

FEATURED SPEAKERS FRA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2019



APRIL ATKINS, ACIP

April Atkins is a Community Affairs Specialist for the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) covering the North and Central Florida markets for the Atlanta FDIC Region. She is responsible for educating insured financial institution representatives, municipal entities and community-based organizations on community reinvestment opportunities. She facilitates partnerships between financial institutions and community-based organizations to promote community and economic development in communities of low wealth. She has also worked on temporary assignments with Minority Depository Institutions, and fair

lending.

Prior to her tenure with the FDIC, April was a part-time lecturer at Georgia Institute of Technology in the building construction program, where she developed and taught courses in residential development policy and finance. She has also served in various urban planning, community and government affairs roles with the Office of the CEO of DeKalb County, Georgia; DeKalb County Board of Commissioners; the Urban Land Institute's Terwilliger Center for Workforce Housing; the Greater Atlanta Home Builders Association; and the City of Marietta, Georgia.

A native of the Florida panhandle, April received her bachelor's from the University of Florida and her master's from the Georgia Institute of Technology. She holds a professional certificate in community economic development from NeighborWorks America and in community development finance from Opportunity Finance Network and the University of New Hampshire's Carsey School of Public Policy. She is a graduate of the National Forum for Black Public Administrators Mentor Program, Leadership DeKalb Class of 2012, and LEAD Atlanta Class of 2011. She served as a co-chair and member of the FDIC's Chairman's Diversity Advisory Council and co-chair for the LEAD Atlanta Class of 2015. In 2017, she was honored to receive the Shirley Taylor-Prakelt Award from the Florida Community Development Association, in recognition of her professional excellence and support of community and economic development. In 2019, April was selected to participate in an executive leadership program with the Graduate School USA, a leading provider of professional development and training courses for the federal government and the private sector.

April is also an appointed planning commissioner in DeKalb County, Georgia, and she volunteers with LEAD Atlanta, and Out of Darkness, an anti-trafficking ministry in Atlanta, Georgia. She is a member of Ray of Hope Christian Church.



THE HONORABLE PETER ALTMAN

Mr. Altman is a Councilmember in the City of New Port Richey. He is a CPA and has managed over 20 Community Development Districts (CDDs) in Florida. Born in St. Petersburg, Peter is a USF graduate with an Accounting Degree. As the former Mayor, he also served as the Finance Director for the city. Reelected in 2018, he serves as an elected official member of the Florida Redevelopment Association. He is a local government representative member of Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council.



MILES BALLOGG

Mr. Ballogg serves as the Brownfields Practice Leader and Economic Development Director for Cardno, Inc. He assists public and private sector clients with land redevelopment programming, assessment, and remediation, specifically in environmentally-blighted areas. Miles has been involved in the implementation of both federal and state Brownfields programs for over 25 years including during their inception. He is a strong advocate for environmental justice and has been recognized as the National Leader of the “Healthfields Movement” by utilizing Brownfields and other leverage resources to improve access to health care for underserved communities. Miles provides comprehensive programmatic support, technical assistance, and project coordination for numerous Brownfield

Redevelopment Projects utilizing EPA Assessment, Cleanup Multi-Purpose, and Cleanup Revolving Loan funding. Miles assists clients (including government agencies, non-profits, and private sector developers) with Brownfields consulting, grant writing, and programmatic support to facilitate the transformation of environmentally-impaired properties into benefits to their communities.



THE HONORABLE JANE CASTOR, MAYOR, CITY OF TAMPA

Jane Castor is the 59th Mayor of the City of Tampa, elected for the first time in 2019. She served 31 years with the Tampa Police Department, working her way from a beat cop to the first female Chief of Police. Castor helped reduce major crime by 70% citywide. She ensured public safety during the 2012 Republican National Convention and the first Bollywood Awards in America. She also oversaw the security plan for Super Bowl XLIII and led the Department of Homeland Security's Tampa Bay Urban Area Security Initiative.

