



APALACHEE REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS REGIONAL IMPACT

**FULL COUNCIL BOARD MEETING
340th Public Meeting
Thursday, March 27th, 2025
10:00am EST/ 9:00am CT**

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**Ricky Jones, Chair – Franklin
 Quincee Messersmith , Vice Chair – Wakulla
 Jack Porter, Secretary/Treasurer – City of Tallahassee
 John Jones, Past Chairman – City of Monticello**

**FRCA POLICY BOARD MEMBERS:
 Jack Porter, Rick Minor, and Lisa Miller**

FULL COUNCIL

Calhoun County

Darryl O’Bryan County Commissioner
 Martha “Mert” Stephens Councilwoman, City of Blountstown

Franklin County

Ricky Jones County Commissioner
 Sebrina Brown Mayor, City of Carrabelle

Gadsden County

Brenda Holt County Commissioner
 Evelyn Goldwire Commissioner, City of Gretna

Gulf County

Sandy Quinn, Jr. County Commissioner
 Johnny Paul Commissioner, City of Wewahitchka
 Michael Hammond Governor’s Appointee

Jackson County

Paul Donofro County Commissioner
 Kim Applewhite Councilwoman, Town of Grand Ridge

Jefferson County

John Jones Councilman, City of Monticello
 Jessica Gramling County Commissioner

Leon County

Rick Minor County Commissioner
 Jack Porter Commissioner, City of Tallahassee
 Lisa Miller Governor’s Appointee

Liberty County

Doyle Brown County Commissioner
 Jennifer Hudgins Councilwoman, City of Bristol

Wakulla County

Quincee Messersmith County Commissioner
 Steve Remke Commissioner, City of St. Marks

Ex-Officio Members

Kristine Morris Fl. Dept. of Environmental Protection
 Darryl Boudreau NW Fl. Water Management District
 Tanya Branton Fl. Dept. of Transportation
 Diane Scholz Florida Commerce
 Greg Slay CRPTA

APALACHEE REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL
FULL COUNCIL BOARD MEETING
THURSDAY – MARCH 27, 2025
10:00 AM EST / 9:00 AM CT
[Click here to join the meeting.](#)

Meeting ID: 245 461 820 442

Passcode: hc2hg2Qd

1. Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance, and Introductions
2. **Approval of Agenda** **3**
3. **Approval of Minutes – January 30th, 2025 Board Meeting** **4**
4. Apalachee Strong Resilience Collaborative Update – ARPC Staff
5. ARPC Economic Impact Dashboard Overview – ARPC Staff
6. Executive Director’s Report – ARPC Chris Rietow, Executive Director **8**
 - A. **Financial Report** **9**
 - B. Staff Program Reports
 1. Economic Development & Community Planning **11**
 2. Emergency Planning **13**
 3. Revolving Loan Fund **15**
 4. Transportation Planning **17**
 5. Environmental Planning **20**
 6. GIS Program **21**
 7. Housing Program **24**
 8. Communications **26**
 9. Growth Management **27**
 - C. SB 1264 & HB 1125
 - D. **Resolution 25-04** **39**
 - E. Rural Renaissance Legislation
7. Board Member Reports / Local & Regional Issues Discussion
8. Ex-Officio Member Updates
9. Public Comment
10. Adjournment

Next ARPC Board Meeting – May 29th, 2025

**APALACHEE REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL
FULL COUNCIL BOARD MEETING
THURSDAY – JANUARY 30TH, 2024
10:00 AM EST/ 9:00 AM CT**

Call to Order and General Business

- Commissioner Ricky Jones called the meeting to order at 10:05 am.
- Quorum confirmed.
- Pledge

ARPC Board Members in Attendance

Ricky Jones	Franklin County Commissioner
Sebrina Brown	Commissioner, City of Carrabelle
Evelyn Goldwire	Mayor, City of Gretna
Johnny Paul	Gulf Commissioner, City of Wewahitchka
Michael Hammond	Governor’s Appointee
Paul Donofro	Jackson County Commissioner
John Jones	Councilman, City of Monticello
Jack Porter	Commissioner, City of Tallahassee
Lisa Miller	Governor’s Appointee
Doyle Brown	Liberty County Commissioner
Quincee Messersmith	Wakulla County Commissioner

Ex-Officio Members in Attendance

Tanya Branton – FL Dept. of Transportation
Darryl Boudreau – NW FL Water Management District
Kristine Morris – Florida Department of Environmental Protection

ARPC Staff in Attendance

Josh Adams – Environmental Planning Manager
Austin Britt – Transportation Planner
Evan Blythe – Environmental Project Manager
Kwentin Eastberg – Deputy Director
Melissa Franklin – Communications Coordinator
Juliette Kearce – Finance Administrator
Divina Lade – Geospatial Planning Manager
Khalig Atakishiyev – GIS Specialist
Christian Levings – Emergency Planning Manager
Isabella Marmanidis – Housing Coordinator
Rick McCraw – Senior Planner
Mary O’Brien – Transportation Planning Manager
Logan Patten – LEPC Coordinator
Monica Pitts – Finance & Human Resources Director
Chris Rietow – Executive Director
Caroline Smith – Economic Development Manager
Justin Stiell – Growth Management Senior Planner
Marcus Thompkins – Housing Coordinator



Tom Thompson – Commuter Assistance Coordinator
Matthew Vossler – RLF Manager
Josh Pasqualone – ARPC Legal Counsel
Lydia Johnson – Environmental Planner

Others in Attendance

Jim McShane – CareerSource Capital Region
Sean Lewis – Florida Commerce
Greg Slay – CRTPA
Brian Waterman – HDR Engineering
Suzanne Lex – CRTPA
Vanessa Spaulding – Tallahassee International Airport
Cheri Gilmore – Florida Commerce
Brandy Hawkins – TSC
Kenneth Johnson – RD, FL
Jack Kostrzewa - CRTPA
Andrew Greene – RD-FL
Craig Williams
Dre Dixon
Andrew Greene
Ben Pingree – Tallahassee International Airport

Approval of Agenda

*Councilman Jones moved to approve agenda as presented.
Commissioner Donofro seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.*

Approval of Board Minutes

*Councilman Jones moved to approve the October 2024 Board Meeting Minutes.
Governor Appointee Micheal Hammond seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.*

Annual ARPC Program Refresher

ARPC program managers provided the Board with an overview of the various programs within ARPC and the benefits and services available to our member governments.

Apalachee Regional Planning Council is dedicated to fostering regional resiliency & enhancing the quality of life throughout our nine-county Region. With a strong focus on collaboration & community engagement, ARPC serves as a vital resource for local governments, businesses, and residents, offering comprehensive planning, research, and technical assistance services.

ARPC works closely with its member counties to secure funding and address a wide range of regional issues, such as:

- transportation

- land use
- economic development
- housing & community development
- GIS
- emergency planning
- and environmental planning.

By facilitating effective communication and cooperation among stakeholders, ARPC helps shape long-term strategies and policies that promote balanced growth and preservation of natural resources. For more information on the services and benefits of ARPC, please visit arpc.org.

FY 2023-2024 Annual Report

With a staff of 23 people spanning nine programs, ARPC services a Region that covers over 6,700 square miles, home to nearly half a million people. So, we stay pretty busy around here! During the 2023 - 2024 fiscal year, ARPC staff utilized just over \$87,000 in member dues to generate a return of more than \$6.5 million in additional funding. This results in a Regional ROI of \$73 to \$1!

Innovation is an essential part of ARPC's success. From overseeing the largest living shoreline in the state, to developing an online planning platform for healthcare agencies statewide, our staff's collective expertise continues to have a lasting impact throughout the Region and beyond. As the needs and challenges of the Region evolve, so do we! One of ARPC's up and coming programs is Apalachee Strong, a Regional Resilience Collaborative. Throughout our communities, resiliency efforts become ever more essential. As such, ARPC's Resiliency Officers will be working to ensure that the Apalachee Region is fully prepared for the challenges of tomorrow! Please take a moment to review the full 2023-2024 ARPC Annual Report!

Executive Director Report

Financial Reports

Governor Appointee Micheal Hammond moved to approve the ARPC Financial Summary, ARPC Budget Amendment, and Signature Authorization Resolution 25-01. Councilman Jones seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.

Staff Program Reports

- Transportation Planning: ARPC staff provided an overview of the Technical Advisory Committee Project List, the 2025-2045 Apalachee Regional Rural Transportation Plan, and Resolutions 25-02 and 25-03.

Commissioner Messersmith moved to approve Resolution 25-02 and 25-03. Councilman Jones seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.

FRCA Policy Board Meeting Recap: The Florida Regional Councils Association is now a 501.c4. This allows FRCA to apply for grant funding directly. FRCA member dues cover the cost of a lobbyist, as well as a Statewide Executive Director.

2025 ARPC Officer Elections

Board members held elections for ARPC’s 2025 Officers, and the results are in! Commissioner Ricky Jones has been reelected as Chair, Commissioner Quincee Messersmith has been elected Vice Chair, and Commissioner Jack Porter was elected Secretary/Treasurer. Congratulations, and thank you all for your service to the Apalachee Region!

Councilman Jones nominated Ricky Jones and Jack Porter. Commissioner Doyle Brown nominated Messersmith for Vice Chair. Motions passed unanimously.

New Ex-Officio Member – To better serve the Region, ARPC Board has unanimously agreed to appoint Greg Slay, Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency.

Commissioner Messersmith moved to appoint Greg Slay as an Ex-Officio Member. Councilman Jones seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

The Board was presented with a letter approving transfer of administrative responsibilities to Big Bend Continuum of Care.

Governor Appointee Micheal Hammond motioned to approve the transfer of responsibilities. Commissioner Donofro seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Next Board Meeting on March 27th, 2025.

Meeting adjourned at 11:56am

APPROVED BY: THE APALACHEE REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL
MEETING IN REGULAR SESSION ON MARCH 27TH, 2025.

