



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

First Coast Named Winner of 2006 Section of the Year Award and Host for 2009 State Conference of the Florida Chapter, American Planning Association

At the recent 2006 State Conference of the Florida Chapter of the American Planning Association (FAPA) held at Marco Island, the FAPA Executive Committee awarded the 2006 Section of the Year Award to the First Coast Section of the American Planning Association (First Coast APA). Mark David Major, AICP, First Coast APA Chair accepted the award at the Thursday luncheon, where former Governor Bob Martinez was also awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award for contributions to the field of planning and growth management. Valerie Hubbard, outgoing President of FAPA, referred to the 2006 Section of the Award as the “Lazarus” award. In less than one year, the First Coast APA increased its professional membership by nearly 25% and hosted two luncheon events each attended by over 50 participants on hurricane preparation in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in the Spring and on the Florida Hometown Democracy movement in the Fall. During the recent year, First Coast APA also designed a website (www.FirstCoastAPA.org), begun publishing of a bi-monthly e-newsletter *1st Coast Planner*, adopted a 2006-2010 Strategic Operation Plan, amended its By-Laws and held elections of officers and board members. The activity of the First Coast APA in 2006 occurred after a period of near-dormancy over the last 3 years.

In light of the 2006 success of the First Coast APA, the FAPA Executive Committee was also awarded the right to host the 2009 State FAPA Conference to the First Coast APA. The conference will be held in the City of Jacksonville. Over 600 public and private planners, and others with an interest in planning, development and growth management, in the State of Florida attended the 2006 State FAPA Conference held in September at the Marriott Marco Island, FL. This included nearly 80 exhibitors and sponsors of the conference. Preliminary planning and site selection for the 2009 State FAPA Conference has already begun and estimated attendance of 600 participants is expected. “The selection of the First Coast APA and the City of Jacksonville to host the 2009 State FAPA Conference is a testament to both the strides our membership have made in the last year in reviving their section and the importance FAPA places on the First Coast Region as a center of planning innovation and future growth in the State of Florida. We hope everyone will get involved to help us ensure Jacksonville hosts the most successful State FAPA Conference ever,” said First Coast APA Chair Mark David Major.

Contact

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First Coast APA serves its membership of over 200 professional planners, and those associated with field of planning, in Baker, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Nassau, Putnam and St. Johns Counties. The purpose of the First Coast Section, Florida Chapter of the American Planning Association is the study and advancement of the art and science of local, regional, state, and national planning; the furtherance of the interests of the profession; the promotion of fellowship among members of the Section; Chapter and Association, all in the particular sphere of planning of the unified development of urban communities and their environs and of states, regions and the nation; and, such other purposes as the Association may time to time declare.