Community outreach has always been a cornerstone of Castor's career. As a cop, Jane knew the families, business owners, and community leaders in her neighborhood and, as Chief, she expected every officer to do the same. Under her watch, everyone was to be treated with dignity and respect. She also implemented several programs to help at-risk youths. Under Jane's leadership, the police department built a RICH House in the city to provide a safe-haven for hundreds of economically disadvantaged kids. She also raised \$4 million to build a recreation center. The Police Athletic League now offers after school/summer programs for 500+ at-risk youths. On a national and local level, Castor is recognized for her leadership in law enforcement and community involvement. She has received multiple awards including the 2015 USF President's Distinguished Citizen Award, 2014 Tampa Chamber of Commerce's Woman of Influence Award, and more. Jane is a proud born and raised Tampanian. She resides in Seminole Heights where she raised her two sons, Sergei and Seely.



CHRISTOPHER COCHRAN

Mr. Cochran is the Director of Service Development for the Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority (HART), where he oversees both the Planning and Scheduling divisions. In this capacity, Mr. Cochran oversees several critical projects related to capital planning and operations. Prior to joining HART, Mr. Cochran worked as a Senior Planner at the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority in St. Petersburg, where, most notably, he managed the design and implementation of the Nation's first P3 Transit partnership with Uber, to provide subsidized rides using public transit dollars to improve connectivity to transit stations. Prior to HART and PSTA, Chris worked at the Center for Urban Transportation Research at the University of South Florida during his tenure as a Graduate Student, where he graduated with an MS in Environmental Science and Policy with a concentration in Geomatics.



GLADYS COOK

Ms. Cook is the Disaster Housing Recovery Director for the Florida Housing Coalition. She brings over 25 years of experience in housing and community development in Florida. For many of those years, she has been a technical advisor for the Florida Housing Coalition and has developed training and program design for nonprofit organizations and local governments. As a planner, she provides research and analysis skills in the formation of housing incentives, conducting needs assessments, and housing specialties such as land banking and community land trusts. She offers capacity building and strategic planning for organizations including predevelopment, underwriting and compliance for homeownership, rental and supportive housing. Gladys is a problem solver and consensus builder seeking to maximize human and capital resources to expand the supply of accessible, sustainable, and affordable homes for workforce and special needs households.



JEREMY EARLE, PH.D, ASLA, AICP

Mr. Earle is the Assistant City Manager and the Executive Director of the Hallandale Beach Community Redevelopment Agency. In addition to managing several departments in the city, he spearheads the redevelopment projects, redevelopment programs and revitalization activity in the city. He is an award winning urban planner himself; under his leadership the CRAs that he has managed have won numerous awards for its programs relating to sustainability, economic development and marketing. Mr. Earle is considered by many to be an expert in the fields of redevelopment and revitalization, and he has considerable experience working in both the public and private sectors. Formerly as the Executive Director of the Dania Beach CRA, he successfully oversaw the investment of millions of dollars within the City of Dania Beach for the purposes of redevelopment, revitalization and economic development.



MICHAEL ENGLISH, AICP

Mr. English is a corporate leader in community planning and redevelopment. He has an extensive background in urban redevelopment, transit planning, and sustainable growth planning. His career includes real estate development, community and comprehensive planning, and eminent domain litigation support. Michael is a committed community leader who in addition to other boards, serves on the Executive Committee for Tampa Downtown Partnership. He served on the Florida Redevelopment Association Board of Directors for six years.

Michael has also served as the Associate Director of the Florida Center for Urban Design & Research, as an associate professor on the faculty of the School of Architecture at the University of South Florida in Tampa, and as the Executive Director of the redevelopment association in the Channel District. He authored one of the first strategic plans for the Channel District and wrote several CRA and master plans for redevelopment districts in Tampa and surrounding areas.