SIGNED:

ATTEST:

Ricky Jones
Chair

Chris Rietow
Executive Director

The following items will be reported and discussed with the Board:

A. Financial Reports: Included in the Board Packet are the following items for Board review and approval:

- **FY 2023/2024 Expense Summary for January & February**

B. Staff Reports: Staff program reports are included on the following pages. Staff will be present at the meeting to answer any questions and report on any additional program updates.

C. SB 1264 & HB 1125: Summary on recent legislation and potential impacts on Regional Planning Councils.

D. Resolution 25-04: Discussion of resolution that establishes ARPC's opposition to language in SB 1264 & HB 1125.

E. Rural Renaissance Legislation: Summary on SB 110 and HB 1427 legislation that will greatly benefit rural counties in the state. See attached memorandum from Senator Albritton.

ACTIONS NEEDED

- **Motion to approve the Financial Summary through February 2025**
- **Motion to approve Resolution 25-04.**

Apalachee Regional Planning Council
Revenue & Expenses 24/25 \$ 107,430.19 Balance 10/1/24

LINE-ITEM	Total	10/24	11/24	12/24	1/25	2/25
General Revenue	22,750.00	-	-	-	22,750.00	-
EDA Planning	-	-	-	-	-	-
EDA Disaster Relief Coordination (DRC)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Safe Streets & Roads for All (SS4A)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Jacob City Broadband	-	-	-	-	-	-
Revolving Loan Fund - REVIVE - OEV Admin	-	-	-	-	-	-
Town of Havana	4,351.25	1,805.46	-	2,545.79	-	-
Liberty County Planner	17,087.65	-	-	8,063.25	-	9,024.40
Franklin County Planner	40,000.00	-	-	20,000.00	-	20,000.00
Jackson (RIF) GM	31,000.00	-	-	31,000.00	-	-
City of Chattahoochee	455.00	455.00	-	-	-	-
Calhoun GIS	1,287.50	-	662.50	-	-	625.00
Franklin GIS	3,750.00	-	-	-	3,750.00	-
Gadsden GIS	7,500.00	-	-	-	-	7,500.00
Wakulla LMS	-	-	-	-	-	-
FDEM - Hazards Analyses	7,939.02	-	-	7,939.02	-	-
FDEM - HMEP Planning	19,461.04	-	-	-	19,461.04	-
FDEM - HMEP Training (Pass-Through)	26,578.00	-	-	-	26,578.00	-
FDEM - LEPC Support Staff	33,300.00	-	13,050.00	-	-	20,250.00
Big Bend Healthcare - Admin	38,309.58	-	-	-	38,309.58	-
Big Bend HealthCare Coalition (Pass-through)	182,123.50	91,037.00	-	49.50	91,037.00	-
Wakulla CDBG Shelter	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wakulla Risk	25,200.00	-	-	25,200.00	-	-
FDEM Cyber	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hurricane Milton Assistance	-	-	-	-	-	-
Regional Resiliency Entity Grant 24/25	-	-	-	-	-	-
Franklin Vulnerability Assessments	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gadsden Vulnerability Assessments	-	-	-	-	-	-
Franklin 98 - ARPC Admin	-	-	-	-	-	-
Franklin 98 - Project (Pass-through)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Riparian County Stakeholder Coalition (RCSC)	5,700.00	5,700.00	-	-	-	-
FDEP - Small Quantity Generator (SQG)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Calhoun SHIP	17,500.00	-	8,750.00	-	-	8,750.00
Gulf SHIP	-	-	-	-	-	-
Jackson SHIP	26,819.10	11,470.38	7,674.36	-	-	7,674.36
Jackson HHRP	330,353.24	186,053.24	72,150.00	-	-	72,150.00
CTD - Transportation Disadvantaged	90,534.04	56,685.96	-	-	26,246.66	7,601.42
FDOT - RideOn	41,099.52	-	41,099.52	-	-	-
FDOT - RRTIP D3	68,000.00	33,000.00	-	-	-	35,000.00
FDOT - RRTIP D3 Maintenance	-	-	-	-	-	-
ARPC County Dues	98,239.10	-	-	33,287.15	20,886.83	44,065.12
FRCA Admin Fees	34,334.32	10,566.39	-	-	12,162.21	11,605.72
FRCA - (Pass-through)	-	-	-	-	-	-
General Project Pass-through	312,625.91	2,645.34	-	145,391.62	94,296.56	70,292.39
Interest Accrued	1,718.45	233.43	659.71	314.43	267.93	242.95

FINANCIALS

TOTAL REVENUE	1,488,016.22	399,652.20	144,046.09	273,790.76	355,745.81	314,781.36
General Expenses						
Salaries	703,814.69	176,603.65	126,205.20	156,043.92	122,783.91	122,178.01
Fringe Benefits	206,894.26	33,910.03	37,920.85	51,344.05	41,149.50	42,569.83
Travel - Direct	7,291.53	1,793.46	2,245.09	2,066.59	527.00	659.39
Travel - Indirect	1,271.03	342.91	53.40	494.71	212.86	167.15
Travel - FRCA	-	-	-	-	-	-
Accounting (QuickBooks and Assoc. Fees)	1,674.68	313.81	695.76	490.50	69.36	105.25
Accounting (Public Trust CPAs)	3,989.25	-	1,740.00	-	495.00	1,754.25
Advertising	1,282.05	-	20.58	617.63	608.70	35.14
Audit	2,000.00	2,000.00	-	-	-	-
Banking Fees	1,784.51	340.90	348.88	387.59	343.60	363.54
Big Bend HealthCare Coalition (Pass-through)	182,693.50	570.00	91,037.00	49.50	91,037.00	-
Board Meeting Expenses	1,237.67	373.80	99.87	515.95	171.77	76.28
Consultants (Contract Required)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dues (FRCA, NADO, SERDI)	13,655.00	6,550.00	800.00	-	6,250.00	55.00
EDA Match	6,681.61	5,111.07	424.75	949.85	-	195.94
Equipment Lease (Copier, Postage Machine)	4,005.81	752.83	1,066.70	647.60	647.60	891.08
F-98 Consultants (Pass-through)	-	-	-	-	-	-
FLEET	424.04	105.75	-	231.01	-	87.28
FRCA - Pass-through	27,827.66	5,629.24	5,118.31	5,454.44	6,138.36	5,487.31
HMEP-T Consultants (Pass-through)	3,053.83	-	1,953.83	-	1,100.00	-
Insurance (Work Comp, Liability, Drone)	20,887.37	8,988.87	1,520.00	-	10,378.50	-
Internet	1,445.00	289.00	289.00	289.00	289.00	289.00
IT Tech Support & Equip	15,061.55	6,693.65	2,086.25	2,114.34	2,854.29	1,313.02
Legal	14,392.50	-	5,220.00	-	8,002.50	1,170.00
Licenses (REMI)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Licenses (ESRI)	8,314.25	-	-	-	-	8,314.25
Miscellaneous	1,100.70	-	-	-	1,033.20	67.50
Office Janitorial	1,500.00	300.00	300.00	300.00	300.00	300.00
Office Supplies	12,416.97	2,526.09	1,328.93	4,266.66	1,599.44	2,695.85
Postage	75.00	-	-	75.00	-	-
Professional Development	650.00	-	-	-	425.00	225.00
Project Expenses (Pass-Through)	239,878.71	4,373.84	1,406.96	99,696.88	813.57	133,587.46
Rent	52,454.79	20,832.82	10,538.15	-	21,083.82	-
Reserves (from ARPC to Reserves)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Subscriptions & Publications	264.46	19.99	-	114.48	-	129.99
Telephone (office, cell, fax)	6,224.61	1,241.06	1,279.34	1,101.24	1,532.89	1,070.08
Utilities	2,453.41	545.69	570.92	-	874.50	462.30
Contingency	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL EXPENSES	1,546,700.44	280,208.46	294,269.77	327,250.94	320,721.37	324,249.90
		10/24	11/24	12/24	1/25	2/25

\$ 48,745.97 Balance 2/28/25

FINANCIALS

Apalachee Regional Planning Council
Budget Report as of 2/28/25

Bal. 1/31/25
58,214.51

Bal. 9/30/24
 107,430.19

LINE-ITEM	FY 24/25 Draft Budget	February 2025	FY-To-Date as of 2/28/25	Budget Balance	Budget Used
General Revenue					
EDA Planning	70,000	-	22,750.00	47,250	33%
EDA Disaster Relief Coordination (DRC)	100,000	-	-	100,000	0%
Safe Streets & Roads for All (SS4A)	248,900	-	-	248,900	0%
Jacob City Broadband	40,500	-	-	40,500	0%
Revolving Loan Fund - REVIVE - OEV Admin	25,000	-	-	25,000	0%
Town of Havana	20,000	-	4,351.25	15,649	22%
Liberty County Planner	42,000	9,024.40	17,087.65	24,912	41%
Franklin County Planner	80,000	20,000.00	40,000.00	40,000	50%
Jackson (RIF) GM	31,000	-	31,000.00	-	100%
City of Chattahoochee	3,500	-	455.00	3,045	13%
Calhoun GIS	15,000	625.00	1,287.50	13,713	9%
Franklin GIS	15,000	-	3,750.00	11,250	25%
Gadsden GIS	15,000	7,500.00	7,500.00	7,500	50%
Wakulla LMS	15,000	-	-	15,000	0%
FDEM - Hazards Analyses	26,850	-	7,939.02	18,911	30%
FDEM - HMEP Planning	15,000	-	19,461.04	[4,461]	130%
FDEM - HMEP Training (Pass-Through)	35,000	-	26,578.00	8,422	76%
FDEM - LEPC Support Staff	90,000	20,250.00	33,300.00	56,700	37%
Big Bend Healthcare - Admin	224,600	-	38,309.58	186,290	17%
Big Bend HealthCare Coalition (Pass-through)	139,470	-	182,123.50	[42,654]	131%
Wakulla CDBG Shelter	15,000	-	-	15,000	0%
Wakulla Risk	12,500	-	-	12,500	0%
FDEM Cyber	105,000	-	-	105,000	0%
FDEM - Hurricane Milton Assistance	25,200	-	25,200.00	-	100%
Regional Resiliency Entity Grant 24/25	220,000	-	-	220,000	0%
Franklin Vulnerability Assessments	175,000	-	-	175,000	0%
Gadsden Vulnerability Assessments	157,500	-	-	157,500	0%
Franklin 98 - ARPC Admin	155,000	-	-	155,000	0%
Franklin 98 - Project (Pass-through)	6,500,000	-	-	6,500,000	0%
Riparian County Stakeholder Coalition (RCSC)	5,700	-	5,700.00	-	100%
FDEP - Small Quantity Generator (SQG)	36,500	-	-	36,500	0%
Calhoun SHIP	35,000	8,750.00	17,500.00	17,500	50%
Gulf SHIP	28,000	-	-	28,000	0%
Jackson SHIP	45,800	7,674.36	26,819.10	18,981	59%
Jackson HHRP	288,600	72,150.00	330,353.24	[41,753]	114%
CTD - Transportation Disadvantaged	209,905	7,601.42	90,534.04	119,371	43%
FDOT - Ride On	215,909	-	41,099.52	174,809	19%
FDOT - RRTTP D3	90,500	35,000.00	68,000.00	22,500	75%

