Regional Chamber of Commerce (now the Central Florida Partnership), to plan for the future of the region's economy and quality of life.
- 2007 – *myregion.org* developed the *How Shall We Grow?* project, with input from more than 20,000 residents over an 18-month period. The process resulted in the Central Florida Regional Growth Vision and produced a voluntary Regional Growth Compact signed by representatives of 7 counties and 86 cities.
- 2007 – the Central Florida Congress of Regional Leaders was created to oversee implementation of the regional vision, with an initial focus on transportation, water, and natural resources.
- 2008 – the ECFRPC developed the region's first Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), which was approved by the U.S. Economic Development Administration.
- 2011 – the ECFRPC adopted the East Central Florida 2060 Plan (ECF 2060), following three years of collaboration with partners. The ECF 2060 Plan meets state statutory requirements as the region's Strategic Regional Policy Plan and has been recognized by the ECFRPC as the Regional Plan for Sustainable Development.

This period marked an unprecedented shift toward regional collaboration in East Central Florida. In its 2009 Regional Progress Report, *myregion.org* identified 70 initiatives and organizations working at a multicounty or regional scale. This collaboration has resulted in plans to develop a "Medical City" of leading education, research, and health care organizations at Lake Nona in southeastern Orlando; to transform downtown Orlando through the construction of a new arena and performing arts center and the renovation of the Citrus Bowl; and to develop SunRail, the region's first commuter rail system, which eventually will run for 61 miles from Deland to Poinciana, among other initiatives.

The partners that have worked together for a decade to create the Central Florida Regional Growth Vision and the ECF 2060 Plan, and to advance SunRail and other regional investments, have now established the East Central Florida Sustainable Communities Consortium. The Consortium will work collaboratively to align regional and local housing, economic development, land use, transportation, environmental, and community resource plans and investments to fully realize the potential of SunRail to transform the economy and quality of life in the communities through which it passes as well as the region as a whole. The Consortium's initial focus through this grant will be to establish and coordinate sustainable development plans for the areas surrounding the Phase I SunRail stations. At the completion of this process, the Consortium will evaluate the lessons learned from this collaborative approach and determine how to best advance future transit-related development as well as other sustainable communities initiatives in the region.

The Appendix includes a list of committed Consortium members, and Rating Factor 1 defines the roles of each Consortium member. The Consortium members, which represent 100 percent of the population in the East Central Florida Economic Development District, include:

- ECFRPC, as lead applicant;
- The region's six county governments; Brevard, Lake, Orange, Osceola, Seminole, and Volusia;
- Seven city governments, which together cover the six station areas and the region's principal cities: Daytona Beach, DeBary, Deltona, Longwood, Orlando, Palm Bay, and Sanford;
- Creative Village Development, LLC, which is working in partnership with the City of Orlando to develop a 68-acre transit-oriented master development in downtown Orlando;
- The four metropolitan planning organizations (MPO) in the region: the Lake-Sumter MPO, METROPLAN ORLANDO (Orange, Osceola, and Seminole Counties), the Space Coast Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) (Brevard County), and the Volusia TPO;
- The Florida Department of Transportation's District 5;
- The Central Florida Regional Transportation Authority (LYNX), the regional transit authority for Orange, Osceola, and Seminole Counties;
- The University of Florida's Shimberg Center for Housing Studies, which will develop and apply affordable housing needs and suitability models;
- The Nonprofit Housing Roundtable for Central Florida, which will serve as a sounding board on affordable housing issues;
- Two organizations – Orlando Health and the Health Council of East Central Florida – which will provide input on public health issues and strategies;
- The Urban Land Institute's Central Florida District Council; and
- *myregion.org*.

The Appendix documents the organizational chart for the Consortium. Key elements of the Consortium organization are as follows:

- The Consortium will work collaboratively to review the overall progress of the grant activities and to identify and resolve key issues. The full membership of the Consortium will meet twice per year, and Consortium members will be actively engaged in specific work activities. The Consortium will strive for consensus on all decisions and take a formal vote of standing members when needed regarding grant administration or regional issues.

- The ECFRPC will serve as the fiscal agent and project manager, and will provide facilitation and technical assistance to the Consortium throughout the process.
- A project Steering Committee will guide day-to-day decisions, working with the ECFRPC project management team. The Steering Committee will include representatives of the ECFRPC; the lead entities for the six station area working groups; the Regional Coordinating Committee, the Affordable Housing Working Group, and any other committees created by the Consortium to support grant activities; and minority or lower-income neighborhoods adjacent to the SunRail stations.
- Six Station Area Working Groups will individually establish and review the planning activities for their respective SunRail station(s) as identified in this grant application. They will be chaired by the lead local government for each station. Each Working Group's membership will include local governments and key partners specific to each station, including representatives of minority and low-income neighborhoods impacted by the station. These meetings will be open to participation by stakeholders that are not part of the Consortium.
- A Regional Coordinating Committee will address crosscutting issues among the six station area plans and develop recommendations to the full Consortium to advance sustainable communities practices across the region. The Committee's membership will include the ECFRPC, the six station area leads, the Shimberg Center for Housing Studies, the Nonprofit Housing Roundtable for Central Florida, Urban Land Institute, *myregion.org*, interested MPOs, and other interested Consortium members. The Committee will provide guidelines for how the station area plans could address common issues such as equity; review Station Area Working Group products; and identify lessons learned and key products transferrable to additional SunRail stations or future regional transit and sustainable communities planning. The Committee will establish a technical working group to work with the Shimberg Center and the Nonprofit Housing Roundtable for Central Florida on the affordable housing analysis for all 12 Phase I SunRail stations, potentially using the Roundtable structure for this purpose. The Committee will recommend to the full Consortium a strategy for sharing lessons learned and for building regional capacity to support future initiatives.

The Working Groups and Coordinating Committee will meet between four and six times per year, and will strive for consensus on all decisions. Where consensus cannot be accomplished, the ECFRPC can provide support to resolve issues that may impede grant performance. Over the past decade, the Consortium members have developed effective working relationships and a history of working collaboratively to establish goals, develop programs, allocate resources, and resolve disputes through data-driven decision-making, analytical problem-solving, and proactive communication. This work will be aided by the many regional partnerships created over the past several years, including the Central Florida Commuter Rail Commission (City of Orlando and Volusia, Seminole, Orange, and Osceola Counties); the Central Florida Congress of Regional Leaders (representatives of 7 counties, 86 cities, and 7 school boards); and the Central Florida MPO Alliance (6 MPOs representing 9 counties). Each of these organizations, along with the ECFRPC, has procedures for resolving disputes and establishing regional policies.

The past few years have highlighted the challenges involved in implementing regional plans and initiatives, particularly during a major recession and with changing elected leadership. The East Central Florida region has moved forward on its commitment to the Regional Growth Vision, the ECF 2060 Plan, and SunRail and other major investments because of the strong base of public, private, and civic support for these initiatives and the common understanding of the region's vision. These same principles of strong leadership, extensive community engagement, and collaborative decision-making will be applied to this grant.

### ***b. Capability and Qualification of Key Personnel***

Consortium members are prepared to commit senior staff to initiate grant activities within 90 days of the grant award. The ECFRPC project management and staff team includes:

- **George Kinney**, Interim Executive Director, will serve as the overall Project Director;
- **Fred Milch**, Project Review Manager, will serve as the day-to-day Program Manager;
- **Elizabeth Rothbeind**, Economic Development and Communications Specialist, will serve as the Deputy Program Manager;
- **Claudia Paskauskas**, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Manager, will lead data management activities; and
- **Andrew Landis**, Policy and Legislative Affairs specialist, will be responsible for policy analysis and support other research, citizen engagement, and planning activities.

The six station area leads will be as follows:

- DeBary Station: **Dan Parrott**, City Manager, City of DeBary;
- Sanford and Altamonte Springs stations: **Nicole Guillet**, Director, Growth Management Department, Seminole County;
- Longwood Station: **Sheryl Bower**, Community Development Services Director, City of Longwood;
- LYNX Central Station: **Brooke Bonnett**, Director of Economic Development, City of Orlando, in partnership with **Roxanne Amoroso**, Senior Vice President, Banc of America Community Development Corporation; and
- Sand Lake Station: **Jim Harrison**, Director, Regional Mobility, Orange County.

**William O'Dell**, Interim Director of the Shimberg Center, will lead the affordable housing needs assessment. **Shelley Lauten**, President, *myregion.org*, will be available to help engage and build consensus among elected officials and community and business leaders.