Michael also led an effort to acquire Tampa's Historic Union Station from CSX Railroad. As a board member, he secured \$3.5 million in local, state, federal and Amtrak funds and managed its restoration and renovation. He served as an 11-year board member of the Hillsborough County City-County Planning Commission, including five times as Chairman, the President of the Board and Chairman of Tampa Historic Streetcar, Inc., and board member for 16 years, and eight-time President of the Tampa/Ybor Railway Society.



MELANIE URFF GABOARDI

Ms. Gaboardi is the Director of Community Development Services for the City of Ocala, Florida. Her responsibilities currently include management of Ocala's Economic Development Division, Community Programs Division and the City's Office of Homeless Prevention. She has experience in finance, human resources, risk management, procurement and over 25 years in contract and grant administration for the private sector as well as local, state and federal funding including CDBG, SHIP and the 2018 EPA Brownfields Assessment grant. She held positions in the manufacturing, retail, healthcare, non-profit, state education, and local government sectors and is familiar with the nuances of the diverse needs of each. Ms. Gaboardi holds a Bachelor's degree in Business

Administration from the University of Central Florida and a Master's degree in Business Administration from Webster University.



DAVID GREEN

Mr. Green is the Executive Director of the Tampa Bay Area Regional Transit Authority (TBARTA). He joined TBARTA as Executive Director in November 2018. With more than 20 years of transit experience, he is focused on promoting regional collaboration that will pave the way forward for development and implementation of world-class transit in Tampa Bay.

Green was the Chief Executive Officer of GRTC Transit System, the Richmond, Virginia regional provider of public transportation, which includes fixed-route bus transit, over-the-road coach express service, and paratransit transportation for those needing individualized care. Within his direction, GRTC provided 8.3 million passenger trips a year. Green also directed RideFinders, the region's transportation demand management agency that offers services to facilitate reduction of single occupancy vehicles. Prior to being named CEO at GRTC in 2014, Green served the agency for 12 years as Director of Procurement and Grants Management.

David Green graduated with a bachelor's degree in finance from Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania and earned an MBA from Virginia Commonwealth University. In 2019, he retired as a Colonel from the United States Army Reserve after 30 years of service.



FRANK L. HEARNE

Frank L. Hearne is a shareholder in the firm of Mechanik Nuccio Hearne & Wester, P.A., in Tampa, Florida where he practices exclusively environmental law. In addition to his legal credentials, Mr. Hearne holds an B.S. degree in engineering focused on water resources and a master's degree in zoology focused on aquatic and estuarine ecology. Mr. Hearne's engineering and scientific training enables him to better comprehend the many technical aspects of his work such as geohydrology, complex organic chemistry and other topics. A substantial portion of his legal practice for over 35 years has been to advise public and private clients in transactions involving contaminated sites, including any aspect involving clean up, negotiations, agreements, insurance and mitigation.



GAIL HAMILTON

Ms. Hamilton is the CRA Director in Zephyrhills, Florida, and the current President of the Florida Redevelopment Association. Her experience with CRAs in large and small programs, Main Street programs, and other types of revitalization efforts have made her a recognized expert in Florida. In her year as President, the FRA is taking on several big projects to improve value to members, and her leadership in the legislative arena in 2019 was key to the successful passage of a bill supportive of CRAs. This is the second time that Ms. Hamilton has served as the President of the FRA, and she has served in a leadership role in the Florida Main Street Program for many years.



TERI HASBROUCK, B.S., M.S. CERTIFIED PUBLIC MANAGER

Ms. Hasbrouck is the Pinellas County Environmental Program Coordinator. Teri develops and manages programs and operations of county-wide initiatives affecting both the public and private sectors of Pinellas County. She serves as program manager to coordinate and develop environmental regulatory programs, monitoring their effectiveness within the area of environmental impacts and compliance. Teri directs program administration, develops and maintains interagency and community partnerships, advisory boards, and interacts with the public on sensitive issues. She manages County-owned contaminated properties and the County Brownfield Program. She works collaboratively with other County departments to provide expertise on property purchases and sales and insures that County-owned properties comply with state and federal regulations. Additionally, she works on special projects that require the development of strategies and plans to meet federal and state environmental regulatory requirements that apply to County assets and operations.