FINANCIALS

FDOT - R RTP D3 Maintenance	30,000	-	-	-	30,000	0%
ARPC County Dues	141,800	44,065.12	98,239.10	43,561	43,561	69%
FRCA Admin Fees	15,770	11,605.72	34,334.32	[18,564]	[18,564]	218%
FRCA - (Pass-through)	70,000	-	-	70,000	70,000	0%
General Project Pass-through	150,000	70,292.39	312,625.91	[162,626]	[162,626]	208%
Interest Accrued	10,000	242.95	1,718.45	8,282	8,282	17%
TOTAL REVENUE	9,990,504	314,781.36	1,488,016.22	8,502,488	8,502,488	15%
General Expenses						
Salaries	1,639,665	122,178.01	703,814.69	935,850	935,850	43%
Fringe Benefits	522,355	42,569.83	206,894.26	315,461	315,461	40%
Travel - Direct	35,000	659.39	7,291.53	27,708	27,708	21%
Travel - Indirect	2,000	167.15	1,271.03	729	729	64%
Travel - FRCA	1,200	-	-	1,200	1,200	0%
Accounting (QuickBooks and Assoc. Fees)	9,700	105.25	1,674.68	8,025	8,025	17%
Accounting (Public Trust CPAs)	6,690	1,754.25	3,989.25	2,701	2,701	60%
Advertising	1,500	35.14	1,282.05	218	218	85%
Audit	24,000	-	2,000.00	22,000	22,000	8%
Banking Fees	5,200	363.54	1,784.51	3,415	3,415	34%
Big Bend HealthCare Coalition (Pass-through)	139,470	-	182,693.50	[43,224]	[43,224]	131%
Board Meeting Expenses	3,000	76.28	1,237.67	1,762	1,762	41%
Consultants (Contract Required)	20,000	-	-	20,000	20,000	0%
Dues (FRCA, NADO, SERDI)	30,000	55.00	13,655.00	16,345	16,345	46%
EDA Match	30,000	195.94	6,681.61	23,318	23,318	22%
Equipment Lease (Copier, Postage Machine)	10,000	891.08	4,005.81	5,994	5,994	40%
F-98 Consultants (Pass-through)	6,500,000	-	-	6,500,000	6,500,000	0%
FLEET	2,000	87.28	424.04	1,576	1,576	21%
FRCA - Pass-through	70,000	5,487.31	27,827.66	42,172	42,172	40%
HMEP-T Consultants (Pass-through)	35,000	-	3,053.83	31,946	31,946	9%
Insurance (Work Comp, Liability, Drone)	35,400	-	20,887.37	14,513	14,513	59%
Internet	3,500	289.00	1,445.00	2,055	2,055	41%
IT Tech Support & Equip	49,000	1,313.02	15,061.55	33,938	33,938	31%
Legal	8,000	1,170.00	14,392.50	[6,393]	[6,393]	180%
Licenses (REMI)	5,550	-	-	5,550	5,550	0%
Licenses (Enterprise)	6,500	8,314.25	8,314.25	[1,814]	[1,814]	128%
Miscellaneous	500	67.50	1,100.70	[601]	[601]	220%
Office Janitorial	3,600	300.00	1,500.00	2,100	2,100	42%
Office Supplies	15,000	2,695.85	12,416.97	2,583	2,583	83%
Postage	300	-	75.00	225	225	25%
Professional Development	5,000	225.00	650.00	4,350	4,350	13%
Project Expenses (Pass-Through)	113,780	133,587.46	239,878.71	[126,099]	[126,099]	211%
Rent	126,000	-	52,454.79	73,545	73,545	42%

FINANCIALS

Reserves (from ARPC to Reserves)	20,000	-	-	20,000	0%
Subscriptions & Publications	300	129.99	264.46	36	88%
Telephone (office, cells, fax)	13,760	1,070.08	6,224.61	7,535	45%
Utilities	7,000	462.30	2,453.41	4,547	35%
Contingency	102,805	-	-	102,805	0%
TOTAL EXPENSES	9,602,775	324,249.90	1,546,700.44	8,056,075	16%
	2/28/2025	48,745.97	48,745.97	2/28/2025	
	Operating Acct. Balance 2/28/25		48,745.97		

(0.00)

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT / COMMUNITY PLANNING PROGRAM**Caroline Smith****PROGRAM STAFFING ANNOUNCEMENT**

We are excited to announce that Ms. Isabella Marmanidis has joined the ARPC Economic Development Program, where she will serve as Economic Development Planner. She previously worked in the ARPC Housing Program.

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

For support with grant application preparation, please contact Caroline Smith, ARPC Economic Development Manager, at csmith@arpc.org. Recent grant application activities include:

- U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) Disaster Recovery Coordination Grant: ARPC staff applied for and received a 5-year federal funding award for \$500,000 to conduct disaster resiliency work in the Region. A variety of activities will be conducted under this funding, including an overhaul of the Apalachee Online website.
- U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Grant: ARPC Economic Development staff partnered with ARPC Transportation staff to apply for multi-year project funding to create a Regional Safety Action Plan that would complement work currently underway for the Rural Regional Transportation Plan (RRTP). ARPC was awarded 2-year federal funding in the amount of \$497,839. Project activities are paused pending federal agency changes.
- Florida Department of State Division of Historical Resources (DHR) Small Matching Grant: ARPC staff applied for the DHR Small Matching Grant on behalf of Chattahoochee Main Street to cover the cost of an engineering inspection on their new Main Street building. Awards will be determined during the current state legislative session.
- Florida Commerce Rural Infrastructure Fund (RIF) Grant: ARPC staff are monitoring the next RIF application cycle, which is anticipated to open in early summer 2025. Grant funding may be used for planning, engineering, and construction projects. No match is required.
- Florida Commerce Community Planning Technical Assistance (CPTA) and Competitive Florida Partnership Grants: ARPC staff are accepting requests for assistance with applications for the upcoming CPTA Grant and Competitive Florida Partnership Grant funding cycles. The application cycles are anticipated to open by April 2025. Both grants can be used to fund economic development planning activities.

WORKSHOPS, FACILITATIONS, AND MEETINGS

- RPC Coordination: ARPC Economic Development staff are planning a statewide RPC training on economic modelling. The training will be hosted centrally at Tampa Bay RPC.
- Gadsden County Economic Development Plan: ARPC staff are working with Gadsden County staff on adoption of the final Gadsden County Economic Development Plan.



MEETING PARTICIPATION

- ARPC staff participated in meetings for organizations across the Region, including Opportunity Florida, Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI), Wakulla County Economic Development Council (EDC), Economic Security Committee for the Leon County Commission on the Status of Women and Girls (CSWG), and the Alliance of Entrepreneur Resource Organizations (AERO).
- National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) Emerging Leaders Program: NADO’s cohort of emerging leaders from the U.S. Economic Development Administration’s (EDA) Austin Region recently visited the Apalachee Region. ARPC staff led the NADO cohort on a tour of the Franklin-98 Living Shoreline project as well as the Wakulla Environmental Institute (WEI), which was partially EDA-funded. The purpose of the tour was to demonstrate the growth and impact of a strong regional development organization.

ACTIVE PROJECTS

- Gadsden County Economic Development Plan: ARPC staff continue activities toward the updating of Gadsden County’s Economic Development Plan. Adoption of the Plan is expected in 2025.
- St. Marks Master Planning with Florida State University (FSU) Department of Urban and Regional Planning: ARPC staff are coordinating an FSU student project with the City of St. Marks in which the students will work during the spring 2025 semester to propose a set of site alternatives for a new St. Marks Master Plan.
- Project Preparation: ARPC staff are currently working on Florida Commerce grant applications as well as project activities for newly awarded grant projects.

REGIONAL HAZARDOUS MATERIALS PROGRAM

ARPC staffs the Apalachee Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC), which is responsible for implementing the federal Emergency Planning and the Community Right-To-Know Act (EPCRA) for the ARPC Region. The four primary activities of the Apalachee LEPC are hazardous materials planning, training, emergency exercises, and public outreach.

Quarterly Meetings

ARPC staff held the Quarter 2 meeting of the Apalachee LEPC at the Tallahassee Fire Training Division on March 25th. The LEPC discussed its upcoming trainings and reviewed the Hazard Analysis Site visits data. Following up on member requests, ALEPC staff will also discuss concerns with rail car freight movement through the Region.



Hazardous Materials Training

The Apalachee LEPC sends attendees annually to the Florida Hazmat Symposium. This event is a week-long conference filled with training and learning opportunities for those in Hazmat Response. Upcoming notable training courses include a 3-hour gasoline tanker response offering to the I-10 counties. Previous Commodity Flow Studies have indicated that gasoline is the largest quantity of hazardous material moving through our region via I-10.

