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Cleveland Clinic Florida Research & Innovation Center in the Tradition Center for Innovation, Port St. Lucie

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PANELISTS

In today's marketplace, municipalities and the businesses that call them home are working with utility providers to improve operations and reduce costs.

Supply chain issues, inflation, cybersecurity, and other challenges tax how businesses perform. The pandemic has exacerbated many of those issues and created additional challenges. More than ever, properly leveraging technology, programs, and other resources to reduce energy costs, improve efficiencies, increase connectivity and help create a cleaner, safer community are essential to growing a company's bottom line.

In a recent panel discussion, experts from NextEra Infrastructure Solutions discussed how the following tips can help municipalities and their constituents deliver on their Environmental, Social and Governance statements, elevate their reputation in the marketplace and improve their financial bottom lines.

Look beyond the bill. The right improvements custom crafted for a particular building or facility will do more than just lower your utility bill; they can also cut operational and maintenance costs, improve reliability, enhance aesthetics, improve safety and comfort and reap tax incentives. In addition to reducing costs, these improvements can increase productivity and enhance reputation.

Upgrade to community-wide fiber-based broadband. Communities that upgrade to fiber give businesses faster data transfer, lower latency, greater reliability, and heightened security. Fiber also allows for more connected energy ecosystems while monitoring use and decreasing costs from waste and inefficient products. In fact, faster, more reliable internet service can reduce operating

expenses by up to 50% when compared to fiber coax hybrid systems and up to 63% when compared to DSL. As the demand for data continues to grow and remote work becomes more commonplace, communities with fiber-based broadband will be better positioned to serve their constituents and attract new businesses and residents. Mass implementation of fiber and broadband will deliver on the demand for high-bandwidth, low latency, and faster communication applications. From there, the possibilities are limitless, as autonomous systems and "smart cities" become the new norm.

Physical protection against cyber-threats. A connected world almost invites cyber security threats. Utilities, municipalities, and others with critical infrastructure should work with their providers to physically isolate their networks, reducing the need to connect through third-party locations or vendors. Physical isolation adds an additional layer of protection against cyber threats to critical infrastructure.

Look for "future-focused" areas. Not all communities or neighborhoods are ready for tomorrow. As part of our "dig once" strategy, we install enough capacity to provide for generations of data demand; allowing municipalities to provide for expanding future needs with minimal financial investment and community disruption. This ensures growing communities have the sufficient infrastructure capacity to serve multiple ISPs and wireless carriers.

Measure for short- and long-term gains. Benchmarking every possible metric can ensure significant investments squeeze out savings to improve operating costs. Measure per square foot or employee, for example, or which locations are operating

FPL's replacement of over **400,000** high-pressure sodium vapor street lights with LED lighting has reduced carbon emissions by over **53,000** metric tons or the equivalent of taking **12,000** cars off the road.

better than others, or how spending has changed over recent history. NextEra Energy professionals will work with your team to measure and identify ways to mitigate energy costs. Fiber, paired with smart meters, can help measure data and even provide self-operation, monitoring, and fleet management decisions at lower operating and maintenance costs.

Reduce your carbon footprint. Lowering costs through energy efficiency is inextricably linked to environmental impact. FPL's replacement of over 400,000 high-pressure sodium vapor street lights with LED lighting has reduced carbon emissions by over 53,000 metric tons or the equivalent of taking 12,000 cars off the road. Other areas for resource and environmental savings are HVAC, insulated windows, variable speed motors, water conservation, renewable energy sources, and EV charging stations.

Find funding resources. The recently passed Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) is investing billions of dollars into energy resiliency and infrastructure for utilities, large businesses, co-ops, and municipalities. The IRA and Infrastructure Investments and Job Act, or IIJA, are just two of the recent government-funded programs offering generous tax and grants to help bridge the digital equity gap.

Do business with a proven leader. Municipal and business leaders who focus on running their organizations often

entrust energy efficiency and sustainability measures to a provider versed in the latest, proven technologies. In pursuit of its Real Zero™ goal, NextEra Energy is working with public utilities and municipalities to bring them renewable energy and to modernize their aging infrastructure to create more efficient and resilient cities. With over \$152 billion in assets and a network of more than 10,000 suppliers, NextEra Energy can buy, build, operate and finance infrastructure improvements - and pass the benefits on to its customers across 49 states.