TYLER HUDSON

Mr. Hudson is a transactions attorney with experience representing clients in the acquisition, disposition, development, financing and leasing of commercial real estate, as well as mergers and acquisitions, private securities offerings and general business transactions. Tyler also practices in the areas of land use/zoning, alcoholic beverage licensing, and government relations.

Prior to joining the firm, Tyler was an associate at Holland & Knight LLP, where he practiced in both the corporate and real estate transactional groups. He was also a consultant with a public affairs firm in Washington, D.C. where he managed integrated government relations campaigns for multinational corporations and trade associations in the aviation, pharmaceutical and reinsurance industries. He is a University of Florida law graduate, J.D. magna cum laude, and graduated from the George Washington University with a bachelor's degree in philosophy.

In 2018, Tyler served as the Chairman of All for Transportation, the historic citizen-led campaign to fund county transportation improvements. The successful campaign collected over 77,000 citizen petitions, raised over \$3 million, and passed with 57% of the vote. He serves on the boards of the Tampa Downtown Partnership and the Tampa Heights Civic Association and is a member of the Urban Land Institute.



JOHN M. JONES, AICP, CRP, FRA-RP

Mr. Jones is a Project Manager for S&ME, Inc. His specialization is in planning and consulting in community redevelopment and economic development. With over 20 years of experience in the field, Mr. Jones has facilitated the establishment, expansion, extension and day to day operations of several Community Redevelopment agencies in Central Florida including the Seminole County US17-92 CRA; the City of Sanford CRA and the City of Oviedo CRA. He has authored numerous Finding of Necessity Studies, CRA Redevelopment Plan updates and amendments for CRA's throughout the State of Florida.

Mr. Jones' career began as a public-sector planner focusing on land use and economic development planning and programming. The past 16 years of his private sector career have enabled him to continue his work with public sector CRA's. Mr. Jones has participated in private sector redevelopment planning, developing business assistance programming, developer matchmaking, the preparation of developer/development RFQs/RFPs and solicitations, the creation of Memorandums of Understanding, negotiation of Developer's Agreement for community redevelopment projects and preparation of retail market studies and economic and fiscal impact report.



EVAN JOHNSON, AICP, LEED AP, FRA-RP

Mr. Johnson is the Business Development Manager for Pinellas County. Mr. Johnson has worked with Florida communities on a wide variety of projects across the state for the past ten years, public and private sector. He is a committed historic preservationist, an urban design and mobility-oriented urban planner, and he has special experience in the critical interplay of land use and transportation. He received his bachelor's degree and master's degree in Urban and Regional Planning from the Florida State University. He was awarded Young Planner of the Year in 2008 by the American Planning Association, and Planner of the Year by the American Planning Association Florida Sun Coast Section in 2008. He serves on the Board of Directors, Friends of Tampa Union Station, Inc., and was elected President in 2014, as well as the Board of the Florida Redevelopment Association.



KAREN KRESS, AICP, LCI

Ms. Kress is the Director of Transportation and Planning at the Tampa Downtown Partnership. Karen serves as the Director of Transportation and Planning at the Tampa Downtown Partnership. In her role, Karen manages all aspects of transportation, parking and access throughout Downtown Tampa. A true advocate for transit and transportation, Karen leads Tampa Downtown Partnership's Transportation and Urban Design Committees, and its Parking Task Force. Karen has been successful in advocating for and bringing transportation options such as Coast bike share, ZipCar carshare, and Downtowner – an app-based electric ride service.