LEPC TRAININGS & EXERCISES	
DATE JAN. 12-17, 2025	COURSE 2025 Florida Hazmat Symposium - 10 Students
DATE APRIL 3, 2025	COURSE 8-Hr Hazmat Awareness Course (Leon County)
DATE MAY	COURSE (4) 3-hour Gasoline Tanker Response

SERC Meetings

ARPC will be attending the next State Emergency Response Commission (SERC) Meeting on April 17th and 18th in St. Augustine.

Planning Project

ALEPC staff is working with the ALEPC Chair, Vice Chair, and Training Task Force Member to finalize this year’s planning project. Options include Hazmat Transportation SOP updates or a hazmat-related exercise.

BIG BEND HEALTHCARE COALITION (BBHCC)

ARPC staffs the Big Bend Healthcare Coalition (BBHCC.) The most recent general membership meeting was held virtually on February 27th.



Healthcare Planning

The BBHCC has worked with the other Florida Healthcare Coalitions (HCCs) to bring an easy-to-use, AHCA-compliant online planning platform to the State through BOLD Planning. Members of the Florida HCCs are able to now complete their Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) completely online, and County Emergency Management staff will also be able to review and approve these plans entirely online. The result of this initiative by the Florida HCCs is a drastic reduction in the time and effort needed to create, review, and approve healthcare facility plans on the required annual basis. Although not required by all agencies, users also have the option to create a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) for their facilities as well through the platform.

Training and Exercise

The Big Bend Healthcare Coalition is primarily a preparedness organization and offers several training and exercise opportunities to its membership throughout the year. These trainings and exercises can be in-person, virtual, or hybrid.

BBHCC TRAININGS & EXERCISES		
DATE APRIL 15, 2025	COURSE Wildfire/Smoke Hazard	TYPE Training
DATE MULTIPLE	COURSE BOLD Planning Training	TYPE Training
DATE MAY	COURSE Medical Response & Surge	TYPE Exercise
DATE MAY	COURSE Wildfire/Smoke Hazard	TYPE Exercise



REVOLVING LOAN FUND (RLF) PROGRAM
Legacy, CARES Act & REVIVE! RLFs
Matthew Vossler

REVOLVING LOAN FUND (RLF) OVERVIEW

The ARPC RLF Program consists of three revolving loan funds: Legacy, CARES Act and REVIVE! and as of March 2024, is servicing thirty-two loans. The main priorities for ARPC staff regarding RLF support and administration are to service the existing loans, provide borrowers with technical assistance when needed, and seek qualified applicants for new loans through marketing. The three RLF programs are briefly described below.

LEGACY RLF (DEFEDERALIZED)

The Legacy RLF program launched in 1984 with an initial Economic Development Administration (EDA) award of \$1 million and an ARPC match with Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds of \$335,000. Since 1984, the ARPC has transformed the original sum of money into over \$5 million dollars in loans to small businesses within the rural communities of the Apalachee Region.

CARES ACT RLF (REVOLVING PHASE)

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act RLF provides small business owners within the Apalachee Region with gap financing to help them recover from the impacts of the COVID pandemic.

HURRICANE MICHAEL/REVIVE! RLF (DISBURSEMENT PHASE)

The Hurricane Michael/Regional Economies Vested in Vital Enterprises (REVIVE!) program is a \$1 million RLF to help establish new businesses and create employment opportunities or expand existing businesses and save existing jobs within Leon County/Tallahassee. The program is funded with \$800,000 from the EDA and a \$200,000 match from Leon County.

CURRENT PORTFOLIO STATUS AS OF 2/28/2025

Portfolio Balance	\$1,235,979.53
Portfolio Yield	5.61%
INTEREST PAID IN 2025	\$8,903.40

DEFAULTED LOANS

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Legacy - Sloan Grainworks | CARES – Dansby |
| Legacy- Deep South | CARES – Rutabaga Café |
| Legacy- Busy Bee (Smiley) | CARES – SWAT (Seafood Wings And Things) |
| CARES - Chef Shac | |

ARPC staff have been diligently working to resolve the defaulted loans either through write-off or collection proceedings.

LOAN STATUSES AS OF 02/28/2025

BUSINESS	INTEREST RATE	MATURITY DATE	TERM LEFT	NEXT PAYMENT	REGULAR PAYMENT	LOAN BALANCE
CAS Childcare	6.000%	02/01/2027	24	03/15/2025	\$241.74	\$862.44
Corner Cafe 1	6.000%	02/01/2027	24	03/15/2025	\$600.00	\$13,176.07
Herz Development	5.000%	10/01/2031	80	11/15/2024	\$325.00	\$21,780.06
New ERA Entrepreneur Network	5.000%	10/01/2031	80	03/15/2025	\$325.00	\$20,993.58
Peaks Ink	6.000%	12/01/2034	118	03/15/2025	\$600.00	\$46,123.87
Pretty Girlz	6.000%	12/01/2027	34	03/15/2025	\$500.00	\$49,848.99
Saucy Lady Oyster Company	5.000%	04/01/2026	14	08/15/2024	\$500.00	\$9,992.10
Southern Fields Brewing	6.000%	12/01/2029	58	03/15/2025	\$1,000.00	\$59,627.44
Marlowe Logging	5.000%	03/01/2029	49	03/01/2025	\$550.00	\$24,658.60
Norris Smokehouse	5.000%	04/01/2031	74	03/15/2025	\$550.00	\$33,972.09
Rejuvenate U Massage Studio	5.000%	07/01/2029	53	12/15/2024	\$175.00	\$7,858.28
Seafood Wings and Things (SWAT), LLC	6.000%	07/01/2027	29	04/15/2024	\$775.00	\$27,936.99
Springbreeze Accounting & Taxes	5.000%	09/01/2034	115	11/15/2024	\$1,200.00	\$162,103.92
Telogia Trading Post	5.000%	03/01/2035	121	03/15/2025	\$800.00	\$80,355.91
Tri-State Pest Control	5.000%	02/01/2026	12	02/15/2025	\$500.00	\$5,942.45
Freda Harris, Julius Harris, Kids First Learning Academ	7.000%	06/15/2034	112	02/15/2025	\$525.00	\$16,730.94
Boss Chic	6.000%	04/01/2032	86	03/15/2025	\$600.00	\$36,308.40
CBS Inc	6.000%	10/01/2032	92	08/15/2024	\$1,100.00	\$84,947.71
Crowning Glory	5.000%	09/01/2031	79	03/02/2025	\$225.00	\$17,285.13
Law Office of Felicia S.W. Thomas	5.000%	11/01/2031	81	03/15/2025	\$425.00	\$24,428.80
Revolutionary Expressions	5.000%	10/01/2031	80	03/15/2025	\$650.00	\$42,662.50
Tremont Concrete Construction Inc	5.000%	07/01/2032	89	01/15/2025	\$975.00	\$70,824.59
Wall Doctors Plastering LLC	6.000%	02/15/2034	108	03/15/2025	\$175.00	\$13,672.52
WCRx Pharmacy	5.000%	08/01/2031	78	03/15/2025	\$1,100.00	\$70,033.26
Om Sairam LLC	7.000%	06/15/2039	172	03/15/2025	\$1,798.16	\$194,633.17
					\$16,214.90	\$1,235,979.53

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROGRAM**Kwentin Eastberg – Mary O'Brien – Tom Thompson – Austin Britt****COMMISSIONER RICK MINOR
& THE 2025 CHAMPIONS
INSTITUTE COHORT**

Congratulations! Selected as one of 14 local elected officials nationwide, Commissioner Minor will participate in Smart Growth America's 2025 Champions Institute. The champions will come together to learn, develop, and advance efforts to improve community design. Staff assisted in reviewing the application that Commissioner Minor put together. Please let us know what sort of opportunities interest you so that we may be of further assistance.

**TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED PROGRAM (TD)**

The Transportation Disadvantaged Program is a statewide effort that assists with travel to and from life-sustaining and quality of life trips for community members that are qualified as elderly, disabled, low-income or at-risk children.

Updates:

The Florida Triple Crown Bus Roadeo was held in February in Gainesville, FL, and the Apalachee Region was well represented!



1st Place Cutaway* Operator: Janet Walden from Calhoun County took 1st place out of 21 participants statewide and will be sent to the National Competition in San Diego!

1st Place Paratransit Technician: Trevor Morea from StarMetro.

2nd Place Cutaway* Operator: Mark Lolley from Calhoun County. 2nd Place Paratransit Technician: Willie Hernandez from Big Bend Transit. 3rd Place Cutaway* Operator: Morgan Carr from Jackson County/ J-Trans. Cutaway* Division Individual Awards Rookie of the Year: Mark Lolley of Calhoun County.

* Cutaway are the small buses that go door-to-door.

3rd Quarter FY 24-25 (early March) meetings focused on the Annual Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) Evaluations.

For more information, visit FDOT CTD, ARPC CTD, or reach out to Kwentin Eastberg at KEastberg@arpc.org or Austin Britt at ABritt@arpc.org.

REGIONAL COMMUTER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (CAP)

The Commuter Assistance Program is a statewide initiative funded by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT). Here in District 3 the program is branded as RideOn Commuter Services.



Ultimately, the goal for the RideOn program is to help reduce single occupant vehicle usage (people driving by themselves) by providing support and incentives for people to carpool, vanpool, take transit, walk, bike, or work from home thus reducing roadway traffic, parking congestion, and carbon emissions.

Relaunching RideOn

Staff are currently updating the RideOn app and website to ensure ease of use and accessibility. The new website will be better suited to help commuters learn how to use the application and offer tips on being proactive about commuting choices.

A marketing campaign to relaunch RideOn will be launched in early April. Look for us on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube.

For more information about the RideOn program you can visit www.rideontgether.org. To request a more detailed RideOn presentation and application demonstration you can reach out to Tom Thompson at TThompson@arpc.org.



APALACHEE REGIONAL RURAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN (RRTP)

The Apalachee Regional Rural Transportation Plan (RRTP) is a pilot project contracted between ARPC and FDOT District 3. The main purpose of the RRTP is to collect information on the greatest transportation needs within the 5 rural county region of Calhoun, Franklin, Gulf, Jackson, and Liberty counties.