NextEra Infrastructure Solutions is a workgroup of affiliates of NextEra Energy, including Gexa Energy Solutions, LLC, NextEra Energy Solutions, LLC, NextCity Networks, LLC, and FPL Energy Services, Inc., that offers unregulated, commercial fiber, lighting, and smart meters solutions for developments, municipalities, and commercial businesses. As one of America's largest capital investors in infrastructure, with between \$50 and \$55 billion in new infrastructure investments planned through 2022, we're helping ensure that the next energy to power our dreams will be American energy. When it comes to development, the products and services needed are those that will enhance the value of new construction while improving the economics of already-built commercial real estate. For more information, contact Francisco Arbide at francisco.arbide@nexteraenergy.com. To learn more about NextEra Energy's Real Zero™ goal, visit www.nexteraenergy.com/real-zero.html.

TREASURE COAST: A Growing Florida Development Gem

Florida's reputation as a business-friendly state has helped make it the darling of economic development. Thriving industries found together in few other markets include manufacturing and logistics; green, blue and agriculture tech; health care and life sciences; energy; and aviation, marine and unique R&D project development. They've been so robust that any mention of the 800 to 1,000 new arrivals includes countless businesses that have relocated here since before the pandemic.

Legend:

- A** Legacy Park: Now leasing 688,000 SF plus build-to-suit parcels
- B** TRADITION CENTER FOR COMMERCE
- C** GLADES Logistics Park: 354,200 SF ready in 2023
- D** GLADES: Now leasing 287,500 SF
- E** INTERSTATE Crossroads Logistics Center: Now leasing 1 Million SF
- F** INTERSTATE COMMERCE CENTER: 207,458 SF available 2023
- G** St. Lucie COMMERCE CENTER: 1.2 Million SF approved
- H** 95 KINGS LOGISTICS CENTER: Now leasing 658,000 SF
- I** SOUTH FLORIDA LOGISTICS CENTER: Now leasing 1.3 Million SF
- J** O&OC: 760,000 SF Build-to-Suit/Lease

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From left: Michael Rem of JBL Development, Fort Pierce Mayor Linda Hudson and Sandra Pabon of Itasca Construction Associates sign the cornerstone of the Interstate Commerce Center, a 207,458 SF Class-A Industrial building. More than 6 million square feet of new industrial facilities are recently completed, under construction or have site plan approvals in St. Lucie County.

Accel Industries, a manufacturer of high-performance conductors headquartered in Connecticut, completed construction on a new 150,000 SF manufacturing facility in Port St. Lucie in 2023

While other regions of the state grapple with growth needed to accommodate new residents and industries, one stretch of coastline has the space, talent, infrastructure, and grade school, higher education and workforce development components ready to meet the needs of business and families alike.

The Treasure Coast of Indian River, St. Lucie and Martin counties has emerged as an ideally located hub of sectors key to Florida's growth. Locals and new arrivals alike know it to be led by business- and regulatory-friendly leadership. Port St. Lucie, which includes the master-planned community of Tradition, is the seventh-largest city by population in Florida and the third-largest in South Florida. The region is ready for growth, with development costs and rental

“Our elected officials understand how important it is to ensure that our well-located industrial sites and immediately available Class-A space transform into career opportunities for our residents.”

— **Peter J. Tesch**
PRESIDENT OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
COUNCIL OF ST. LUCIE COUNTY

rates often far below those found elsewhere in the state.

“Our elected officials understand how important it is to ensure that our well-located industrial sites and immediately available Class-A space transform into career

opportunities for our residents,” said Peter J. Tesch, president of the Economic Development Council of St. Lucie County.

The region may not capture the news of others around the state, but to executives looking to grow,

the Treasure Coast is headline worthy. Municipalities throughout the region offer expedited permitting options delivering unmatched speed-to-market. With more than 61% of St. Lucie County's over 158,000 workforce commuting somewhere else every day, leaders are eager to have them work closer to home. In all, the region has 315,000 workers.

Workforce and employers have access to a great variety of training opportunities. High schools offer 58 different career-training programs. Indian River State College, a first-place Aspen Award winner and one of the most affordable colleges in the U.S., is opening an advanced manufacturing center this year. Along with its full range of career training programs, the college's professionals will work with



Legacy Park at Tradition, a 425-acre Class-A industrial park in Port St. Lucie, developed by the Sansone Group. Current tenants include Amazon and FedEx Ground, food distributor Cheney Brothers' warehouse is under construction, as are two spec buildings; build-to-suit locations are also available



Indian River State College, Massey Campus
Credit: James M. Crocco



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employers to develop customized programs.

Located midway between Miami and Orlando on Interstate 95 and Florida's Turnpike, the region is the gateway to South Florida. It defines accessibility. Brightline, the high-speed rail line serving Palm Beach, Broward and Miami-Dade counties, and soon north to Orlando and beyond, will open a regional station in the coming years.