An avid biker, Karen helped found Tampa BayCycle (now called Bike Walk Tampa Bay), a regional cycling education, advocacy and encouragement campaign in 2007 and for over twenty years she has actively volunteered for the Sierra Club's Inspiring Connections Outdoors program. Acknowledging her efforts, Karen was honored by the Suncoast Chapter of the American Planning Association Planner of the Year in 2014 and in 2017 she was appointed as a Planning Commissioner by the City of Tampa. She is also a certified League Cycling Instructor (LCI) and can teach bike safety classes. Karen moved to Tampa in the mid-1990's and is raising her three children with her husband in their own little slice of paradise on the Hillsborough River.



CHARLES L. MAROHN, JR., PE, AICP

Charles is the Founder and President of Strong Towns. Marohn is the lead author of *Thoughts on Building Strong Towns — Volume 1, Volume 2 and Volume 3* — as well as the author of *A World Class Transportation System*. He hosts the Strong Towns Podcast and is a primary writer for Strong Towns' web content. He has presented Strong Towns concepts in hundreds of cities and towns across North America and in 2017 was named one of

the 10 Most Influential Urbanists of all time by Planetizen. Marohn is a long-time commentator on KAXE Northern Community Radio. He currently co-hosts KAXE's Dig Deep program, a monthly examination of public policy issues affecting Minnesotans. Chuck grew up on a small farm in Central Minnesota. The oldest of three sons of two elementary school teachers, he joined the Minnesota National Guard on his 17th birthday during his junior year of high school and served for nine years. In addition to being passionate about building a stronger America, he loves playing music, is an obsessive reader and religiously follows his favorite team, the Minnesota Twins. Chuck and his wife live with their two daughters in their hometown of Brainerd, Minnesota.



LISA ANNE MIFFLIN, NBE | CRCM

District Community Affairs Officer
Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC)

Lisa provides CRA training, technical assistance and community development resources to banks, OCC examiners and other stakeholders in Florida, Oklahoma and NE Texas. Lisa also leads and participates in CRA examinations for banks throughout the country. She began her career with the OCC as a safety and soundness examiner; later specializing in anti-money laundering, consumer protection and CRA. She has also served in other capacities in the OCC including college recruiting, new examiner training and assignments in Large Bank Supervision, Compliance/CRA Policy and Problem Bank Supervision in Washington, D.C. Ms. Mifflin is a speaker for industry conferences and an instructor for OCC CRA workshops for examiners and bank directors. She also represents the OCC on the advisory board for the Hillsborough County Schools Academy of Finance, a program that provides financial education, job shadowing and financial internships to high school students. Lisa is a graduate of the University of South Florida (USF) with a Master of Public Administration, Bachelor of Science in Finance, and Certificate in Urban Studies. In 2017, Lisa completed the USF Community Real Estate Development program.



TONY OTTE, CEcD, FRA-RA

Mr. Otte is the CRA and Economic Development Manager for the City of New Smyrna Beach. He is a current FRA Board Member and has over 30 years of redevelopment & economic development experience - as a City Manager; CRA and Economic Development Director. His commercial realtor experience has spanned many years, and he maintains his Florida Real Estate Sales Associate license (voluntarily inactive). He managed a family construction business, is a IEDC Certified Economic Developer and a FRA Florida Redevelopment Administrator. He has a master's degree in Public Affairs from the University of Cincinnati and a bachelor's Degree, Thomas More College, Crestview Hills,

Kentucky.



MATTHEW PETTY

Matthew is a city planner and real estate developer who has also been elected three times to the Fayetteville City Council. Matthew has a deep understanding of American zoning and development codes and infrastructure planning processes. He has facilitated numerous public hearings and stakeholder engagement efforts, and his first mixed-use project as an owner-developer is under construction.

Matthew was a grant writer and development associate for four years at the University of Arkansas Community Design Center, a professional urban design and architecture program which has earned more than 100 national and international awards for its urban designs, storm water solutions, and scenario plans. Matthew's time at UACDC has provided him a keen sense of how to overcome obstacles to project funding and site development. Serving his ninth year on the Fayetteville City Council, Matthew is Chair of the Transportation Committee as well as the city's tourism agency, where he orients infrastructure and marketing budgets towards Fayetteville's broader strategies.