The Appendix provides biographical information for the key personnel. Rating Factor 1 Form documents the time commitments for the key personnel. The Consortium members collectively provide the staff resources and expertise to manage all phases of the grant activity. Many Consortium members have general consultants available to assist immediately. The ECFRPC may procure additional consultant services to carry out key activities, including community outreach and engagement, crosscutting policy analyses, and capacity building. The lead entities for each station area may procure consultant services to assist with the station area plan if needed to augment available staff resources and expertise.

### ***c. Capacity to Address Economic and Social Disparities***

East Central Florida is the Federally designated Economic Development District and the ECFRPC is responsible for developing the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The 2011 CEDS, which was submitted to the U.S. Economic Development Administration for approval on September 30, 2011, was updated with the involvement of elected officials; business and community leaders; and representatives of economic development, workforce, education, and community organizations, including low-income and minority groups. The ECFRPC and *myregion.org* have used a similar approach to develop the Regional Growth Vision and the ECF 2060 Plan.

The ECFRPC and other Consortium members have a demonstrated history of working with marginalized communities in East Central Florida to address economic and social disparities through

specific projects. For example, a public/private partnership between the City of Orlando and a development team led by Banc of America Community Development Corporation is working to develop Creative Village, a transit-oriented master development on a proposed 68-acre site at the location of the former Amway Center. Creative Village proposes to bring more than 8,200 jobs and up to \$1 billion dollars in real estate development, including 1,200 units of mixed-income housing, over a 15-year period. Creative Village is envisioned as a focal point for the burgeoning digital media industry and a draw for creative workers, but will be blended into the nearby, low-income Parramore neighborhood with careful attention to affordable housing and social and economic diversity.

As another example, the ECFRPC, in collaboration with the Farmworker Association of Florida, recently received a three-year, \$300,000 grant from the Kellogg Foundation to conduct a community food assessment in the unincorporated enclave of South Apopka. The grant's objective is to increase access to fresh, locally grown, healthy food for farmworker, minority, and low-income residents.

## **2. Rating Factor 2: Needs/Extent of the Problem**

### ***b. Narrative Statement of Need***

The East Central Florida region was one of the fastest growing parts of the nation over the past 50 years, with population growing from less than 300,000 in 1950 to nearly 3.2 million in 2010 (U.S. Census). Population growth began to taper off in 2007, as the traditional driver of the region's growth – relocation of families and retirees from the rest of the nation – slowed dramatically. Population growth is expected to strengthen in upcoming years, but is not likely to regain the previous pace. The region's population has become increasingly diverse during this period, with particularly strong growth in the past decade among residents of Hispanic or Latin origin.

The recession impacted East Central Florida significantly, with the most severe impacts in housing, real estate, and construction. Employment has begun to edge higher, but August 2011 employment is more than 93,000 jobs (6 percent) lower than the July 2008 peak (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics). The unemployment rate surged from historic lows of near 3 percent in 2006 to more than 12 percent. The region has been severely impacted by the collapse of home prices due to oversupply, lack of demand, and the banking and credit crisis. Single-family homes lost 40 to 50 percent of their value since their peak in 2006. While a large housing inventory was built, affordable housing continues to be a challenge for many of the region's workers. In particular, the foreclosures and the collapse of the housing market have increased demand for the limited supply of rental units.

The region's industry mix historically has been driven by lower-wage jobs in services and hospitality, reflecting its status as one of the world's leading tourist destinations. The average wage per job was \$38,700 in 2009, 14 percent below the national average (U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis). Efforts are underway to diversify the economy, with the region targeting growth in such industries as technology, creative arts and design, and life sciences. The region's ability to attract and retain skilled workers – as well as the availability of suitable sites – will be key factors in growing these industries.

The region accommodated the unprecedented population growth over the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century by developing in a sprawling, low-density pattern. The costs of this pattern are evident: rapid conversion of open space to build more houses, loss of agricultural land, encroachment on sensitive environmental areas, significant increases in water and energy use, and overreliance on cars for transportation. Fewer than half of the region's residents lived within cities in 2007, a share that has declined since 2000 (U.S. Census Bureau).

In the past decades, the region's transportation investments have reinforced this sprawling pattern but have not been able to keep pace with the growth in demand. Vehicle-miles traveled more than doubled between 1990 and 2008, while total road mileage has increased about 25 percent (Federal Highway

Administration). Over 90 percent of regional trips use automobiles, with public transit accounting for about 1.4 percent in 2008 (U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey). The result has been a continued degrading of travel time and safety. Nearly 80 percent of peak-period highway travel is in congested conditions, with average delay of 38 hours per commuter in 2010 (Texas Transportation Institute, *Urban Mobility Report*, 2011). The Orlando-Kissimmee metropolitan statistical area has been ranked as the nation's most dangerous area for pedestrians (Transportation for America, *Dangerous by Design*, 2011).

The public transportation alternative today usually means spending hours on a bus and making several connections to use the transit system. This is particularly true for low-income populations making trips between affordable housing opportunities and lower-wage jobs. Over the past decades, the combination of higher home prices (until the crash), "drive until you qualify" housing searches, and long commutes has had a toll on household budgets, with the proportion of population paying more than 45 percent of income on housing and transportation increasing from 88 percent to 92 percent (Center for Neighborhood Technology, H&T Affordability Index).

In 2007, 20 percent of adults reported changing outdoor activities due to poor air quality in Central Florida (Florida Department of Health). Of primary concern is ozone, which is a main ingredient in urban smog that affects the region in many ways, from asthma rates to agricultural production. Regional emissions of air quality pollutants that produce ozone generally have been declining for the past 30 years due to improvements in vehicle technology – but if travel continues to grow, total emissions may begin to increase, and the region's air quality could slip below Federal standards. Energy efficiency also is a regional concern because of its impacts on economic activity and future resource availability.

The gap in economic opportunity between socioeconomic groups remains significant. Four counties recorded poverty rates in excess of 12.5 percent in 2009. Lower-income families often lack convenient access to jobs, public transportation, fresh food, health care, and other amenities. More than 13 percent of low-income residents live more than one mile from a grocery store (U.S. Department of Agriculture). Orange County's 2011 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice concluded that fair housing issues in Orange County are still present despite enforcement and outreach efforts in place. Based on the fair housing complaints filed, the primary complaints for housing discrimination are from the disabled population, followed by African Americans. There is a recent trend showing complaints from non-English speakers. A 2006 assessment in Seminole County reported a small number of fair housing complaints covering similar issues.

The ECF 2060 Plan has identified and documented these issues, as well as a vision for future development that has received widespread support from the public, businesses, and elected officials. This vision emphasizes focusing future growth in urban centers connected through multimodal transportation corridors. The commitment to build SunRail, a commuter rail spine to connect historic and new communities in the heart of the region along a corridor of commerce, provides one of the first steps to reshape the direction of development in East Central Florida. SunRail provides an additional competitive choice for transportation, and the station areas along the line have the opportunity to attract compact, mixed-use development. The opportunity exists to coordinate plans and investments so that SunRail becomes the focal point for revitalizing existing communities, attracting skilled workers and innovation-oriented businesses, expanding safe and convenient travel options, helping improve energy efficiency and air quality, and providing minority and lower-income households with greater access to opportunity.

### ***c. Area of Severe Economic Distress***

The regional unemployment rate from May 2010 to May 2011 averaged 12.4 percent (the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics). This is 1.2 times the national average unemployment rate of 10.1 percent during the same period. Four of the six counties recorded poverty rates in excess of 12.5 percent in 2009: Lake

(12.6 percent), Orange (14.3 percent), Osceola (15.8 percent), and Volusia (15.2 percent) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009 Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates). Poverty levels surrounding several of the SunRail stations are significantly higher. Regional median household income is more than 75 percent of the national average, but there are significant pockets of poverty.

### **3. Rating Factor 3: Soundness of Approach**

The grant will enable the Consortium to build on the initiation of SunRail service to plan for and incentivize sustainable and inclusive development decisions to support existing communities adjacent to the commuter rail stations. The Consortium seeks to:

- Attract high-quality, higher-paying jobs and provide residents the opportunity to access these jobs using public transit;
- Promote social equity and access to opportunity by revitalizing minority and/or low-income neighborhoods adjacent to the SunRail stations;
- Provide more transportation choices, improve public health and safety, and reduce energy use by providing local transit, bicycle, and pedestrian connections to SunRail stations;
- Plan for affordable and energy efficient housing around the SunRail stations;
- Encourage sustainable, compact urban development surrounding the SunRail stations; and
- Integrate and leverage investments among state, regional, and local transportation, economic development, housing, community development, and other agencies, as well as the private and nonprofit sectors.