Treasure Coast International Airport is larger by land mass than Miami International Airport, and the Port of Fort Pierce serves the bustling marine sector. St. Lucie County also is home to Free Trade Zone #218.

Logistics are in many ways the most visible of its thriving sectors. The Kings Logistics Center, South Florida Logistics Center, Interstate Commerce Center and an Amazon facility are four of the facilities adding over a combined six million square feet to the region's portfolio. Food distribution provider Cheney Bros. will open a 300,000-square-foot facility in Port St. Lucie by year's end. Two recent industrial and commercial parks, Legacy Park at Tradition and the Interstate Crossroads Business Center, brought 6.5 million square feet online and are having a significant regional impact.

Nothing epitomizes the region's growth more so than the Port of

Fort Pierce. Recognized in March by the publication Trade and Industry Development for its "dramatic change" as one of the nation's "engines of economic expansion: Ports, Inland Ports and Depots," the port is one of only 14 deepwater ports in Florida. Once primarily a terminal for shipping produce and citrus, today St. Lucie, Indian River, Okeechobee, Highlands, Hendry, Glades and Martin counties rely on the port and its access to the FEC railway mainline less than a mile from the port. Today, Derecktor Shipyards runs a mega yacht repair facility on the site, further positioning the region's role in the region's "blue economy."

Well-planned growth will continue, especially as the region offers up land and development options unavailable in other space-starved regions.

"We have the land, the workforce, the education system and millions of square feet of available Class-A space," said Tesch, whose organization works with neighboring the Business Development Board of Martin County and the Indian River County Chamber's Economic Development Office to boost the region. "Those are the reasons why St. Lucie County has been 'discovered' by industrial developers and why we'll be able to continue to attract employers in the years to come."



City officials and Cheney Brothers executives break ground in Legacy Park in Port St. Lucie April 2022

Key sectors shine in regional success

When Cleveland Clinic Florida expanded beyond South Florida into the Treasure Coast market in 2019, it reflected the region's current - and forecast - growth.

Today, the hospital network has two Stuart hospitals in Martin County and Cleveland Clinic Tradition Hospital and the Cleveland Clinic Florida Research and Innovation Center, both in Port St. Lucie. Its Indian River Hospital in Vero Beach recently underwent capital improvements to its women's health program and operating rooms. Its Tradition facility received new technology to perform robotic colorectal

“Florida is a unique market because the population continues to grow exponentially, especially in the Treasure Coast.”

— Rishi P. Singh
PRESIDENT OF CLEVELAND CLINIC

surgeries, and they're creating a new 7,000-square-foot ophthalmology suite in Stuart.

“Florida is a unique market because the population continues to grow

exponentially, especially in the Treasure Coast,” said Rishi P. Singh, president of Cleveland Clinic's Martin hospitals. “Since expanding Cleveland Clinic into this region, our focus has centered on meeting access

and increased demand for our clinical care and expertise.”

All signs point to continued growth throughout the Treasure Coast. Life sciences, logistics and manufacturing, clean energy, marine and aviation all have seen dramatic growth. The FPL nuclear plant on Hutchinson Island, and parent NextEra Energy's support of clean power, is luring energy startups to the region. High-performance and sportfishing boat makers Maverick Boat Group, Pursuit Boats and Twin Vee PowerCats, Inc. all are based or have significant manufacturing here, taking advantage of the elevated allure of the Port of Fort Pierce, where Derecktor



Cleveland Clinic Florida Research and Innovation Center in Port St. Lucie's 107,000 SF research center with biosafety Level 3 facilities

Fort Pierce operates a shipyard tapping South Florida's attraction as a global yachting capital.

If opportunity can be measured in square feet, the region is brimming with it. The Treasure Coast, and especially St. Lucie County, has seen millions of square feet of industrial facilities and commercial parks come online in recent years. Real estate brokerages such as Jeremiah Baron & Co. Commercial Real Estate in Stuart have specialized in the sale, leasing and management of the growing number of retail shopping centers, office buildings, industrial warehouses, and multi-family properties and particularly this emerging area.

The promise of growth and opportunity in the region's emerging life science hub was ideal for LactaLogics' automated manufacturing facility in Port St. Lucie. The company relocated from Reno, Nevada. The strategic move to what will be a fully

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— Glenn Snow
CO-FOUNDER AND CEO OF LACTALOGIC

renovated facility offers the latest technology, safety, and energy-efficient features, Glenn Snow, the company's co-founder and CEO, noted at the time. Atop the state's 70 neonatal intensive care units is Florida's low corporate tax rate and no personal income tax. Local financial incentives and abundant, skilled labor was an added benefit.

“We want to ensure we have access to a large labor pool for high-tech manufacturing and customer service, a lower cost of living, and a great quality of life,” he said.