Matthew's experience has taught him how to identify and overcome barriers to missing middle development and placemaking. He believes cities can build local wealth and restore neighborhoods by leveling the playing field for appropriate infill projects.

Matthew holds undergraduate degrees in Mathematics and Political Science from the University of Arkansas.



C.J. REYNOLDS

Ms. Reynolds is the Director of Resilience and Engagement for the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council. She is also the staff lead for the Tampa Bay Regional Resilience Coalition, which was formed in 2018 and currently includes 28 local governments. CJ has more than 25 years of experience working with scientists, local governments, professional associations, agencies and the private sector to identify and address emerging risks through innovative research and training partnerships. As the Resilience Coalition lead, she works with elected officials and staff to support integration of resilience strategies into all departments and plans. From 2011 to 2018, CJ was a researcher at the University of South Florida College of Marine Science, where she developed and coordinated federal grant research projects involving local governments to assess attitudes related to risk, adaptation strategies and municipal finance. Prior to moving to Florida, CJ was the Director of Industry Education at Merieux NutriSciences, a global food testing and consulting company, where she led the development of technical services and training for new food safety regulations and standards. She has also served as the director of public relations for the National Cattlemen's Beef Association. CJ has a Bachelor of Science degree from Northern Illinois University.



BELINDA RICHARD

Ms. Richard is Terracon's National Brownfields Program Manager and has over 20 years of environmental experience with the past 14 years dedicated to the brownfields program. She has assisted more than 50 brownfield programs in implementing over \$30 million dollars of federal brownfields grant funding. Her experience includes grant development, project management, grant compliance and reporting, community outreach, Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPPs), budget management, brownfield inventories, environmental site assessments, remedial planning, grant closeouts, cleanup oversight, brownfield incentives and Brownfield Site Rehabilitation Agreements (BSRAs).

Ms. Richard has assisted clients in securing EPA Grant funding and every aspect of the brownfields grant lifecycle ensuring compliance with EPA Terms and Conditions of the grant. She works closely with communities in obtaining funding, developing their programs, leveraging local incentives and implementing successful redevelopment. In addition, Ms. Richard works closely with the EPA Brownfields administration, and is an experienced negotiator with the regulatory community. Ms. Richard started her career as an environmental regulator for the Florida Department of Environmental Protection; and has a Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Engineering from the University of Florida.



TONI SHAMPLAIN, FRA-RA

Toni Shamplain is the Downtown North CRA Manager with the City of Panama City CRA. She is also the President Elect of the Florida Redevelopment Association and holds the designation of Florida Redevelopment Administrator through the FRA Academy.

Prior to her current position Ms. Shamplain was the Main Street Manager with the Downtown Improvement Board where she not only served as Main Street Manager but also was responsible for 3 of the 4 CRAs administered by the DIB.

Additionally, she was the first Director for the Panama City CRA as a stand-alone agency that later merged with the City of Panama City. Ms. Shamplain holds a bachelor's degree from Bethune Cookman University and has earned various Certifications in Management, Outcome Evaluations, Human Resources, as well as a Certificate of Appreciation from the Executive Office of the United States President, Washington D.C.

Toni's areas of expertise include not only community revitalization and redevelopment, but design and implementation of substance abuse treatment programs, designing group homes for children as well as the elderly; primary health care; criminal justice and corrections; information officer for a computer software design corporation, and working in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. Ms. Shamplain also has expertise in System Analysis, Budgets, Public Policy, Faith Based Organizations and Not for Profits, etc.

Ms. Shamplain has worked effectively within various levels of government to include city, state and federal government. She is also a former Instructor with the Georgia Schools of Substance Abuse Studies, a Visiting Professor for Historical Black Colleges, adjunct professor Daytona Beach State College, Guest Lecturer at Georgetown University, and a National Motivational Speaker. Ms. Shamplain has been featured on National TV (CBS) for her advocacy and program success in Miami Florida while also being a contributing author with the Child Welfare League of America. Shamplain recently graduated from Rowlett Real Estate School and is preparing to take the state examination.