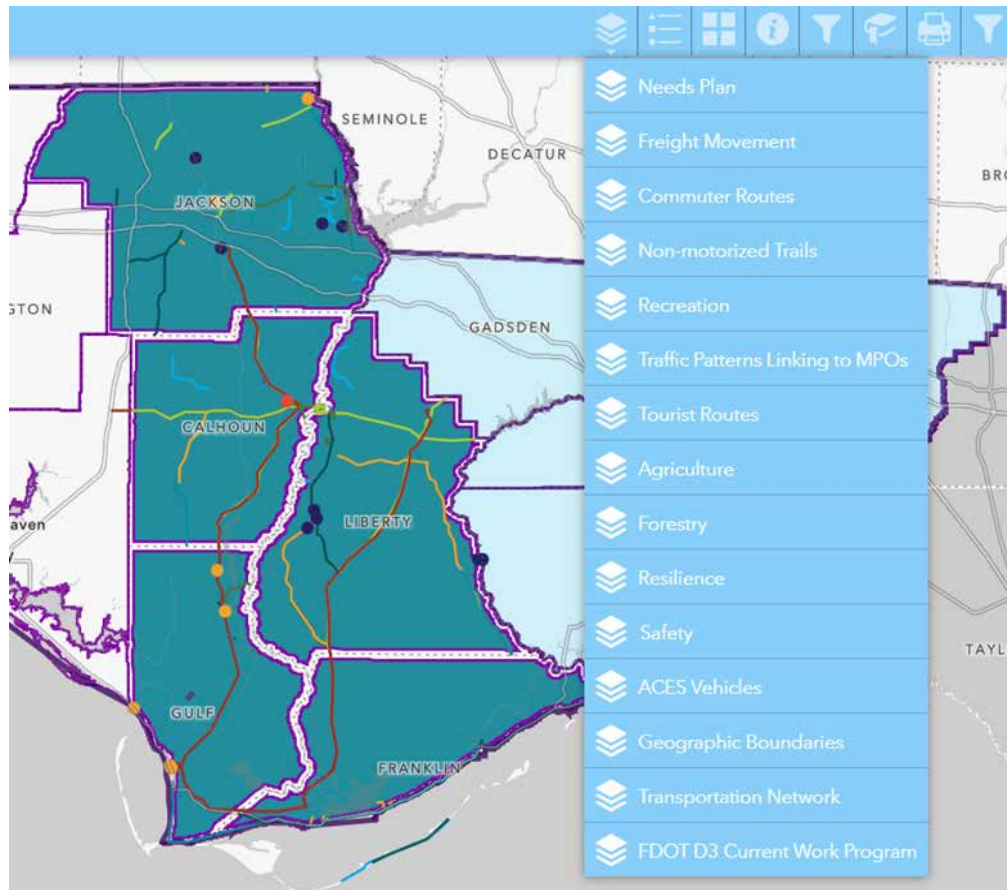
Contract with FDOT was extended

The Apalachee Regional Rural Transportation Plan (RRTP) was adopted January 30th, 2025 and the final version is available on our website. With the extension of the contract with FDOT, among other things, staff will continue to provide support through ongoing Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meetings, where topics will include funding opportunities to implement the projects.



Staff presented on the RRTP and its interactive map at the March Jackson County Board of County Commissioners meeting per Commissioner Donofro’s invitation.

The RRTP’s interactive map has been updated to be more user-friendly and include more data. For more information click [here](#) or reach out to Mary O’Brien at MOBrien@arpc.org.



ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING PROGRAM
Josh Adams – Evan Blythe – Lydia Johnson

SMALL QUANTITIES HAZARDOUS WASTE

The ARPC Environmental Planning Department implements the SQG notification and verification program under state statute 403.7225. The goal of the program is to ensure businesses understand and comply with their federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) obligations. Accordingly, we conduct hazardous waste management assessments and provide technical expertise to businesses in our Region, except for Leon County, which has its own robust environmental program. This involves identifying and verifying 20% of potential hazardous waste producers, including automotive, wood-working, industrial, and medical facilities. Walkthroughs are conducted and rules are explained. Staff suggests ways to minimize and recycle wastes and maintain compliance with applicable rules and regulations. At the end of each fiscal year, we provide data to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection on the number of businesses audited, and types and amounts of wastes. This enables the state to better understand the needs and types of facilities that are subject to regulation.

VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENTS

ARPC staff has mapped potential flood impacts over the years 2040 and 2070 for Franklin and Gadsden County. Based on the types of impacts, such as storm surge or general flooding, recommendations are being generated for the asset types including transportation, community and emergency facilities, infrastructure, and historical natural resources. These assets are vulnerable to flooding and sea level rise, which can have economic, social, and environmental impacts.



Drums improperly stored and labeled
Credit: UF/IFAS Pesticide Information Office



Excess drums and unknown contents; open to elements. Credit: Florida Department of Environmental Protection



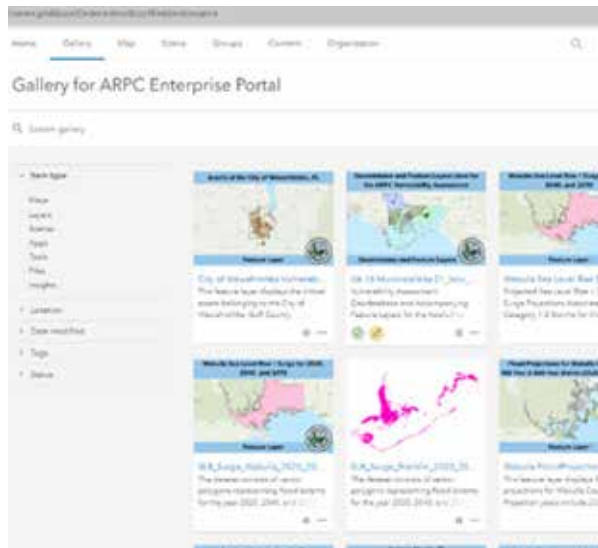
**GEOSPATIAL PLANNING PROGRAM
Divina Lade – Khalig Atakishiyev**

ONGOING GEOSPATIAL SUPPORT TO MEMBER COUNTIES

COUNTY	GEOSPATIAL SUPPORT
CALHOUN	Maintenance of Calhoun County Land Use Map.
FRANKLIN	Maintenance of the Franklin Zoning Web Application.

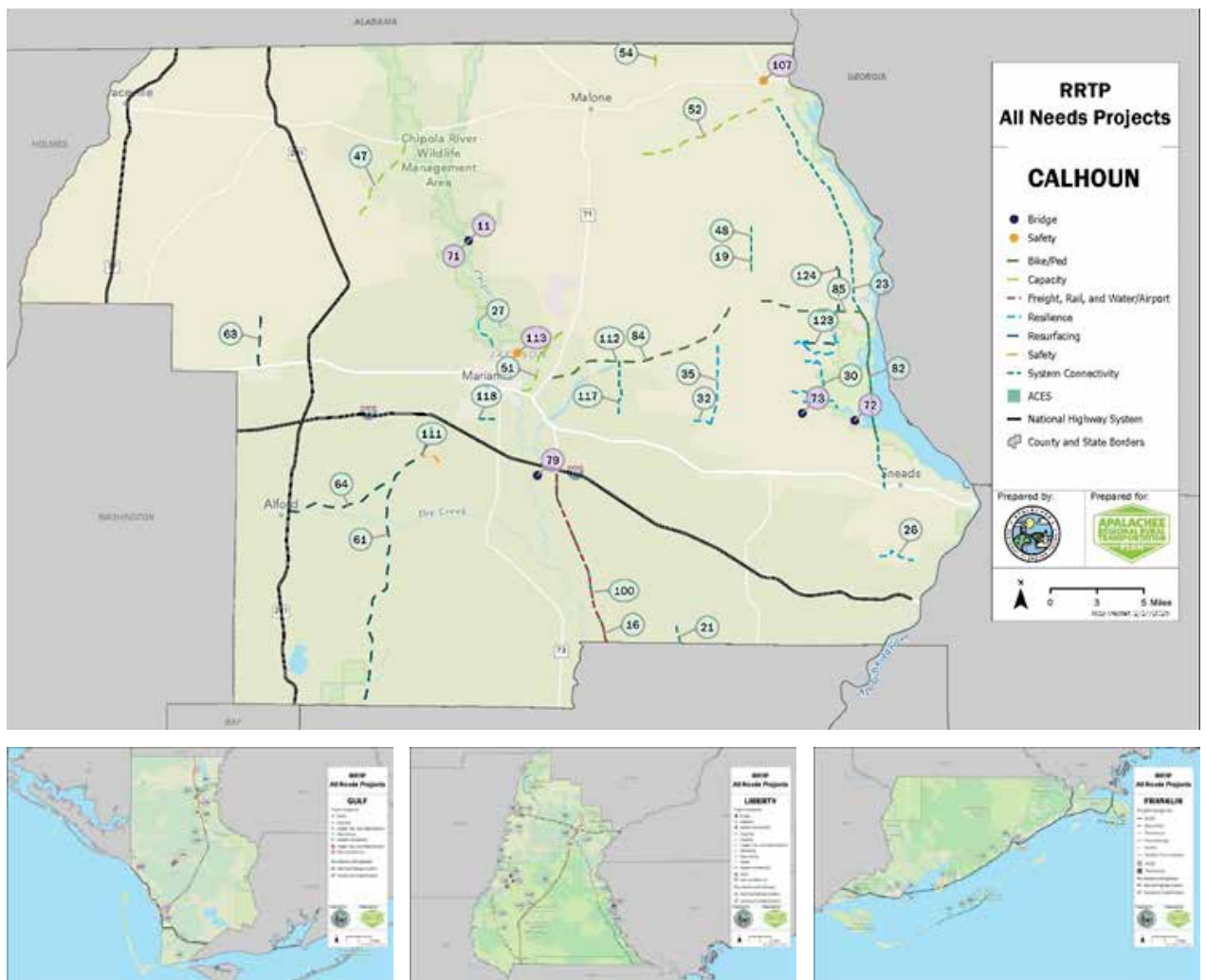
GEOSPATIAL SUPPORT TO ARPC PLANNING PROGRAMS

PROGRAM	PROJECT	DESCRIPTION
TRANSPORTATION	REGIONAL RURAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN	Maintenance of the RRTP web application developed for this project. Development of sample static maps showcasing identified projects in the Region.
ENVIRONMENTAL	GADSDEN COUNTY VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT	Generation of extreme future rainfall event for Gadsden County, 2040 & 2070.
ENVIRONMENTAL	REGIONAL EXTREME RAINFALL MAPPING	Generation of extreme rainfall model for the nine counties in the Region for the year 2040 and 2070.
JOINT GEOSPATIAL/ ENVIRONMENTAL	WAKULLA LOCAL MITIGATION STRATEGY PLAN 2026	ARPC is supporting Wakulla County in updating their Local Mitigation Strategy Plan.