The project focus area includes the 12 stations along the 31-mile first phase of SunRail, which links DeBary to Sand Lake Road in Orange County. Service is expected to begin in 2014. The grant will provide targeted resources to catalyze and leverage planning activities for 6 out of the 12 committed and funded stations for Phase I SunRail service. The grant also will develop an affordable housing model and analysis to support all 12 Phase I stations. Finally, the grant will identify best practices and build regional capacity to support sustainable and inclusive development decisions across all six counties in the region, including future SunRail extensions and feeder transit routes.

#### ***b1. General Description of Proposed Detailed Execution Plan and Program for a Regional Plan for Sustainable Development***

*(a) Describe the contents of the existing regional plan or vision and how the consortium plans to improve, advance, and/or execute this plan so that it becomes a complete RPSD.*

The Central Florida Regional Growth Vision provides a long-range shared regional vision for a seven-county region encompassing the six ECFRPC/Consortium counties and adjacent Polk County. The ECF 2060 Plan serves as the six-county region's Strategic Regional Policy Plan (SRPP) under state law and has been adopted by formal resolution as the Regional Plan for Sustainable Development. The ECF 2060 Plan is intended to guide local decision-making in a manner that leads toward the implementation of the Regional Growth Vision. If these goals and policies are used to inform local comprehensive plans, land development regulations, developments of regional impact, capital improvements plans, and transportation improvements plans, the region will alter its development and investment patterns and promote sustainable and inclusive growth. A summary of the ECF 2060 plan is provided in the Appendix. The Consortium is pursuing this grant opportunity to build on the momentum created by these prior efforts and to begin implementation of the ECF 2060 Plan.

*(b) Identify any gaps in the existing RPSD that need to be addressed and describe how you plan to address them.*

Under current Florida law, the ECFRPC has no direct power to enforce the ECF 2060 Plan. The primary implementation comes from a state evaluation and compliance process. Each local jurisdiction is required, within seven years of its last comprehensive plan evaluation, to review the appropriate SRPP (in this case, the ECF 2060 Plan) and, if necessary, amend its comprehensive plan to achieve consistency with the SRPP. The ECF 2060 Plan, therefore, will gradually be integrated into local plans over a seven-year period, and the region will evolve to accomplish the regional vision. SunRail provides an opportunity to catalyze implementation of the ECF 2060 Plan and the Regional Growth Vision, but several gaps in the existing ECF 2060 Plan and related regional and local plans must be addressed.

### **Gap #1: Need for Station Area Plans To Precede SunRail Implementation**

The seven-year period between the adoption of the ECF 2060 plan and the subsequent update of all local comprehensive plans means that some local jurisdictions may not update their plans and related land use maps and development policies prior to the opening of SunRail in 2014. Sustainable development patterns around the stations and in feeder transit corridors are essential in the early years of SunRail service to build ridership and support future extensions. Optimizing the value of SunRail means building ridership by making it attractive, safe, affordable, and convenient to live or work near transit stations. It also means leveraging the new property taxes from surrounding development to help pay for future operations because SunRail currently has no dedicated source of local funding. County property taxes will pay for operation and maintenance after 2020. Therefore, the local governments hosting the SunRail stations, and other impacted jurisdictions, should develop station area plans and update comprehensive plans prior to the opening of SunRail. Many cities and counties stand ready to do so, but need financial and technical support to accelerate this process.

**Solution:** This grant will provide financial and technical support for station area plans, related updates to comprehensive plans, and initial implementation of these plans. The six stations selected for the detailed analysis have the greatest need for coordinated planning, and the local governments and other partners involved in these stations are ready to move forward.

### **Gap #2: Need for Station Area Affordable Housing Strategies and Fair Housing and Equity Assessments**

The ECF 2060 Plan has policies on affordable housing, but the ECFRPC has no direct power to enforce these policies. Each local comprehensive plan has a housing element that addresses affordable housing. The ECF 2060 Plan showed there is a significant need for safe, desirable, and affordable housing, particularly for rental housing near employment centers. However, affordable housing strategies have not been developed for many of the SunRail station areas, in part due to the lack of a neighborhood-level affordable housing needs analysis in the context of overall regional need. In addition, while individual counties regularly identify impediments to fair housing choice, the region as a whole has not developed a regional assessment of fair housing and equity.

**Solution:** The University of Florida's Shimberg Center for Housing Studies has completed a three-year project to develop a GIS-based affordable housing needs analysis and housing suitability model. Orange County, which has the largest population and a significant need, is a demonstration county for these models. The models can estimate and project demand and need as well as identify the spatial relationship between jobs and housing at both neighborhood and regional levels. This process will identify the affordable housing needs throughout the region, some of which may be met by planning for housing within proximity of a SunRail station. The Shimberg Center will assist the Nonprofit Affordable Housing Roundtable of Central Florida and Consortium members in developing strategies and financing opportunities to encourage and incentivize the provision of any needed affordable housing, such as density and intensity bonuses and inclusionary zoning.

The station area plans, with their emphasis on minority and/or lower-income neighborhoods and leveraging SunRail as a major public involvement, will follow HUD guidelines and develop many of the elements of a fair housing and equity assessment. The Consortium will recommend how these station area assessments can be extended and integrated in a Regional Fair Housing and Equity Assessment at the conclusion of this process.

### **Gap #3: Need for Closer Linkage with Economic Development Programs**

The ECF 2060 Plan and the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) provide strategies for the region's economy to diversify from its historic reliance on tourism, construction, and agriculture. SunRail provides an opportunity to create a commerce corridor connecting central business districts and employment centers, which would be one key step in the region's economic transformation. To fully realize the value of SunRail, the economic and business development plans, programs, and regulations in the cities and counties served by commuter rail must support and provide incentives for compact, mixed-use development, particularly in communities which historically have not served as significant regional employment centers. Particular attention must be given to creating opportunities for minority-owned and disadvantaged businesses.

**Solution:** The SunRail stations are opportunities for supporting existing and creating new employment centers. The station area plans will be designed to enhance access for residents to jobs and for businesses to workers and customers. They also will help design activity centers which incentivize further investment in these communities.

### **Gap #4: Need for Greater Emphasis on Equity and Diversity**

The rapid growth development of East Central Florida has resulted in an increasingly diverse population, but also has furthered structural disparities among socioeconomic groups in terms of unemployment, wage levels, educational attainment, and health status. This is particularly the case in several neighborhoods adjacent to the SunRail stations, such as East Altamonte, the Parramore and Callahan communities, and Sand Lake. The ECF 2060 Plan provides high-level information on demographic and socioeconomic conditions, but does not provide a detailed strategy for reducing these disparities or leveraging the region's diversity as one of its economic assets.

**Solution:** SunRail provides an opportunity to create pathways for prosperity for the full range of residents living along the corridor. The station area plans will emphasize creating and providing better access to jobs through transportation improvements. They will address affordable housing needs, and accommodate a diverse mix of jobs and housing in the station areas. The station area plans also may address issues such as access to education, health care, and core amenities such as parks and fresh food. They also may include policies and incentives to site educational and other public facilities in these communities, as well as to encourage private investment. These plans provide an opportunity to encourage full participation of all socioeconomic groups in planning for the future of each community and the broader region.

*(c) Describe how the existing regional plan or vision addresses the six Livability Principles, and, if it does not, describe how the consortium intends to incorporate them into the plan.*

#### **1. Provide more transportation choices**

The Regional Growth Compact commits the region's local governments and other partners to the guiding principle of providing more transportation choices. The ECF 2060 Plan sets a goal to "develop a balanced multimodal transportation network that connects compact centers of development with mixed use transit-served corridors." SunRail will be the first step in this regional network and several bus rapid transit and light rail alternatives are under study to augment this new mode. The station area plans will guide land use and development plans to help build ridership for SunRail. The station area plans also

will define connections to bus and other transit systems, including services for flexible routing, such as LYNX PickUpLine, and for transportation disadvantaged populations. They also will help plan for enhanced pedestrians and bicycle networks, including safe routes to schools. The sustainability practices and tools developed as part of this grant can be applied to the remaining SunRail stations as well as to future feeder transit services. Together, the grant activities will help expand cost-effective transportation choices to improve livability, air quality, and public health.