CLIFFORD B. SHEPARD

Mr. Shepard is the general counsel of the Florida Redevelopment Association. Mr. Shepard serves in a city attorney capacity to several cities in Florida. He also serves as the General Counsel for the Florida Redevelopment Association and is a certified Circuit Court mediator.

He obtained his undergraduate degree in journalism (News Writing and Editing) and graduated law school from the University of Florida, where he was a member of the Trial Competition Team, Managing Editor of *The Verdict* student newspaper, and a member of the law school's student government.

Cliff's practice developed in the areas of local government law, complex commercial litigation, real estate development, insurance defense and construction law, as well as homeowner and condominium association representation, an area he developed after serving as association president to a 2400 home development in Seminole County. In 1995, Cliff attained the AV rating from Martindale-Hubbell, and is listed in the *Bar Register of Preeminent Lawyers*®. Cliff practices and mediates extensively in the areas of government law, employment, defense, real estate, construction law, complex commercial litigation and community association law. He is Board Certified by The Florida Bar in City, County and Local Government Law.

Cliff has been honored by Florida Trend Magazine as one of Florida's *Legal Elite*™ (2005-2009) in the areas of Governmental and Administrative Law and Commercial Litigation. Each year the magazine names a new group of top lawyers who have earned the confidence of those who know their work the best. Attorneys and judges throughout Florida were asked to name lawyers whom they hold in the highest regard - lawyers they have worked with or would recommend to others. The *Legal Elite*™ represent the top 1.7% of the 56,513 Florida Bar members who practice in the state. Cliff was also named a "*Florida Super Lawyers*" (2005-2010) by Law & Politics Magazine. "*Florida Super Lawyers*" is a consumer's guide to the best attorneys in the state.

Community service has also been a staple of Cliff's personal and professional life. He has served as a member of the Land Planning Agency for the City of Oviedo and as a member of the Board of Directors of Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Central Florida. He has also served as the Chairman of the Board for *Kids Beating Cancer, Inc.*, a multiple award-winning local charity that assists families touched by childhood cancer through the recruitment, DNA testing and matching of potential bone marrow donors to patients whose best hope for a cure is a bone marrow transplant. Cliff also serves as a court appointed *guardian-ad-litem* to children who have been abused, abandoned or neglected by their parents.



RICHARD STAUTS

Richard Stauts is the Executive Director of the Florida City Community Redevelopment Agency. A native Texan, he graduated from Stephen F. Austin University with a BBA. Rick moved to Morgan City, Louisiana, working for the Credit Bureau for nine years, then the First National Bank. In 1987, Rick moved to Florida with First American Bank in Tallahassee. In 1989, Rick became an Economic Development Specialist and later, Planning Manager with the State of Florida Community Development Block Grant Program.

Since 2003, Rick has been the CRA Executive Director in two cities, Homestead until 2007, and Florida City from 2007 to present. Rick served two five-year terms on the Florida Redevelopment Association Board of Directors, serves on the FRA Nominating Committee, and is the Past Chairman of the FRA Academy Committee.

Rick has presented at conferences and workshops for such groups as the Florida League of Cities, Florida Redevelopment Association, Florida Economic Development Council, Florida Community Development Association, Florida Housing Coalition, Florida Main Street, FEMA, and US HUD.



KEN THOMAS

Ken Thomas is the Director of Housing & Redevelopment for the City of Leesburg.

Mr. Thomas has served local governments for over 30 years; most of his work experience has involved redevelopment of neighborhoods. He is currently the Director of Housing & Redevelopment for the City of Leesburg; Ken has been employed with the City of Leesburg for 17 years. Prior to Leesburg, Ken worked at the City of Delray Beach and Orange County Government; he holds a master's degree in Public Administration

from the University of Central Florida and a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Historic Bethune Cookman University.