ARPC ARCGIS ENTERPRISE PORTAL
 Continual maintenance of ARPC’s ArcGIS Enterprise Portal’s geospatial features and layers is as crucial as managing other GIS components across various planning projects. The Geospatial program is committed to carefully populating meta-data for all published content and establishing a consistent thumbnail layout for each item, as illustrated in the image on the left. This ongoing task emphasizes ARPC’s commitment to upholding a standardized and well-organized repository of geospatial data.

SAMPLE STATIC MAPS PRODUCED FOR THE RTP PROJECT





APALACHEE REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

GEOSPATIAL PLANNING SUPPORT AND SERVICES

Geospatial Data Creation and Editing

(creation of geospatial features, e.g., setting up a field maps database to collect location information of fire hydrants as basis in a developing an interactive map, and transforming non spatial information into geographic information)

GEOSPATIAL PRODUCT STORAGE AND MAINTENANCE

(storage and annual maintenance of published web map and applications via ARPC's Geospatial Enterprise Portal.)

RESILIENCE PLANNING & PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Local Mitigation Strategy Plan | Participatory Mapping Strategic & Behavior Change Communications Plan | Climate Adaptation Plan | Project Management

Custom Mapping, Digitization, and Spatial Analysis

(digitization of paper maps)

DRONE IMAGE, VIDEO, AND 3D MODELING

(aerial mapping, disaster mapping including mapping the extent of flooding, structural damage, and risk analysis, pre and post hurricane mapping, FEMA/ insurance documentation; utilize imagery and videos to better engage community in a planning process, water tower inspection, documentation of existing road conditions, and asset inventories)

Web Application Development and Geo-visualization

(development of interactive web applications from zoning map, comprehensive land use maps, utilities maps, fire hydrants, Story Maps and Dashboard Development)

GIS EDUCATION AND TRAINING

(in-person or remote technical support to county planning staff)

CONTACT
DIVINA LADE
DLADE@ARPC.ORG

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
Marcus Thompkins – Isabella Marmanidis – Rick McCraw

CALHOUN COUNTY STATE HOUSING INITIATIVES PARTNERSHIP (SHIP)

ARPC provides administration to Calhoun County’s SHIP Program. The county receives an annual allocation of \$350,000.00 from the Sadowski Trust Fund (Florida Housing Finance Corporation) to assist residents in addressing housing repairs that impact life, safety, and code.

The SHIP program currently offers four strategies of assistance:

- Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation
- Purchase Assistance with/without Rehabilitation (First-Time Homebuyer Program)
- Foreclosure Prevention / Mortgage Assistance
- Emergency Housing Repair

JACKSON COUNTY STATE HOUSING INITIATIVES PARTNERSHIP (SHIP)

Since July 2021, the ARPC has been working with Jackson County residents to coordinate needed housing repairs, as well as to assist first-time home buyers with purchasing a home.

The SHIP program currently offers four strategies of assistance:

- Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation
- Purchase with/without Rehabilitation (First-Time Homebuyer Program)
- Emergency Repair



JACKSON COUNTY HURRICANE HOUSING RECOVERY PROGRAM (HHRP)

The HHRP program currently offers three strategies of assistance:

- Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation
- Purchase with/without Rehabilitation (First-Time Homebuyer Program)
- Demolition/Reconstruction

GULF COUNTY STATE HOUSING INITIATIVES PARTNERSHIP (SHIP)

- Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation
- Purchase with/without Rehabilitation (First-Time Homebuyer Program)

Applications are being received on an on-going basis, subject to availability of funding. Only completed applications will be considered on a first-come, first-served basis, however the county does give priority to veterans and elderly households. Interested residents can still go online at www.gulfcounty-fl.gov/county_government/s_h_i_p to submit a pre-screening and application. The Apalachee Regional Planning Council is committed to accessibility for all applicants. Staff have been working with residents directly for technical assistance or accommodation to apply for assistance.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The rising cost of construction materials has created limitations in project scope and flexibility. Contractors have voiced concerns regarding their ability to start and complete projects without receiving an advance payment.

Housing Studies can be used to study the local housing environment in preparation of housing policy, development, preservation, and further research. Staff is currently exploring funding opportunities to begin the process of a regional housing study.



COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAM
Melissa Franklin

COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT TO ARPC PROGRAMS

PROGRAM	PROJECT	DESCRIPTION
TRANSPORTATION	REGIONAL RURAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN	Extensive webpage updates; R RTP draft formatting.
TRANSPORTATION	RIDEON	Currently redesigning the RideOn website.
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT	BBHCC	Currently redesigning the BBHCC website.
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT		Developed brochure regarding the CRS for Wakulla County.
ARPC	COMMUNICATIONS	Developed RFQ webpage and published all relevant materials.
ARPC	COMMUNICATIONS	Published a blog regarding the history of ARPC.
ARPC	COMMUNICATIONS	Developed RFQ webpage and published all relevant materials.
ARPC	COMMUNICATIONS	Distributed a press release announcing the 2025 ARPC Officer Elections.
ARPC	COMMUNICATIONS	Developed the March 2025 ARPC Board Package. Planning & coordination of Full Council Board Meeting.
ARPC	COMMUNICATIONS	Organized the inaugural ARPC Community Service Day!
ARPC	COMMUNICATIONS	Developed the January 2025 Board Notes.
ARPC	COMMUNICATIONS	Social media & website maintenance.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Justin Stiel

PROGRAMMING CHANGES

The Growth Management Team is growing! This quarter ARPC officially welcomes Brianna Williams to the team as a full-time employee. Brianna is a current student at Florida State University in Urban and Regional Planning. Brianna has been working with Growth Management since August 2024 as an intern and brings additional capacity to the program.

The Growth Management Program is primarily responsible for a range of planning activities, including comprehensive plan amendments (such as Future Land Use amendments), zoning changes, land use recommendations, and writing and amending land development regulations. Additionally, the program supports local public workshops, assists with planning grant administration, and coordinates special planning projects. These activities provide essential technical assistance to ARPC's member local governments and municipalities.

CURRENT AND ONGOING PLANNING SERVICES

ARPC provides planning services through direct collaboration with local government staff on project reviews. ARPC currently assists the Town of Havana with respective growth management needs. The Growth Management Program has continued to expand, adding two continuing service contracts with Liberty County and Franklin County. ARPC staff serve as the county planners for Liberty and Franklin counties.

Staff are working with Jackson County Planners to schedule the second hearing for the updates to the Jackson County Comprehensive Plan, as needed for Jackson County's Evaluation and Appraisal Report.

CONSISTENCY WITH LOCAL COMPREHENSIVE PLANS & LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

Serving as an extension of our member local governments, ARPC staff reviews development applications to ensure they comply with local Comprehensive Plans and Land Development Regulations. ARPC's current review practices include completing site plan reviews and providing recommendations for approval, approval with conditions, or denial for residential development, commercial development, subdivisions, accessory uses, accessory buildings, and code enforcement issues. Additionally, ARPC staff participate in meetings with developers to offer guidance on relevant sections of the land development code and comprehensive plan, as requested by local governments.



MONTHLY ACTIVITY REPORT: January 2025

ASSOCIATION MANAGEMENT

- Prepared the Agenda for the January EDAC meeting and Winter Policy Board meeting. Created the PowerPoint presentation for the Policy Board meeting and integrated slides prepared by RPC staff that highlighted recent programs and projects.
- Hosted the January EDAC meeting in Tallahassee at the Apalachee Regional Planning Council.
- Managed logistics and hosted FRCA's Winter Policy Board meeting at the AC Marriot in Tallahassee.
- Finalized the accounting transition – on behalf of the EDAC and Policy Board, I would like to thank ARPC Executive Director Chirs Rietow and his staff for supporting FRCA and managing our bookkeeping for many years!
- Monthly meeting with FRCA's Bookkeeper and EDAC Treasurer.
- Received unanimous support from the Policy Board for FRCA's new Bylaws, aligned with our Articles of Incorporation, and recommendation for nonprofit designation.
- Submitted application to the IRS to designate FRCA as a 501c4 nonprofit Association.
- Built a new website for FRCA and Newsletter template, that will be unveiled in early February.
- Attended NARC meeting and hosted a special EDAC meeting to discuss federal funding.