## **2. Promote equitable, affordable housing**

The Regional Growth Compact commits the region's local governments and other partners to the guiding principle of creating a range of obtainable housing choices. The ECF 2060 Plan sets a goal to "assure that an adequate supply of safe, sanitary, and affordable housing is equitably distributed throughout the region." The grant activities will build upon these policies by developing affordable housing strategies around the SunRail stations. The Shimberg Center's housing models and resulting benchmarks will be used to identify the potential location of housing near transit and to further direct incentives and investments. The approach could be expanded to include a calculation of transportation costs associated with compact, mixed-use housing to demonstrate that community location, character, and design are better predictors of overall affordability than household size and income alone. This approach is consistent with the HUD and U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) commitment to redefine housing affordability to include transportation costs. In addition, quantifying need will assist Consortium members in leveraging Federal and state funding sources, and implementing both mandatory and incentive-based programs.

## **3. Enhance economic competitiveness**

The Regional Growth Compact includes a principle to encourage a diverse, globally competitive economy. The 2011 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) includes the following economic development goals:

- Further diversify the economy by attracting, retaining and growing rising economic clusters and business incubation;
- Create an economically and environmentally sustainable region by implementing the Regional Growth Vision; and
- Improve global connectivity of all transportation systems.

SunRail provides an important first step toward a balanced and efficient multimodal transportation system by linking existing and emerging economic assets. The SunRail system, supported by sustainable land use and economic development decisions, will improve access to jobs, attract highly skilled creative workers who often seek urban amenities, create economies of scale and greater integration among industry clusters, and encourage private investment along the corridor. The grant activities will support effective integration of economic development and business support strategies into station area plans to help maximize the potential economic value of SunRail.

## **4. Support existing communities**

The Regional Growth Vision emphasizes the importance of focusing future growth in activity centers. The ECF 2060 Plan encourages investment in existing urban and suburban centers, supports emerging economic centers, increases density to enhance mixed-use development, and promotes transit-oriented development. Urban centers and rail transit nodes with existing infrastructure provide opportunities for supporting existing communities and conserving natural resource areas. With proper planning and investment around the rail transit stations, these areas can offer accessibility and increased livability to all income levels. They also can provide for economic revitalization of existing nearby businesses as well as attract new businesses. The station area plans will develop strategies to support the specific

communities surrounding the SunRail stations, including opportunities to help existing communities to become more energy efficient. The combination of station-specific plans with overarching regional guidelines and policies will create solutions that reflect the unique character of each community, while also supporting the overall goal of a more livable and sustainable region.

## **5. Coordinate policies and leverage investment**

The Regional Growth Vision and Compact provide a common framework for 2 RPCs, 5 MPOs, 7 counties, 86 cities, 7 school boards, 3 water management districts, and numerous other state, regional, and local entities. The ECF 2060 Plan identifies policies to implement this vision and was developed with input from the same set of partners.

The grant activities are designed to leverage the Federal, state, and local investment in SunRail by coordinating the transportation investment with supportive land use, economic development, housing, and community development policies and plans at each station as well as for the region as a whole. The Consortium has been established to facilitate ongoing coordination of policies, plans, and investments, with a standing regional coordinating committee reviewing the station area plans and making recommendations to strengthen coordination and share best practices regionwide.

Some SunRail stations serve communities which have recently received or are committed to receive significant Federal, state, local, or private investment. For example, the City of Orlando's Creative Village initiative is leveraging the connectivity provided by SunRail and the land made available through construction of the new arena to develop a center of excellence for digital media, while also revitalizing the existing Parramore and Callahan neighborhoods, both of which are Title VI communities. The improvements included as part of this grant request would augment improvements within the overall Creative Village project currently being funded by a \$10 million U.S. DOT TIGER II grant. The Parramore bus rapid transit (BRT) project will provide premium transit service to the Creative Village project, the Parramore and Callahan neighborhoods, downtown Orlando, the Amway Center, Florida A&M University Law School, the Federal courthouse, and other employment centers.

An additional example of leveraged investment is LYMMO's east/west expansion in downtown Orlando. Funded by the Federal Transit Administration's New Starts program, this project was recently approved for \$9.92 million and will provide an east-west transit connection through downtown Orlando, providing service to SunRail stations, the Downtown Performing Arts Center, Amway Center, Parramore BRT, and the Thornton Park neighborhood. Both the Parramore BRT and the East/West BRT will begin operation in 2014, around the same time as SunRail.

## **6. Value communities and neighborhoods**

The Regional Growth Compact includes principles to foster distinctive, attractive, and safe places to live; and to build communities with educational, health care, and cultural amenities. The ECF 2060 Plan will focus investment into existing communities by promoting livable places to work, shop, and play. The plan was developed and is being implemented with focused outreach to distressed and marginalized communities, and identifies numerous opportunities for investment in these communities, with SunRail being at the forefront. These investments will be a catalyst for recovery from the economic recession which has impacted the region so profoundly, particularly lower-income and minority communities. The station area plans will accelerate planning for these neighborhoods, and ensure that the SunRail investment creates opportunities for all residents in these neighborhoods and communities.

*(d) Describe how the plan will leverage critical regional economic assets to advance sustainability.*

The Regional Growth Vision, the ECF 2060 Plan, and the CEDS have made a commitment to focus future economic growth in employment centers connected through multimodal transportation networks. SunRail will connect multiple communities and employment centers along a "Corridor of Commerce."

The station area plans will support sustainable and inclusive growth around SunRail stations, optimizing the rail asset and attracting investment to these corridors and station areas. Successful implementation of SunRail's first phase will build support for future extensions and for feeder transit routes, such as potential connections from Poinciana to Lakeland, from Orlando International Airport to Lake Nona Medical City, and from Lake County to Orlando – all contributing to a more connected region.

*(e) Describe how the plan will build inclusive communities free from discrimination, and advance access to economic opportunity for all segments of the population.*

The Regional Growth Vision and the ECF 2060 Plan both recognize the importance of diversity to the region's future economy and quality of life. SunRail is an important first step in this vision, because it will connect a wide range of diverse communities and allow workers to access jobs in 12 (and ultimately 17) station areas without relying on automobiles. The station areas all provide opportunities for businesses to relocate or expand to redevelopment areas in compact urban nodes surrounded by residential areas with a wide range of housing options as well as education, retail, and other services. Such mixed-use communities have been demonstrated around the country to attract creative class workers and support innovative businesses.

The six station areas selected for detailed planning all have a high proportion of minority and low-income populations within one mile of the station. The Altamonte Springs station in unincorporated Seminole County is a good example of how this project will impact a low-income community by improving access to transportation, jobs, affordable housing and health care. A one-mile buffer around the station reflects a high proportion of minority population (see map in Appendix). The project will provide data and technical analyses, and actively involve representatives of the community in making decisions about the future. The plans will seek to affirmatively further fair housing practices, and minimize neighborhood disruption and displacement in these areas.

## ***b2. Process to Improve or Further Develop Your Existing Sustainable Regional Plan or Vision.***

*(a) Describe how the consortium plans to engage a broad cross section of local communities, including low-income, minority, and economically disadvantaged communities, and what efforts will be made to ensure that such communities will have an effective role in the planning process and participate in a sustained manner throughout implementation. Describe plans to engage private sector and business interests that play significant roles in regional economic growth. Discuss previous challenges experienced in getting to the current level of cooperation in regional planning, how participating communities have implemented mechanisms and processes to overcome them, and existing and anticipated political challenges.*

The project will engage a broad cross section of residents, business leaders, elected officials, and stakeholders through a variety of methods that worked successfully as part of Regional Growth Vision and the ECF 2060 Plan. Key elements of this approach include:

- The Regional Coordinating Committee will recommend overall guidelines and best practices for community engagement across all aspects of this project. These may include traditional techniques such as public workshops as well as more innovative techniques such as telephone “town hall” meetings.
- Each Station Area Working Group will develop a specific outreach and engagement plan which will identify key groups and develop strategies to maximize the participation of each group, with emphasis on traditionally marginalized populations.
- The Central Florida Congress of Regional Leaders will provide a forum for obtaining input and feedback from elected officials representing the region's 7 counties and 86 cities.

- *myregion.org* and the Urban Land Institute will provide their expertise and networks for engaging key private sector leaders at appropriate points in the process.

