



INTERMODAL LOGISTICS CENTERS:

Moving us Forward to Increase Trade and Create Jobs

By Sherry Howard, Deputy Director
Palm Beach County Department of Economic Sustainability

A thriving economy depends, in large part, on an interconnected transportation network of highways, rail, seaports, and airports in order to distribute goods. As highlighted in this issue of *Business*, general aviation plays an important role by providing more specialized services that boost aviation's impact on improving overall business efficiency, which the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Aviation Office reports at an annual increase of \$94.5 billion.

South Florida, with its developing multimodal infrastructure system, now has the opportunity to further connect these transportation modes and transform this region into a major hub for trade, logistics, and manufacturing with the advent of Intermodal Logistics Centers.

The terms "intermodal logistics center" and "inland port" refer to one or more facilities that serve as an inland point of intermodal transfer of freight. There, activities relating to transport, logistics, goods distribution, consolidation and other valued activities are carried out and are designed to support or be supported by conveyance or shipping through one or more seaports or freight carriers.

Domestic sugar producer, Florida Crystals has proposed an Intermodal Logistics Center (ILC) on 850 acres of industrial land in the Glades Region of western Palm Beach County. The ILC project is a component of the Glades Region Master Plan that Palm Beach County is administering with a team of professional partners pursuant to a grant received from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Development of the Plan involves extensive public participation and will serve as a guiding blueprint to enhance economic competitiveness in the Glades, focusing on major employment centers.

Plans for the ILC include the receipt and shipment of cargo to and from South Florida ports, provision of off-port cargo storage, consolidation, repackaging and transfer of goods. The facility may also include other intermodal terminals and related transportation facilities, warehousing and distribution centers, and other office, light industrial, and manufacturing and assembly uses. It is important to note that not only could such a facility enhance the growth of the logistics and distribution industry cluster and position the county to increase trade, but very important for the Glades Region is the anticipated 4,000+ jobs it could create in an area which has experienced high unemployment.

In January, FDOT, District IV released its US 27 Multimodal Planning & Conceptual Engineering (PACE) Study which investigated the feasibility of developing a multimodal US 27 corridor, incorporating rail that would connect with the Port of Miami. The PACE study concluded that US 27 must be widened to accommodate future ILC traffic and that the addition of rail was indeed feasible. As the proposed ILC site in the Glades sits at a crossroads in this transportation corridor, we look forward to further analysis and recommendations coming out of the study.

For further information about this and other components of the Glades Region Master Plan, please look for this icon on the DES home page at www.pbcgov.com/des or contact DES at (561) 233-3600.

**Glades
Region
Master
Plan**