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT/CAPACITY BUILDING and OUTREACH

- Hosted individual meetings with the EDA/ERSF Team and eight of our RPCs that were impacted by Hurricanes Debbie, Helene and Milton.
- Attended Florida Regional Resilience Collaborative Coordinators Forum
- Continued to contact FRCA Partners to provide update on FRCA's new Executive Director and organizational structure.
- Worked with Central Florida RPC to finalize FRCA's FY23/24 Annual Report
- Continued discussions to identify opportunities to increase FRCA's capacity and outreach to support Florida's RPCs





MONTHLY ACTIVITY REPORT: February 2025

ASSOCIATION MANAGEMENT

- Filed Annual Report with Florida Division of Corporations
- Hosted the February EDAC Executive Committee Meeting
- Monthly meeting with FRCA's Bookkeeper and EDAC Treasurer
- Monitored potential changes to federal funding and programs
- Received Legislative Updates from FRCAs Legislative Consultants and provide weekly updates to the EDAC as needed
- Hosted Special EDAC Meeting to discuss Senate Bill 1264 and HB 1125

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT/CAPACITY BUILDING and OUTREACH

- Attended Florida Regional Resilience Collaborative Coordinators Forum
- Attended FRCA-RPC Communications Working Group Meeting
- Worked on planning and scheduling LEPC Coordinators meeting and other FRCA workgroup meetings
- Submitted Sponsorship for 2025 Rural Counties Days at the Capital, March 19th-20th
- Set up meetings with FRCA partners
- Continued to work with EDA/ERSF Team as RPCs hosted Federal Interagency Resource Exchange (FIRE) and Economic Recovery Workshops in areas impacted by Hurricanes Debbie, Helene and Milton
- Completed and Published new FRCA Website: FLRegionalCouncils.org



THE FLORIDA SENATE
SENATOR BEN ALBRITTON
President

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Senators
FROM: Ben Albritton
SUBJECT: Florida's Rural Renaissance
DATE: February 19, 2025

Today Senator Simon will file legislation that brings to life Florida's rural renaissance. As you all know, I'm a proud son of rural Florida, Florida's Heartland, six generations deep. Our small, tight-knit, legacy communities are filled with some of the nicest, hardworking people you will ever meet. Rural communities look after one another and would give their last dollar and even the shirt off their own back to help a neighbor in need. That's a way of life worth preserving. As I did at our Organization Session in November, I'm asking you to join me in the fight for a rural renaissance in Florida.

Our rural communities are full of opportunity, and that doesn't just mean development. We need to update our laws to reflect what a rural community can look like in modern Florida. And, we need to diversify our view of what economic development looks like in rural Florida. Gone are the days of setting our sights primarily on large companies, or anchor businesses, with massive capital investments who can deliver on the promise of high wage, high-value jobs, but economically devastate a local community when they close or relocate. We need to focus on infrastructure improvements that support existing businesses as they grow and transition based on the needs of our economy. This includes our legacy farm and citrus operations, who will be well-served by improvements to farm-to-market roads essential to keeping fresh food within reach of Florida families.

Expansions to our broadband infrastructure will drastically expand opportunities for education, commerce, and health care in rural Florida. The number of remote workers has nearly doubled since the pandemic. Just like remote work offered people the chance to flee high tax, lockdown states and head south to the free State of Florida, improvements in broadband capacity and high-speed internet access will allow folks living in rural communities to capitalize on workforce changes, placing big city employment options at the fingertips of our rural residents.

In addition to employment opportunities, currently our rural quality of life can be limited by access to education and health care. I believe we can combine enhancements to the traditional infrastructure for schools and hospitals, with innovations that expand and strengthen access to these public services. A strong transportation infrastructure and access to robust public services naturally attracts community, maintaining the modest population levels small businesses (restaurants, shops, childcare centers) need to thrive. Larger businesses are naturally attracted to thriving communities without massive taxpayer-funded economic incentives. Appealing to mid and large-scale corporations should be the effect, not the cause of development in our rural areas.

In the outline below, you will find a bold, comprehensive approach that creates opportunities to improve our rural quality of life, while preserving the time-honored way-of-life that has been deeply cherished generation after generation. These initiatives build on and modernize some of our longstanding economic development programs with a focus on infrastructure, not incentives. They also complement other legislative initiatives and investments from school choice options for Florida families, to the wildlife corridor connecting legacy trail towns and historic farm and ranch lands, to expanding Live Healthy initiatives in rural communities. In total, these initiatives provide opportunities for rural communities to grow as they see fit, based on decisions made by local families and businesses who call rural Florida home.

Rural communities are strong and proud. I can tell you the last place they'll look for guidance is the government, but this legislation outlines some things we can do to help. With your support, we can expand education, health care, commerce, transportation, and support agriculture, and its supply chain, so Floridians who call our rural communities home, have access to the opportunities the rest of Florida has to offer. These are critical enhancements and investments to support 31 of our 67 counties and hundreds of rural communities across Florida. We have seen tremendous economic growth in urban areas of Florida, its Rural Florida's turn.

I look forward to discussing these initiatives with you in the coming weeks and hope the proposal will earn your support.

SB 110 – FLORIDA’S RURAL RENAISSANCE

Increases Support and Partnerships with Rural Communities

Modernizes Support for Fiscally-Constrained Counties to Account for Inflation

Many communities are growing out of the current definitions used in Florida law for rural and fiscally constrained counties (FCC), either due to population increases or increases in the amount of property taxes raised. The bill modernizes these definitions. For example, the bill increases the FCC threshold (set in 2006) from a county that raises \$5 million in property tax revenue per 1 mil, to \$10 million per 1 mil.

Currently, a distribution from the tax collected on direct-to-home satellite service is provided to fiscally constrained counties (FCC). Eligibility to participate is based on the county’s participation in the half-cent sales tax distribution. FCCs are estimated to receive a total distribution of \$10.4 million in FY 2024-2025. The allocation among the several FCCs is based on a formula that uses the following factors: a county’s millage rate, population, and school taxable value. An FCC may use these funds for any public purpose except for debt service.

The bill increases the total distribution to no less than \$50 million per fiscal year and changes the revenue source from the tax on direct-to-home satellite service to sales tax, which has been a more stable source that moves with the overall state economy. The current distribution from direct-to-home satellite is instead redirected to General Revenue (GR). The bill also changes the formula to use the following factors: sales tax collections, per capita personal income, and population. An FCC with declining per capita sales tax collections or per capital personal income will receive a relatively larger share of the total distribution. Finally, the bill adds spending requirements. Specifically, 50% of the distribution must be used for public safety, 30% for infrastructure, and 20% for any public purpose. Debt service is not allowed.

Creates the Office of Rural Prosperity

The bill creates the Office of Rural Prosperity at the Department of Commerce to provide technical assistance to rural communities. The Office will promote and facilitate statewide planning assistance for local governments, serving as a robust resource for rural local governments with dedicated regional staff. Personnel will be permanently assigned to regional rural community liaison centers across the state to engage with locals and facilitate access to resources. They will aid local governments in accessing state and federal resources and conduct routine trainings on requirements of the Community Planning Act and other relevant state and federal legislation.

The Office will create and maintain an interactive tool, the “Rural Resource Directory,” designed for rural local governments to navigate state and federal grants and resources. OPPAGA will review the effectiveness of the Office of Rural Prosperity every three years, after an annual review for the initial three years. The bill also modernizes the existing Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) statute and rural local government strategy.

Establishes Renaissance Grants for Counties with Declining Population

A subset of our rural communities has lost population over the last decade (Gadsden, Hardee, Talyor, Jackson, Calhoun, Liberty, Madison, and Lafayette Counties), resulting in declining business activity. The bill creates a \$1 million block grant for each of the eight counties with declining population. Each county must develop a plan to use the funds with the goal of population growth. Use of these funds will be audited. The grant will be awarded annually until the county sees three consecutive years of population growth.

Funds for Rural Public Infrastructure Innovations

To facilitate the use of innovative, cost-saving technologies that will help rural governments save time and money, the bill creates a competitive application process for organizations with at least three years of experience in bringing innovations to local communities. Funds will help rural governments test and use new technologies.

Enhances Rural Economic Development Initiatives

Local or regional economic development community partners in rural communities can apply for grants to help cover the cost of site preparedness, and marketing and training opportunities to further economic development initiatives. Further, by working with the Office and updating REDI functions, the attention to rural areas will increase the likelihood that goals are maximized and successful.

Adds Small Business Development Center Circuit Riders

Growing small businesses fosters a sense of community and attracts people and commerce to the community as it grows. The Small Business Development Center currently funds staff in rural areas to "ride the circuit" of their region and work with local governments and communities to bring services, including access to capital, technical assistance, and other small business services. SDBC is a federal program that utilizes federal funding and matching funds from local state college partners. The bill appropriates \$1 million to increase circuit riders and reach more communities through this program.

Maximizes Options for Rural Housing

Raises Minimum Allocations for SHIP to Jump Start Rural Housing Options

Currently allocations are population-based, with the minimum allocation for each county within the State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) Program set at \$350,000. The bill increases the minimum allocation for each county to \$1 million which will provide additional funding to rural communities.

Preserves Rental Housing in Rural Communities

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) currently offers more than 14,000 subsidized rental units at over 300 properties across the state, the vast majority of which are located in rural areas. USDA-financed properties are reaching the end of their use restrictions and are at risk of turning into market rate rental housing. To preserve these units as affordable rentals, the bill appropriates funds for rehabilitation or acquisition for owners who agree to maintain the properties as affordable housing.

Enhances Rural Transportation and Broadband Infrastructure

Expands Rural Infrastructure Fund

The Rural Infrastructure Fund (RIF) facilitates planning, preparing, and financing of infrastructure projects in rural communities to encourage job creation and capital investment in rural economies. RIF funds can be used by rural communities as a match for other infrastructure funding programs. Currently the program is appropriated \$5 million annually. The bill increases the recurring appropriation to \$10 million, with a onetime additional infusion of \$40 million.

Increases Rural Revolving Loan Program Funding

The Rural Revolving Loan Program was created by the Legislature in 1996 to facilitate the use of existing federal, state, and local financial resources by providing local governments with access to funds to promote the economic viability of rural communities. The program is intended to be highly flexible and the loan amounts vary depending on the need of applicants. Currently, the program receives \$420,000 annually. The bill increases the recurring funding to a total of \$1.4 million, with a one-time additional infusion of \$4 million. Because these are loans, these funds will be leveraged by rural communities many times.

Improves Coordination for Federal Broadband Programs

Broadband access has become a critical quality of life issue, with high-speed internet serving as a gateway to commerce, education, and health care. Florida is set to receive \$1.2 billion in federal funding through the Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) Program, in addition to other federal funds allocated to broadband, including \$366 million from the federal Capital Project Fund and \$400 million pandemic funds appropriated by the Legislature to the Broadband Opportunity Program.