Many of the region’s county and city governments, as well as the MPOs, have established procedures for public involvement, including provisions for meeting all applicable state and Federal laws. As one example, METROPLAN ORLANDO has developed a Title VI and a Limited English Proficiency Plan as part of its overall Public Involvement Plan. Orange County also has an extensive public involvement program, including provisions for its multilingual population. Such programs will provide guidance to public engagement activities for the stations addressed in the grant. The Regional Coordinating Committee will identify best practices in terms of public involvement plans, activities, and products, and share these practices so the entire region continually improves its methods for engaging all aspects of the community in planning decisions. The Consortium will explore how best to create and maintain a virtual library demonstrating effective techniques for engaging all segments of the community, and also how to facilitate access to translation services when needed. The Consortium also will define and track community engagement performance measures, building on measures adopted by FDOT and the MPOs. Example may include attendance and level of satisfaction with Consortium meetings and public meetings, and minority and low-income resident participation in project outreach through neighborhood and community meetings and Consortium meetings.

*(b) Identify any gaps in the existing regional plan or vision that need to be addressed and describe how the consortium plans to address them. These may include subject-matter gaps, such as affordable housing, fair housing, transportation, water infrastructure, climate change impact assessments, environmental justice, etc., or process gaps, such as use of scenario planning methods or broad-based and extensive community involvement. Describe what opportunities support from the grant program will make possible.*

As discussed earlier, the Regional Growth Vision and the ECF 2060 Plan have four major gaps:

1. Need for an accelerated process for moving from a regional plan to local action;
2. Need for affordable housing plans and fair housing assessments for key transit-oriented locations;
3. Need for closer linkage with economic development programs; and
4. Need for greater emphasis on equity and diversity.

Through its focus on the Phase I SunRail station areas, the grant will help address these gaps at specific locations and also build capacity for the region to eventually address these gaps in all communities. By developing community-level plans for six SunRail stations, the Consortium will demonstrate sustainable and inclusive development practices to the entire region, and accelerate transformative investments with regional impact. The affordable housing analysis will support housing plans for all 12 SunRail stations, and enhance tools for use across the region. The economic development elements of the plans will serve as prototypes for implementing the 2011 CEDS. The techniques used to ensure equitable participation in decision-making and equitable outcomes for all socioeconomic groups also will be transferrable across the region.

*(c) Describe what you have learned from assessments of existing conditions, plans, and policies in your region and how the consortium will use that information to further develop the existing plan. If such assessments are not complete, describe what work remains and how it will be accomplished.*

Through its ongoing review of local government comprehensive plan amendments and evaluation and appraisal reports, the ECFRPC has determined that many jurisdictions are conforming to the ECF 2060 Plan by including revised goals, objectives, and policies. However, some communities, such as those

surrounding the six station areas, need help updating their comprehensive plans to fully meet the goals of the ECF 2060 Plan. Specific gaps may include policies relating to:

- Integrating housing, land use, economic and workforce development, transportation, and infrastructure investments;
- Increasing economic competitiveness and revitalization;
- Promoting social equity, inclusion, and access to opportunity;
- Reducing energy use, greenhouse gas production and the related impacts of climate change;
- Improving public health; and
- Removing barriers to sustainable development for housing, economic development, transportation, and related environmental quality issues.

The six station area plans will provide prototypes for how individual communities, and the region as a whole, can implement these policies.

The ECFRPC recently completed an inventory of land use regulations, including allowable densities and floor-area-ratios, around the SunRail stations. Adopted comprehensive plans for many of the station areas already support transit-oriented development, but some local governments will require assistance with implementing specific land development regulations. The station area plans will recommend such regulatory changes.

The ECFRPC also has identified several Developments of Regional Impact (DRI) near the SunRail station areas. These large developments are subject to regional review as mandated by state statute. Plans are underway to transform these major developments into commuter hubs, walkable mixed use transit-oriented centers that will be well positioned to take advantage of SunRail and feeder routes. These already are recognized by local governments as appropriate places for such uses, and will be reflected in the station area plans.

*(d) Describe the specific steps that will be required to move from plan to action, including: changes to local zoning, building and energy codes, land use, financing, and development policies; work with MPOs and state agencies to realign transportation investments; solidifying regional agreements for water, waste, and natural resource management; launching employment initiatives that support regional workforce needs and programs targeting hard-to-reach populations that create a better jobs/housing balance; identifying capital improvement costs and financing strategies for specific area, transit corridor, water/wastewater service, or regional affordable housing plans; measures specifically identified to remediate longstanding environmental justice concerns, and/or conducting negotiations that formalize multijurisdictional agreements to implement elements of a RPSD. Be certain to identify challenges that are distinctive or defining in your region.*

Under Florida law, the ECF 2060 Plan, as the SRPP, is the master growth policy document for the region. The first step in implementing the ECF 2060 Plan is educating the dozens of local jurisdictions and providing them with the tools to advance specific policies contained in the Plan. Each local government has up to seven years from final adoption of the ECF 2060 Plan to submit an evaluation and appraisal report and recommend comprehensive plan amendments as needed to ensure consistency with the regional Plan. These educational, capacity building, and evaluation activities are ongoing, and will be accelerated by the resources of this grant.

The communities hosting SunRail stations have the specific responsibility for developing plans to coordinate land uses, ensure the availability of affordable housing, improve access to regional transit and to pedestrian and bicycle networks, and enhance access to employment, health care, and other services in

their particular area. These plans should be developed consistent with the ECF 2060 Plan – in some cases, before the host communities have completed their evaluation and appraisal processes. The grant will provide resources to accelerate and coordinate these activities.

Specific policy changes that may be identified through the station area plans or regional coordination include changes to local zoning, building and energy codes; land use, financing, and development policies; statewide, MPO, and local transportation plans; economic and workforce development programs; stormwater master plans; and housing plans. Recommendations may include changes to zoning codes and design guidelines to encourage compact, mixed-use development; implementation of the State of Florida’s transit-oriented development guidelines requiring increased densities, reduced off-street parking and increased floor area ratios; development and implementation of transportation design for livable community standards; or policies recommending that new construction around rail stations use best practices in sustainability. Such policies may be implemented by individual jurisdictions or by multijurisdictional agreements. The ECFPRC will maintain a record of these policy changes and work with the Consortium to identify and share best practices across the region.

Further, the Central Florida Regional Transportation Authority (LYNX) will evaluate bus ridership demands as they increase or change as a result of SunRail operations and station area development. Routes may be adjusted or new services offered to meet the needs of employers, the workforce, minority and low-income populations, and hard-to-reach neighborhoods.

*(e) Identify the kinds of catalytic projects that the consortium hopes will directly result from the execution of the RPSD. If the consortium has identified a specific project that it would like to explore further as a part of this planning grant, please describe its regional significance and relation to the other elements of the envisioned plan, local support for the project, project feasibility and design of the project, and how it will further enable adoption of this aspect of the regional plan when it is eventually built. In addition, applicants must provide a cost/benefit analysis of the specified project for which the applicant would like to invest resources from the grant. The cost/benefit analysis shall cover, at the minimum, the following: cash benefits (e.g., reduction of energy consumption, reduction of waste disposal costs); noncash benefits (e.g., reduction of green house gas emissions, improved accessibility to affordable housing); and costs (capital costs and associated maintenance costs). Applicants also must provide a description of how the catalytic project addresses the disparities identified in Rating Factor 2.*

The catalytic project is SunRail, the region’s first commuter rail system. The grant will support station area planning at six SunRail stations to address the gaps in the ECF 2060 Plan and accelerate its implementation. The station area work activities were identified by ECFRPC and the participating jurisdictions based on an assessment of existing local plans and regulations to identify gaps in each community’s readiness for a station. Table 1 identifies the specific projects in the proposed work plan.

The proposed tasks are focused around setting the framework for transit-oriented development in and around the proposed SunRail stations. A detailed cost/benefit analysis is difficult for the specific station area planning activities but the \$2.8 million of projects proposed in this grant application would support and enhance the full range of benefits identified in previous analyses of SunRail.

A Florida Department of Transportation study examined economic benefits of potential transit-oriented development at all 17 Phase I and II SunRail stations. The study estimated that development around the SunRail stations would create nearly 95,000 permanent jobs within a half-mile radius each station, with a total payroll impact of \$2.5 billion. The development would result in additional \$18.4 billion in property value in these areas. These benefits cannot be fully realized without the station area planning and land development regulation changes that are a primary focus for the proposed grant activities. The current land development regulations and existing patterns around these stations are lower density suburban patterns, which will not create the highly desirable economic benefits of transit-oriented development.

