

Eight Elements of Seaport Success

To achieve the 2016 vision of success, our seaports collectively identified eight specific elements to be addressed in our respective planning and development initiatives:

Element 1: Strategic Port Planning - Locally, Regionally, and Statewide

Solid, forward-looking planning has been responsible for the seaports' successes to date and will continue to guide our future, providing a balance of environmental stewardship and economic benefits. State statutes require that each Florida seaport have an approved port master plan, incorporated into the comprehensive plan of its local government. The planning process provides an open public opportunity for the seaports and their partners to assess the goals, objectives, and policies needed to achieve the seaports' strategic regional market and community needs. The resulting plans guide the future of the seaports -- locally, regionally, and statewide.

Element 2: Deepwater Access

Without adequate navigational access, seaports cannot meet expanding market and vessel requirements. Consequently, developing and maintaining adequate deepwater berths, navigation channels, and turning basins is essential to the seaports' competitive future and vision of success.

Element 3: Efficient Landside Access

Just as adequate navigational access for vessels is essential to a seaport's growth, road and rail systems must be able to move cargo and passengers efficiently on and off the ports. Good market access through a seamless connection from the water, through the port, and onto the highway, air, and rail systems is a prerequisite for efficient and cost-effective services to global shippers and other maritime users. Through the funding provided under the state's Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) and SIS Growth Management programs, Florida's seaports have made significant headway in connecting their facilities to the major trade corridors that carry goods the length and breadth of Florida's peninsula. Funding has been programmed over the five-year period for designated seaport connectors and it is hoped that the state will be able not only to fund additional road and rail links, but also to accelerate construction. To make an even greater difference in today's competitive environment, however, Florida needs to promote its strategic statewide significant trade corridors for both federal and state funding.



Element 4: Capacity for Port Growth - Locally and Regionally

Limited land for capacity expansion constrains growth at many of our seaports. Through more efficient and effective use of the limited land we do have, the seaports hope to overcome this constraint. Among

the tools at our disposal are implementation of appropriate new development and redevelopment strategies and the use of new technologies to be more productive in stacking full containers and storing empty ones, for example, or in receiving bulk cargoes.

Element 5: Balance between User Needs and the Cost of Maritime Operations

Mandated security continues to impose a costly burden on the seaports, as we strive to achieve our goals. Having deferred vital capital projects to pay for our security infrastructure, we have continued to realign our budgets to address the recurring operational costs of maintaining the required level of alert. Seaports

Achieving the balance between commerce and security has created enormous financial and operational challenges at all of the seaports.

must be efficient, cost-effective, and secure to be competitive. At the same time, the industry requires that seaports remain flexible and offer services and facilities to their users at a cost that is sensitive to market demand and serves to reduce the cost of consumer goods in the marketplace. Balancing commerce and security has created enormous financial and operational challenges at all of the seaports.

Element 6: Ability to Build and Sustain Key Partnerships

Since the creation of the FSTED program in 1990, Florida's transportation system providers and users have been partners in creating efficient statewide transportation services. Today the need for efficient services is greater than ever and our seaports, with their local, state, federal, and private sector partners, require infrastructure funding strategies that effectively meet the market demands of our capital improvement programs. Continued local, state, and federal government support is critical to the on-going success of our seaports and Florida's economy.

Element 7: Value of Investing in Florida Seaports and Serving Florida's Population

Florida seaports and users provide critical services to the state's population in terms of accessing global freight and cruise markets. Most of the consumer goods serving our growing population and the construction materials building the state's infrastructure flow through Florida's seaports. Florida residents thus accrue daily benefits from their proximity to one or more of our state's seaports as consumers purchase the goods transported across seaport docks, entrepreneurs sustain diversified businesses serving the maritime industry, and employees enjoy the well-paying jobs the seaports create.

Element 8: Enhanced Public Understanding and Support for Florida's Seaports

Despite the economic benefits our seaports bring to their respective communities and the state, these benefits are not generally understood by the public at large. Consequently, the seaports determined that we should individually and collectively promote public understanding of our value and importance to Florida's economic vitality and prosperity.

These eight elements provide the framework for achieving our 2016 vision of success. To continue the work of this comprehensive planning initiative, however, our seaports, users, and partners must continue engaging in a cooperative planning process to build consensus on our shared vision of success and on the needs, policies, and strategies to implement that vision.