With the growing needs of the manufacturing and life science industries, skilled labor is a deliberate effort. Local educators and workforce development professionals are training or retraining the workforce of 315,000 across includes St. Lucie, Indian River, Martin and Okeechobee counties.

Workforce development starts young. Indiantown High School provides a high school core curriculum focusing on career exploration and workforce development. Among the higher education institutions here, such as Florida

International University's Center for Translational Science and the Aviator College of Aeronautical Science & Technology, is Indian River State College.

Named number one in the nation by the Aspen Institute for excellence and innovation applied toward training and education, its 22,000 students can earn associates and bachelors degrees and career and technical certifications, often custom-aligned with employers' specific needs. The school also was awarded \$45 million from philanthropist MacKenzie Scott and a \$4.96 million Hispanic-Serving Institutions STEM and Articulation Program grant. In 2021, IRSC was one of only 16 institutions awarded a U.S. Department of Education grant to establish a Center of Excellence for Veteran Student Success, which opened in 2022.

For employers needing high-tech workers, the college's Eastman Advanced Workforce Training Complex is Florida's

Moving at the Speed of Jobs



17 months from donor commitment to completion—Indiantown High School, IRSC's new career and workforce charter school.

Find out more at irsc.edu.



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IRSC is an EAVEO institution.

most advanced workforce training facility. In 2021, it became an Adobe Creative Campus, providing students and faculty to the company's software suite. The school also offers programs in nursing and health care, optics and photonics, cyber security education, renewable energy and public safety.

"When an IRSC student completes their studies, they leave the college with an unmatched education coupled with ready-for-workforce digital literacy skills and a personal brand toolkit," said IRSC President Timothy Moore. "These students ultimately become the workforce engine that improves the quality of life for themselves, their families and their neighbors and guarantees economic prosperity for all of us."

All stories by freelance business writer Jeff Zbar. He can be reached at jeff@jeffzbar.com.



Derektor Shipyards' new repair and refit operation at the Port of Fort Pierce, designed and built specifically for mega yachts

DRIVE TIME

- 3 hours
- 4 hours
- 6 hours
- 8 hours

Q.

Where is the **3rd LARGEST CITY** in South Florida? ???

HINTS:

- It's in the **5th fastest-growing county** in Florida
- Has a drive-time of **3 hours or less to 70% of the state's population**
- Its regional **workforce numbers 300,000+**
- The school district is **#5 in the state for career & technical education** and one of only 4 districts with a consecutive 6-year **90+% graduation rate**
- Is home to an award-winning state college with **80+ career training and/or technical certificate programs**
- Has the **lowest labor and housing costs** in South Florida
- Offers the **most development-ready acreage** in the region, including parcels with direct access to Interstate 95 and the turnpike
- Has **millions of square feet of Class A industrial space ready for occupancy** with a total of **6+ million square feet of completed, under construction or site plan permitted facilities** in its county!

Give up? The Sansone Group, JBL Asset Management, Tambone Companies, Seefried Industrial Properties, Hope Commercial Holdings, Stonemont Financial Group, the Silverman Group and more are already there. *Shouldn't you be here too?*

The Gateway to South Florida: the cities of Port St. Lucie and Fort Pierce in St. Lucie County.

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The Face

OF TREASURE COAST REAL ESTATE

Introducing Jeremiah Baron, the founder and CEO of Jeremiah Baron & Co. Commercial Real Estate. Known for his extensive industry knowledge and expertise, Jeremiah has established a reputation for delivering outstanding service to his clients and consistently achieving exceptional results. With more than 20 years of experience, he has built a strong network of industry professionals and gained an in-depth understanding of the Treasure Coast real estate market.

In addition to his work as a commercial real estate broker, Jeremiah Baron is also a highly successful developer, with a track record of creating innovative and highly desirable properties. He has been involved in the development of numerous high-profile projects throughout Florida, including luxury residential communities, nationally branded commercial properties, and mixed-use developments. His focus on quality and attention to detail have earned him a reputation for excellence, and he is widely regarded as one of the most talented and successful developers on Florida's Treasure Coast.

Why the Treasure Coast? With its strategic position between Orlando and South Florida, the area offers easy access to highways, ports, and airports making it convenient for businesses to import and export goods. Unlike Palm Beach County and Miami there is an abundance of untapped real estate potential. Jeremiah recognized the area's key attributes early on and focused on these local qualities.

Through his work as a developer and broker, Baron has become a highly respected and influential figure in the Florida real estate industry. If you are in the market to innovate, create, develop, buy or sell; visit JeremiahBaronCompanies.com.



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