

***Adapting to Climate Change
Now: The Critical Issue for
Florida Communities***

APA Florida 2013
Jean Scott

Panel Topics and Speakers

- *Panel Overview* – Jean Scott, Managing Member, SLC,LLC
- *The Seven 50 Southeast Florida Context* – Jim Murley, Executive Director, South Florida Regional Planning Council
- *Learning from the Fort Lauderdale and Miami-Dade County Experiences* – Susanne M. Torriente, Assistant City Manager, City of Fort Lauderdale, Florida
- *The Legal and Local Government Planning Context* – Erin L. Deady, PA, and Of Counsel, Corbett and White, PA

The Consistent Messages

- Florida is uniquely vulnerable to the impacts of climate change
- Understanding and preparing for climate change is a timely issue
- Issues cross the:
 - social, built, and natural environments
 - disciplines that many local government departments are organized around (e.g., transportation, water management, codes, and land use)
 - public and private sectors
 - jurisdictional lines of local government

Some Lessons

1. Visible leadership support starting at the top and working the way down

- Lip service only won't work – active advocacy and leadership required.
- Adopting a resolution of intent is a good way to start.
- Seeing the support of leaders across disciplines/departments empowers staff to be creative and collaborative.

2. A designated task master

- Oversees the process and makes sure that deadlines are set and met and remain a priority focus.
- Has the authority to work across all departments and agencies.
- Is appointed by and organizationally attached to (and reports directly to) the top leadership.

3. Homework first

- Develop/assemble/analyze the scientific data – the baseline inventory and driving issues (know your risks).
- Inventory who is doing what and who needs to be a part of the process.
- Identify the potential technical and financial resources and planning/regulatory contexts and tools.
- Collect/learn from best practices of other communities.

4. Tailor-design an organizational structure

- Engage those who need to be part of the solution/the heads that need to nod for something to happen.
- Break down silos/work and communicate across the issues and organizational lines.
- Have organizational members (e.g., a task force) appointed and openly supported by top officials.

5. Develop a climate change/sustainability plan

- Should be comprehensive and designed to integrate addressing climate change:
 - inside government , and
 - outside in the community.
- Have clear goals, action steps, assignments, and measureable targets that can be used to verify results and conduct meaningful monitoring (discussed later).

6. Inventory and align other initiatives under the umbrella of the climate change plan

Examples:

- Existing and planned departmental and agency policies, initiatives, and capacities.
- Include regulations like codes,
- Related legislative initiatives.
- Financial resources (a government's budget is its vision).

7. Leverage capacity through public-private partnerships

- Foster and integrate public-private partnerships. E.g., a mayor-appointed outside advisory board that brings in the views and resources of other public and private agencies and organizations.
- Use those partnerships to get the work done without the need for new money – all the more important in times of dwindling resources.

8. Early on create the brand and the “buzz” – what people are talking about

- Create a logo and good tag line that will imbed the idea in people’s minds and create excitement.
- Remember that good visuals are important – the old adage that one picture is worth a 1,000 words.
- Use events of all types (including ones sponsored by others) to get the word out.

9. Establish a two-way communication flow early and often

- Can be used to build understanding, demand, and support and get feedback.
- Should provide multiple ways for the public to be involved and provide input – web, peer messengers, community events, etc.
- Don't forget about keeping decision-makers and media informed.

10. Create/nurture/support the champions/the keepers of the flame and the boundary crossers

- Think through/develop the foundation for an ongoing champion group from the earliest stages of planning.
- Include boundary crossers – those who understand/can move across/have the respect of the organizations that need to be and stay at the table.

11. Continually monitor progress and be nimble when it's time to change course

- Have in place an agreed-upon monitoring process that is based on measurable indicators and performance measures.
- Include times for regular assessment – “How are we doing?” conversations.
- Be ready to adjust what you are doing when conditions change and new problems or opportunities arise.

12. Celebrate successes along the way

- Create lively events photo ops that appeal to media to announce successes/get media's attention.
- Keep telling and re-telling the story – leaders and populations change and need to be brought along. (Personal stories a persuasive tool.)
- Don't forget the power of interactive multimedia.