Ken has dedicated his professional life to redeveloping neighborhoods; providing affordable housing, small business development and job creation. Ken created the first Business Incubator in Lake County (known as the Leesburg Business Incubator). He has been responsible for local governments receiving millions of dollars in grant funds for housing and redevelopment efforts. Ken was responsible for renovating an apartment complex utilizing grant funding, which resulted in the first housing incubation program focused on providing temporary housing to individuals who desired to become first time homebuyers. Most recently, Mr. Thomas has been responsible for the first Resource Center in Lake County. Ken is a Board Member of the Florida Redevelopment Association, Central Florida Health Foundation Board Chairman, and the Leesburg High School Power Academy Advisory Board and Lake County Housing Advisory Board. Ken has been married to his wife (Maria) for 29 years and they have four children.



BRENDA THROWER

Ms. Thrower is the Economic Development Specialist for the Ybor City Development Corporation, Economic and Urban Development Department, City of Tampa. She serves on the Florida Redevelopment Association Board of Directors. She manages, plans, and promotes economic development initiatives for Ybor City's two Community Redevelopment Areas. As your tour guide of the Ybor Walking Tour, Brenda is reprising her much sought-after role of bringing history, economic development and Ybor to life.



DAVID N. TOLCES, B.C.S.

David N. Tolces, B.C.S., Board Certified City, County, Local Government Lawyer is Shareholder with the firm of Goren, Cherof, Doody & Ezrol, P.A., in Fort Lauderdale, and Delray Beach, Florida. His practice includes governmental law, commercial transactions, real estate, and environmental matters. Currently David serves as legal counsel for the Delray Beach, Lake Worth Beach, and the Margate Community Redevelopment Agencies. Mr. Tolces also represents municipalities and other governmental agencies in Broward and Palm Beach Counties, including the Broward

County Housing Authority, the Deerfield Beach Housing Authority, the Dania Beach Housing Authority, the Hillsboro Inlet District, and the City of Doral Charter Review Commission. Mr. Tolces has served as Special Counsel for the Port Canaveral District Charter Review Committee, and as General Counsel to the Brevard County Charter Review Commission. His private practice includes representing clients in real estate, land use, administrative, and civil litigation matters that are an outgrowth of acquiring, selling, or owning real estate in Florida. He received his B.S. in Geological Sciences from the University of Texas at Austin in 1986, and his J.D. from the University of Florida College of Law in 1989. Mr. Tolces is certified by the Florida Bar in City, County, and Local Government Law.



JUSTIN WILLITS

Mr. Willits joined the Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority (HART) in May of 2019 as a Senior Planner in the Service Development Department. He previously worked as a consultant for Tampa-based Tindale Oliver for 6 years. Prior to coming to Tampa, he supported the Transit Task Force planning a Bus Rapid Transit Network for Montgomery County, MD while completing his master's in urban and Regional Planning from The University of Florida. His professional career has been focused transit operations planning, multi-modal Complete Streets and developing Transit Master Plans for various agencies throughout the southeast. His primary role at HART is overseeing day-to-day service planning, project development, the management of short-and-long-range planning, and inter-agency coordination to enhance multi-modal transportation systems throughout the region. He and his wife both prefer commuting by bike or transit, and he currently sits on the Livable Roadways Committee of the Hillsborough Metropolitan Planning Organization.



MICHAEL ZAHARIOS

As a third-generation entrepreneur, Mr. Zaharios' passion for innovation started at a young age while spending afternoons learning about business from his dad and grandfather at their automotive repair shop in Daytona Beach. While earning a bachelor's degree and MBA, he helped lay the groundwork for the inception of the Florida Virtual Entrepreneur Center. He oversees this organization, which has grown into an online network and educational resource for entrepreneurs across Florida's 67 counties. He is passionate about giving back to the community through volunteering, and facilitating events such as 1 Million Cups, Kickstart Weekend and Startup Grind.