SunRail implementation will reduce vehicle-miles traveled (VMT), and increase mobility choices for local residents, workers, and visitors, including the transportation disadvantaged. Evaluations of transit-oriented development projects across the country show VMT reductions of up to 50 percent over conventional suburban development patterns. These would produce further benefits in terms of fuel consumption, air quality, and safety. These VMT reductions will occur only if the SunRail is implemented with higher densities and mixed uses near its stations.

**Table 1. Work Plan Summary**

<b>Work Activity</b>	<b>Lead Consortium Member</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Requested Grant Funding (Local Match)</b>
DeBary Station Area	City of DeBary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete an Affordable Workforce Housing Plan.</li> <li>• Design pedestrian/bicycle connections to SunRail Station.</li> <li>• Complete a Master Stormwater Plan along U.S. 17-92 to incentivize transit-oriented development at the SunRail station.</li> </ul>	\$200,000 (\$40,000)
Sanford Station Area	Seminole County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a station area plan that would facilitate the development of a core of commerce and sustainable compact urban development to increase economic competitiveness and reduce environmental impacts. The plan would evaluate the development opportunities of the station and surrounding area and consider the incorporation of transit-oriented development criteria, affordable housing criteria, job development opportunities, and multimodal mobility features in the area surrounding the station.</li> </ul>	\$100,000 (\$20,000)
Altamonte Springs Station Area	Seminole County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a station area plan similar to the Sanford project described above.</li> <li>• Design a bicycle/pedestrian connection between the Altamonte Springs SunRail station and the surrounding low-income and minority neighborhood.</li> </ul>	\$275,000 (\$55,000)
Longwood Station Area	City of Longwood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan and design mobility improvements, including pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly facilities and ancillary public infrastructure, and acquire right-of-way to complete and connect the SunRail station and its adjacent commercial development to jobs and neighborhoods within a half-mile walk or three-mile bike ride from the station.</li> </ul>	\$500,000 (\$100,000)

**Table 1. Work Plan Summary (continued)**

<b>Work Activity</b>	<b>Lead Consortium Member</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Requested Grant Funding (Local Match)</b>
LYNX Central Station Area	City of Orlando with Creative Village Development, LLC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide direct access to affordable housing from the station and to the residents of the greater Parramore neighborhood – a low-income, minority section of downtown Orlando – through the planning, design and permitting of two new public roadways and ancillary public infrastructure improvements within the transit-oriented, mixed-use, Creative Village Development, which in turn will facilitate the development of affordable, workforce housing.</li> <li>• Create opportunities for the residents of the Parramore neighborhood to access regional commerce through improved connectivity to the station and to facilitate the construction of office and educational development that will establish the Creative Village Development as a regional cluster of high-tech/digital commerce.</li> <li>• Improve multimodal (bike, pedestrian, transit) transportation opportunities between the station and the Parramore neighborhood.</li> </ul>	\$825,000 (\$165,000)
Sand Lake Station	Orange County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop Transportation Design for Livable Communities standards, initially for use at the station, but ultimately to be used throughout the County.</li> </ul>	\$150,000 (\$30,000)
Affordable Housing Study	Shimberg Center for Housing Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyze the 12 Phase I SunRail station areas to determine the need for affordable housing and assist the Consortium in developing strategies to reduce the combined burden of housing and transportation costs.</li> </ul>	\$200,000 (\$40,000)
Outreach and Equity	ECFRPC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate community outreach and engagement.</li> <li>• Develop and expand crosscutting policies to revitalize and engage minority and low-income neighborhoods.</li> </ul>	\$426,150 (\$85,230)
Consortium Management and Administration	ECFRPC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convene Consortium and Regional Coordinating Committee meetings.</li> <li>• Identify and share lessons learned.</li> <li>• Manage grant activities.</li> <li>• Report on progress.</li> </ul>	\$164,850 (\$32,970)
<b>Total Grant Request</b>	<b>ECFRPC</b>		<b>\$2,841,000</b> <b>(\$568,200)</b>

*(f) Explain how other public agencies, including state agencies and special districts, will be engaged to advance elements of the Regional Plan.*

As part of the grant, the ECFRPC will establish a Consortium management structure that will coordinate projects, integrate planning, develop and implement a stakeholder outreach strategy, build regional capacity, and strengthen existing and build new regional relationships. The Consortium management structure is described as part of Rating Factor 1. The tiered structure will allow for the involvement of regional and local agencies at the appropriate level through the Station Area Working Groups, the Regional Coordinating Committee, and the Consortium itself. The Consortium will leverage existing regional organizations, including the Central Florida Congress of Regional Leaders, the Central Florida Commuter Rail Commission, and the Central Florida MPO Alliance to engage leadership of regional and local agencies.

The ECF 2060 Plan, SunRail, and the activities outlined in this grant proposal reinforce strategic direction provided by Florida state agencies. This grant proposal is consistent with the goals and objectives of the recently adopted 2060 Florida Transportation Plan, and the participation of FDOT District 5 on the Consortium will ensure ongoing coordination with FDOT plans and programs. The Florida Governor and Legislature recently enacted legislation to create a new Department of Economic Opportunity to coordinate statewide economic development activities, including the community development functions of the former Florida Department of Community Affairs. This new department is charged with updating Florida's Strategic Plan for Economic Development in 2012. The Consortium will participate in this process to determine how best to align activities and leverage resources. Ongoing coordination also will occur with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and other resource agencies, using the State's Efficient Transportation Decision-making (ETDM) process as a tool for early coordination and review on the potential community and environmental impacts of any infrastructure investments proposed in the station areas.

### ***b3. Governance and Management.***

*(a) Describe the rationale for the selection of the partners applying for the Program, the commitment of each partner, and the strategy for incorporating any additional potential partners who may not currently be part of the consortium.*

The Consortium Partners for the proposed project were assembled because of their demonstrated commitment and leadership to implementation of the shared Regional Growth Vision and the ECF 2060 Plan. In addition, the partners are directly impacted by the geography of the planned SunRail stations and their influence areas, and have a vested interest in achieving the greatest leverage possible from the investments in those stations and the surrounding areas for their constituents. The selection of the Consortium members also reflects the diverse land use, housing, economic development, environmental, and transportation interests across the region. Together, the Consortium partners represent 100 percent of the population in the region.

The Appendix includes a list of committed Consortium members. Each Consortium member is committed to dedicate appropriate resources for successful project development and implementation. The Appendix also documents the memorandum of agreement (MOA) signed by committed consortium members.

The Consortium's membership may expand over time to encompass additional partners, including housing authorities and providers, neighborhood and citizen groups, economic development organizations, and additional representatives of traditionally marginalized communities. Upon receipt of the grant, Consortium members will enter into a Consortium agreement with the ECFRPC as lead applicant; additional Consortium members will sign this agreement as they join.

*(b) Describe the role each consortium member will play in executing your regional plan implementation process and the adjustments that need to be made to the existing structure and why these changes are necessary.*

Each Consortium member will be actively involved in the execution of the project. The Consortium includes subrecipients of the grant who would be actively engaged in leading specific tasks, along with supporting partners involved in coordinated work efforts. Rating Factor 1 defines the commitment and roles of each Consortium member.

As described in Rating Factor 1, the Consortium as a whole will meet on a periodic basis to review the overall progress and to identify and resolve key issues. Five local governments have been identified to lead the planning for the six SunRail stations identified in the grant application: City of DeBary, Seminole County (Sanford and Altamonte Springs stations), City of Longwood, City of Orlando in partnership with Creative Village Development, LLC (LYNX Central station), and Orange County (Sand Lake station). Each of these plans will include impacted local governments and key partners specific to each station. The Shimberg Center for Housing Studies will lead the affordable housing needs analysis, with support from the Nonprofit Housing Roundtable for Central Florida. The ECFRPC, the six station area leads, one or more of the region's MPOs, the Shimberg Center, *myregion.org*, the Urban Land Institute, and other interested Consortium members will form the Regional Coordinating Committee to address crosscutting issues and capacity building strategies. Because the grant funding would support planning at numerous sites which would thrive on citizen participation, the task of increasing public involvement and outreach will be shared among all Consortium members.