The bill improves coordination and technical assistance between the Office of Broadband at the Department of Commerce and rural or underserved communities in need of broadband services.

Historic Commitment to Farm to Market Roads

The bill creates the Florida Arterial Road Modernization (FARM) Program, amending the existing arterial rural highway projects statutes to incorporate funding for roads used primarily as farm-to-market connections between rural agricultural areas and market distribution centers. The bill creates a new distribution specifically for arterial roads from existing documentary stamp revenues by redirecting \$30 million from unallocated funds collected through Documentary Stamps to the State Transportation Trust Fund (STTF). With existing funding of \$20 million annually, this results in a \$50 million annual investment in arterial roads.

Expands Small County Road Assistance Program

The Small County Road Assistance Program (SCRAP) assists small county governments in resurfacing and reconstructing county roads. The bill redirects a portion of vehicle title fees, which are currently directed to the state’s general revenue fund, to the STTF to increase funding available for the program. The Department of Transportation (DOT) is currently required to expend \$25 million on the program, and this redirect more than doubles the state’s investment in these counties.

Improves Education Opportunities in Rural Communities

Expands Regional Education Consortia

Current education regional consortium service organizations include the Northeast Florida Educational Consortium (NEFEC); Panhandle Area Educational Consortium (PAEC); and Heartland Educational Consortium (HEC), which serve small, rural school districts to reduce overhead administrative costs, minimize duplication of services, promote new programs, and provide personnel and programmatic support.

School districts with 20,000 or fewer students, lab schools, and the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind may enter into cooperative agreements to form a regional consortium service organization. Each regional consortium receives a grant of \$50,000 per school district and eligible member to be used for the delivery of services within the participating school districts. The consortium board of directors, made up of the superintendents of the participating school districts, determines the services and use of funds. The bill increases from \$50,000 to \$150,000 the consortia funding per eligible member and appropriates recurring funding for this investment.

Creates Regional Consortium Service Organization Supplemental Services Program

The bill creates a grant program administered by the three regional consortium service organizations to supplement member needs related to transportation; district finance personnel services; cybersecurity support; school safety; college, career, and workforce development; academic supports; and behavior support within exceptional student education services.

Updates Special Facility Construction Account

The Special Facility Construction Account (SFCA) provides construction funds to school districts that have urgent construction needs but lack sufficient resources and have no reasonable expectation of raising needed funds over the next three years through tax revenue. Typically, the projects that receive funds through the SFCA are located in rural areas that have an insufficient tax base to fund large construction projects.

A school district receiving funding must levy the maximum discretionary millage (1.5 mills) for three years before making a request and until project completion. Of that levy, the school district must pay the value of 1 mill per year to the project. This is collected by the Department of Education. This leaves participating districts with limited ability to pay for other fixed capital outlay needs. The bill authorizes a school district that receives funds through the SFCA to retain its entire 1.5 mill discretionary ad valorem levy.

Adds a Student Loan Repayment Program for Rural Educators

The bill creates the Rural Incentive for Professional Educators (RIPE) program to help small counties attract and retain instructional personnel and administrators. The program provides a yearly benefit for educators that reside in and work as instructional employees or administrators at public or private schools in a fiscally constrained county.

Participants receive up to \$15,000 in total student loan repayment assistance over five years, disbursed in annual payments not to exceed \$3,000 per year.

Expands Access to Health Care in Rural Florida

Growing Doctors and Nurses in Rural Areas

Rural communities in Florida have limited access to medical care. As a result, these communities are home to more people with medically-complex needs, which if addressed through preventative and primary care, could significantly improve quality of life and reduce costs for families. Physicians and autonomous APRNs might be more willing to locate to rural areas with grant funding to establish primary care practices in rural areas.

Existing financial incentive programs (e.g. FRAME) do not fund facility construction, acquisition, renovation, or lease; medical equipment and furnishings; or information technology. All of these are needed in order for a practice to be established. The bill creates a new grant program to help start-up physician and autonomous APRN offices and practices in rural areas.

Training Rural Paramedics and EMTs in Advanced Stroke, Cardiac, and Obstetrics Response
Stroke, Cardiac and Obstetrics patients in rural Florida face challenges including limited access to hospitals, fewer resources, and a lack of advanced treatments. These challenges can lead to worse health outcomes and higher mortality rates.

The bill creates the Stroke, Cardiac, and Obstetric Response and Education (SCORE) Grant Program within the Department of Health to increase access to high-quality stroke, cardiac, and obstetric care through the application of technology and innovative training for medical professionals who provide emergency care, including EMTs and other first responders.

Expands Rural Hospital Grant Program To Cover Mobile Units and Telemedicine Kiosks
The Rural Hospital Capital Improvement Program provides critical funding to rural hospitals to acquire, repair, improve, and upgrade systems, facilities, or equipment. The state budget currently includes \$10 million in recurring funding for these grants.

The bill adds \$25 million in nonrecurring funding to meet the growing needs of rural hospitals. Funds will cover mobile units to provide primary care services, behavioral health services, or obstetric and gynecological services in rural areas, and telemedicine kiosks to provide urgent care services remotely in rural areas.

Increases Existing Medicaid Payments for Rural Hospitals
In Florida, five rural hospitals have closed, primarily due to financial challenges. A "critical access hospital" (CAH) is one that meets federal standards, including location in a rural area and distance from other hospitals. Federal Medicare recognizes this distinction and provides higher payments for Medicare services provided at these hospitals. However, Florida Medicaid reimbursement does not recognize CAH status.

The bill appropriates additional dollars to enhance Medicaid payments to reimburse rural hospitals that provide care for the current Medicaid population, similar to Medicare reimbursement.

Rural Renaissance Appropriations – \$197.4 million

- Renaissance Grants – \$8 million
- Office of Rural Prosperity – \$2.5 million
- Preserving Rental Housing in Rural Communities – \$30 million
- Rural Strategy Grants – \$250,000
- Rural Infrastructure Fund – \$45 million
- Rural Revolving Loan Program – \$5 million
- Innovations for Rural Counties – \$500,000
- Small Business Development Center Network – \$1 million
- Student Loan Repayment for Rural Educators – \$7 million
- Regional Education Consortia – Increase from \$50K to \$150K per district – \$3.6 million
- Regional Education Consortia Grants – \$25 million
- Rural Hospital Medicaid Enhancement – \$6.3 million state, \$8.2 million federal
- Rural Hospital Improvement Grants – \$25 million
- Stroke, Cardiac, and Obstetric Response and Education – \$5 million
- Doctor/APRN Start Up Program – \$25 million

General Revenue Redirects in the Bill

- Fiscally Constrained Counties – approximately \$37 million
- Farm-to-Market Roads – \$30 million State Transportation Trust Fund
- Small County Road Assistance Program – approximately \$35 million State Transportation Trust Fund

Additional Funding for General Appropriations Act

- State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) Program – \$18.8 million



APALACHEE REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

Local Partnerships. Regional Impact.

RESOLUTION #25-04

A RESOLUTION OF THE APALACHEE REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL REPRESENTING THE LOCAL GOVERNMENTS OF CALHOUN, FRANKLIN, GADSDEN, GULF, JACKSON, JEFFERSON, LEON, LIBERTY, AND WAKULLA COUNTIES, FLORIDA; OPPOSING ELIMINATION OF STATUTORY AUTHORIZATION FOR REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCILS IN FLORIDA AS PROPOSED IN SENATE BILL 1264 AND HOUSE BILL 1125 OR SIMILAR PROPOSED LEGISLATION; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the Apalachee Regional Planning Council's (ARPC) nine-county geographical area is comprised of Calhoun, Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Jackson, Jefferson, Leon, Liberty and Wakulla counties and 28 municipalities contained therein, with over 500,000 residents; and

WHEREAS, the ARPC is a multi-purpose regional governmental entity with policy responsibilities in the areas of affordable housing, economic development, emergency preparedness, energy, natural resources, urban planning, agriculture, and regional transportation; and

WHEREAS, for more than five decades Regional Planning Councils have served the public as Florida's only multipurpose regional entities that coordinate intergovernmental solutions to multijurisdictional issues identified by their member local governments; and

WHEREAS, the 67 counties in the state are divided into 10 Regional Planning Councils which perform functions in Economic Development, Transportation, Emergency Preparedness, Regional Convening, and Resilience to the extent and as directed by their member counties, cities, and gubernatorial appointees; and

WHEREAS, the Regional Planning Councils compete for and bring to Florida millions of dollars in federal funds for Economic Development, Transportation, and Environmental and Brownfields Cleanup that would otherwise go to other states; and

WHEREAS, the Regional Planning Councils receive no regular general appropriation for operation from the State and, instead, are supported by Federal grant funds, local dues, local contracts, and State contracts for specific programs implemented on behalf of the State; and

WHEREAS, Regional Planning Councils no longer have any regulatory authority and are no longer involved in Developments of Regional Impact (DRIs); and

WHEREAS, Regional Planning Councils serve a critical role in hazardous material response coordination and training through the Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs) operated by each Council; and

WHEREAS, Regional Planning Councils regularly assist state agencies in implementing their statutory duties and legislative directives, along with coordinating these duties and directives with local input, at

no charge to the State; and

WHEREAS, Regional Planning Councils partner with local governments and various agencies to secure grant funding, staff specialized projects, and provide technical support and facilitation expertise; and

WHEREAS, proposed Senate Bill 1264 and House Bill 1125 will remove authorization and all references to Regional Planning Councils from the Florida Statutes, depriving the people of the State of the important work the Councils do and the Federal funds they bring into Florida.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE APALACHEE REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL THAT:

Section 1. The Legislature is urged to remove all references to Regional Planning Councils from Senate Bill 1264 and House Bill 1125 or any similar proposed legislation and to leave Regional Planning Councils in the Florida Statutes; and

Section 2. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon adoption hereof.

DULY ADOPTED by the Apalachee Regional Planning Council this 27th day of March 2025.

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