*(c) Detail the formal structure of the consortium, including its decision-making mechanisms and specific strategies to ensure that the perspectives of diverse and traditionally underrepresented populations directly influence the development and implementation of the Regional Plan for Sustainable Development. HUD will reserve five of the rating points for Governance and Management for this item.*

The Consortium structure is documented in the discussion under Rating Factor 1, and an organization chart is included in the Appendix. Key elements of the structure include:

- The East Central Florida Sustainable Communities Consortium;
- The ECFRPC, as the fiscal agent and project manager;
- The project Steering Committee, which will guide day-to-day decisions for the Consortium;
- Six Station Area Working Groups;
- A Regional Coordinating Committee; and
- An Affordable Housing Working Group.

Other working groups may be created by the Consortium if needed.

As discussed under Rating Factor 1, the Station Area Working Groups, Regional Coordinating Committee, and Consortium as a whole will strive for consensus on all decisions. Where consensus cannot be accomplished, the ECFRPC can provide support to resolve issues that may impede grant performance. Upon receipt of the grant, the Consortium will develop a statement of organization to detail the structure, membership, and procedures of its committees.

Particular attention will be provided throughout the process to including the perspectives of diverse and traditionally underrepresented communities. The focus of the work plan on station area planning near or adjacent to minority or lower-income neighborhoods will require the ongoing involvement of the directly impacted communities, but emphasis also will be given to underrepresented communities located near other SunRail stops or elsewhere in the region who may be directly impacted by future

investments, including the region's youth and young professionals. Previous processes in this region or around the country often have made an effort to seek input from traditionally underrepresented populations through targeted briefings and input sessions. This process will build on those activities, but also create meaningful involvement of these communities in the decision-making process by asking representatives of key groups to participate on the various Station Area Working Groups, the Regional Coordinating Committee, the Steering Committee, and the Consortium itself. The diverse leadership structure established by *myregion.org* is a model for how to accomplish this engagement.

*(d) Describe the budget resources that will be dedicated to ensuring that organizations that can deepen the diversity of participation in the planning process have the capacity to fulfill this aspect of outreach and engagement.*

Fifteen percent of the grant, or \$426,150, has been set aside for outreach and engagement activities intended to broaden and deepen the diversity of participation in the planning process. The ECFRPC, MPOs, Creative Village, *myregion.org*, and Orlando Health are examples of Consortium members with a demonstrated track record of engaging underrepresented portions of the community in planning and visioning for their future. The ECFRPC intends to hire a specialist and procure consultant services as needed to support these outreach activities.

*(e) Describe the data management plan, including how information will be collected and shared among participating agencies to ensure that decisions are well-informed and communicated across jurisdictions.*

Data management will be centrally located at the ECFRPC through its GIS capability. Central Florida GIS (CFGIS) is a program of the ECFRPC developed in partnership with FDOT in 2001. The program provides 700 GIS professionals and data map users in 10 counties with a forum to communicate and share data. Its web site, <http://www.cfgis.org>, is the repository for all GIS data in Central Florida. CFGIS benchmarks and evaluates data on economics, transportation, land use, natural resources, air quality, housing, and related topics, and also develops spatial mapping applications.

The ECFRPC has been storing extensive data sets for regional planning projects for nearly 50 years. During the drafting of the ECF 2060 Plan, data were managed by its professional planners and GIS specialists. Additionally, the ECFRPC will enhance its web site to provide updated information about the projects funded under this HUD grant. The ECFRPC will set up a dedicated project webpage and will feature project documents, public meeting announcements, video segments, and social networking links to encourage communication among Consortium members, stakeholders, government officials, project consultants, and the public.

*(f) Explain how you will ensure the implementation of the RPSD, including, if applicable, the identification of existing and future funding commitments.*

Implementation of the ECF 2060 Plan, as the region's RPSD, and recommendations of this project, will occur through multiple channels:

- Each Station Area Working Group will make specific recommendations on its site to the local government responsible for each station area, as well as to other participating partners in that site. As part of the Consortium, the lead local government shall give every consideration to implementing elements of station area plans that advance regional interests identified by the Consortium.
- As the lead applicant, the ECFRPC will facilitate integration of this project's recommendations into future implementation of and updates to the ECF 2060 Plan and the CEDS.
- Local governments will incorporate relevant recommendations into their comprehensive plans, capital improvement plans, transit development plans, affordable housing plans, economic development plans, and other plans as appropriate. The Congress of Regional Leaders will provide a forum for

discussing crosscutting policy issues. The ECFRPC will assist with the integration of recommendations into local government comprehensive plans through its review of Evaluation and Appraisal Reports, as discussed on page 7.

- The MPOs will integrate recommendations into their long-range transportation plan updates and transportation improvement programs, with the Central Florida MPO Alliance serving as a forum for discussion of crosscutting issues. The Central Florida Commuter Rail Commission can address recommendations specific to SunRail, and LYNX will address coordination with its existing transit services.
- Ongoing coordination with FDOT, the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, and other state agencies will assist with integration of recommendations into state agency plans.

The ECFRPC will maintain a master list of recommendations and commitments to enable tracking of progress over time.

#### ***b4. Project Completion Schedule.***

*(a) Describe the implementation schedule, including regular milestones necessary to achieve the critical actions, start and end dates for each activity, and expected metrics and results.*

The following schedule assumes a January 2012 kickoff to grant activities.

#### **Phase 1 – Project Initiation: January-June 2012 (Months 1 to 6)**

- Execute all Consortium agreement and subgrantee contracts.
- Establish and develop operating rules for the Consortium, the Regional Coordinating Committee, and the Station Area Working Groups.
- Develop public outreach strategy, including guidelines for station area plans.
- Enhance the CFGIS regional database to cover data management needs for the grant.
- Initiate development of a common set of transit-oriented planning and design guidelines for SunRail stations.

#### **Phase 2 – Project Expansion: July-December 2012 (Months 7-12)**

- Initiate individual contracts as needed for each of six station area plans.
- Initiate work on affordable housing model applicable to the region.
- Begin outreach to all elements of the community in each station area.
- Provide regular information sharing at all levels of the Consortium.

#### **Phase 3 – Analysis and Recommendations: January to December 2013 (Months 13 to 24)**

- Conduct extensive outreach to local communities; focus on marginalized community outreach, engagement and capacity building.
- Finalize individual station area plans.
- Develop affordable housing model applicable to the region.
- Determine the need for affordable housing proximate to each SunRail station.
- Provide regular information sharing at all levels of the Consortium.

#### **Phase 4 – Implementation: January to December 2013 (Months 25 to 36)**

- Work with local governments on adoption of station area plans.
- Develop regional housing implementation plan.
- Develop lessons learned from station area planning efforts and housing needs assessment.
- Share lessons learned with regional partners, including training programs.

*(b) Describe how the consortium will link elements of the existing RPSD to specific outcomes to be achieved in the next 18 to 36 months that resolve challenges identified in Factor 2 of this NOFA.*

The Consortium will regularly monitor progress on all grant activities and ensure the achievement of the following outcomes in the next 36 months:

- Adoption of station area plans for six SunRail stations. These plans will be consistent with the ECF 2060 Plan and the six Livability Principles.
- Assessment of affordable housing needs near all 12 Phase I SunRail stations, as well as the development strategies for encouraging the provision of needed affordable housing and ensuring compliance with fair housing laws.
- Alignment with economic and workforce development and business strategies to ensure the overall station area plans improve access to workers and customers and incentivize further investment in these communities.
- Alignment with state, regional, and local transportation plans to provide appropriate local transit, bicycle, and pedestrian connections to the SunRail stations.
- Identification of changes needed to local comprehensive plans and land development regulations to encourage sustainable, compact urban development in places identified in the station area plans.
- Development of specific strategies to ensure the station area plans help revitalize minority and/or low-income neighborhoods adjacent to the SunRail stations and provide equitable outcomes for all residents.
- Development of processes to integrate and leverage station area investments among state, regional, and local transportation, economic development, housing, community development, and other agencies, as well as the private and nonprofit sectors.
- Capacity building among Consortium members to share the lessons learned from this project and extend sustainable and inclusive development practices to other communities in the East Central Florida region.

*(c) Detail the mechanisms that will be used to advance economic opportunity for populations performing below the regional median, including and not limited to community monitoring agreements, employment development strategies, targeted neighborhood plans, and activities that affirmatively further fair housing.*

Transit-oriented development plans should ensure that lower-income populations benefit from both improved access to jobs and affordable housing opportunities that minimize combined costs for housing and transportation. Through the station area planning process funded by this grant, stakeholders (including local planners, officials, and community members) will identify economic and housing strategies most appropriate to the communities served by SunRail and the needs of their workers and residents. Examples of economic strategies that may be considered include siting of public facility investments in station areas, local employment requirements for publicly financed construction (including the rail project and any civic or publicly funded developments); zoning to ensure a diversity of job opportunities (e.g., mixed-use in core areas as well as some office and light manufacturing/industrial on the fringes of station areas); designating disadvantaged communities and making use of state and local economic incentive programs targeted at these communities; and targeted information and outreach to attract specific types of businesses.

Communities are increasingly recognizing the importance of preserving and expanding affordable housing near transit – providing mobility and access to jobs for those who need it most, increasing

transit ridership, and ensuring a diversity of populations within station areas even as land values rise. Strategies for ensuring production of new affordable housing include nonfinancial incentives such as density bonuses, zoning based on floor area ratios instead of number of units, and reducing parking requirements; financial incentives such as loans, grants, and tax abatements through tax increment financing or affordable housing trust funds; land investment by public and nonprofit agencies; and requirements such as inclusionary zoning requirements and affordability requirements where public financing is involved. Strategies for preserving existing affordable housing such as limiting condominium conversions, transfer taxes, and first right of refusal laws also are available. Strategies to affirmatively further fair housing will include training and outreach activities. Best practice strategies will be identified from leading regions such as California, New Jersey, and Oregon and stakeholders will identify strategies that can be adapted to the East Central Florida region.

### ***3c. Budget Proposal***

The Consortium is requesting \$2,841,000 in funding to implement the proposed project. The budget proposal is summarized in Table 1 and detailed in Form HUD424CBW. Consortium members have pledged \$568,200 (20 percent) in matching contributions. Recognizing the importance of outreach and equity, the Consortium will dedicate 15 percent of the total requested grant dollars to this task.

### ***3d. HUD's Departmental Policy Priorities***

#### **(1) Capacity Building and Knowledge Sharing**

##### *(a) Increase the skills and technical expertise of partner organizations*

The Consortium's work plan is structured to ensure the lessons learned are able to be applied in communities that will see future phases of SunRail or feeder transit services, as well others in the region that will benefit from sustainable development. Transit-oriented development and station area planning are relatively new concepts for many of the Consortium members and interested stakeholders. For the proposed project to be successful in the short and long term, an extensive capacity building strategy will be created to include a variety of stakeholders across East Central Florida. One of the early tasks will be to develop a three-year capacity building strategy to augment the expertise of Consortium members and planning staff of affected communities. At a minimum, the ECFRPC, with support from *myregion.org* and the Urban Land Institute, will develop resource materials on a project web site, initiate webinars about sustainable development best practices, and schedule presentations to interested stakeholders within affected communities. The capacity building strategy will proceed in a phased approach – from the initial six communities covered in this grant, to the remaining six SunRail Phase I station, then to the five SunRail Phase II stations, communities with feeder transit services, and other interested communities. The goal will be for all interested communities to gain the capacity to conduct similar sustainable development planning activities.

##### *(b) Share knowledge among partners*

The Consortium anticipates two parallel tracks for sharing knowledge:

- Regional data sharing and research outputs will be effectively and transparently communicated through CFGIS and its web site, <http://www.cfgis.org>, continuing an effort that has been in place for over 10 years between 10 counties and more than 700 members through monthly users' group meetings, newsletters, and workshops.
- Additionally, regular partner dialogues and workshops, and a structured peer exchange, will share lessons learned and project-related knowledge in general. This will be done through leverage of existing forums, including the Urban Land Institute, the Central Florida MPO Alliance, the Central

Florida Commuter Rail Commission, and others. The best practices and project findings will be collected and published on the project's web site.

## **(2) Expand Crosscutting Policy Knowledge**

The Consortium is committed to tracking and understanding which project elements and resulting development policies have demonstrated success, and to sharing that information with communities and agencies in Central Florida and elsewhere. Policy lessons learned during the planning process will be evaluated and distributed to a diverse range of potential audiences, including policy-makers, other regional consortia, and interested community leadership. The policy lessons learned during the planning process will be shared with the ECFRPC, the Congress of Regional Leaders, and the Central Florida MPO Alliance, Florida state agencies, and the Central Florida Delegation (12 members of the Florida Senate and 26 members of the House), among others. All Consortium members will receive a policy best practices briefing booklet, containing the policy lessons learned from this project. The Shimberg Center will create an executive summary of the affordable housing study's findings to be distributed to the groups mentioned above and through the capacity building activities.

## **4. Rating Factor 4: Match, Leveraging Resources, and Program Integration**

Consortium members have pledged \$568,200 (20 percent) in matching contributions to the requested grant. More significantly, the grant will leverage the \$357 million in committed Federal, state, and local capital investment in SunRail's first phase. The application also will leverage nearly \$23 million in Federal funding for BRT connections to the downtown Orlando SunRail stations, enhancements to Seminole County SunRail station facilities, and development of a trail providing bicycle and pedestrian access to downtown Orlando SunRail stations (see full list in Appendix). The Consortium will identify and coordinate with other Federal and state investments in the region as they are developed.

The grant activities will occur simultaneous with the updates of the region's five MPO long-range transportation plans, the ECFRPC's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies, and review or update of many of the region's comprehensive plans. The Consortium will maximize integration of these and other long-range planning activities to enable projects supporting multiple goals to move forward in a timely manner.

The Consortium's project and work plan are consistent with Federal and state sustainability policy and guidance. The sustainable communities programs of HUD, EPA, and DOT are examples of a number of Federal initiatives that strive to positively impact community development, providing for improved access to jobs and better connected, healthier communities. In Florida, FDOT together with the Department of Community Affairs (now Department of Economic Opportunity) published "A Framework for TOD in Florida" in March 2011, addressing many of the issues faced by the SunRail station area communities. Through the 2060 Florida Transportation Plan, FDOT has established a transportation vision for Florida's future that relies on a connected network of multimodal transportation facilities, with pedestrian, bicycle, and transit being key elements. The Department of Economic Opportunity's Strategic Plan is anticipated to further reinforce the importance of strategic transportation investments and quality places to support the State's economic goals.

## **5. Rating Factor 5: Achieving Results and Program Evaluation (18 points)**

### *(a) Mandatory Outcomes from the Creation of a Regional Plan for Sustainable Development*

The project will directly address the following mandatory outcomes:

- Increased participation and decision-making in implementing a long-range vision for the region by populations traditionally marginalized in public planning processes;

- Reduced social and economic disparities for the low-income, minority communities, and other disadvantaged populations within the target region;
- Decrease in per capita VMT and transportation-related emissions for the region;
- Decrease in overall combined housing and transportation costs per household;
- Increased proportion of low- and very low-income households within a 30-minute transit commute of major employment centers; and
- Increase in the share of residential and commercial construction on underutilized infill development sites that encourage revitalization, while minimizing displacement in neighborhoods with significant disadvantaged populations.

The project also will further implementation of the ECF 2060 Plan, which addresses the other mandatory outcomes related to regional transportation, housing, water, and air quality plans that are deeply aligned and tied to local comprehensive land use and capital investment plans; and aligned Federal planning and investment resources that mirror the local and regional strategies for achieving sustainable communities.

*(b) Additional potential outcomes from establishing a Regional Plan for Sustainable Development*

Additional outcomes from this project include: the transformation of marginalized neighborhoods into highly accessible communities that provide opportunity for improved jobs, education, health and other amenities; affordable housing access in reinvigorated station areas that also have high-quality transit accessibility; improved public health outcomes from safer and more walkable neighborhoods; and more efficient use of urban land and infrastructure systems.

The Consortium will develop a performance monitoring plan, including specific indicators that can be tracked over time to assess progress toward the desired outcomes as well as the overall goals of the Regional Growth Vision and the ECF 2060 Plan. Indicators and benchmarks may include:

- Proportion of the region paying more than 45 percent of income for combined housing and transportation costs;
- Amount of new development (housing units, square feet of commercial space by type, etc.) in station areas and consistency of this development with adopted plans;
- Number of new jobs in station areas;
- Amount of new housing in station areas that meet affordability criteria;
- Vehicle-miles traveled per capita;
- Percent of trips using SunRail or other forms of public or nonmotorized transportation; and
- Citizen participation in and satisfaction with planning decisions.

These will be evaluated to determine if region is proceeding toward the Regional Growth Vision and the ECF 2060 Plan. Outcomes will be tracked for the region as a whole, for the specific SunRail communities, and for minority and low-income communities, subject to data availability.