

## NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Betty S. Carlin, Director of Communications  
(813) 872-2811  
[bcarlin@tampabay.org](mailto:bcarlin@tampabay.org)

### **REGIONAL ECONOMIC SCORECARD SHOWS REGION CONTINUES TO SLIP Regional Leadership Conference To Provide Forum To Discuss, Develop Solutions**

TAMPA BAY, FL (May 19, 2008) – The Tampa Bay Partnership released findings from its latest Regional Economic Scorecard today which compares the region's economic performance against the comparison regions of Atlanta, Charlotte, Dallas, Jacksonville, and Raleigh-Durham. Overall, the Scorecard reflected a decline in performance for Tampa Bay due to the state's weak housing sector. As a result of the downturn in housing over the last 12 months, Tampa Bay lost 27, 0000 jobs from the first quarter 2007. This suppressed income for the region over the same period. The two Florida communities ranked in the scorecard, Jacksonville and Tampa Bay, ranked fifth and sixth overall, respectively.

The scorecard, which measures the five economic driver categories of employment and workforce; income and productivity; housing; innovation; and education, contained some promising news for Tampa Bay. Housing permit growth in the region improved from the last scorecard, Tampa Bay continued to enjoy a competitive edge in the critical category of education, and Tampa Bay's innovation ranking showed only a slight decline, despite the economic downturn.

The scorecard also ranked the comparison regions in the area of transportation for the first time ever. The Partnership developed this ranking with input from representatives of FDOT, MPOs, and other transportation professionals. The transportation measures included congestion, commute time, vehicle miles traveled per capita, transit ridership, and investment per capita. Tampa Bay ranked fourth in the transportation category.

“The most recent scorecard reflects the impact of the widely reported economic downturn and shows that we have work to do to strengthen the economic health and well being of our region,” said Gary Sasso, President & CEO with Carlton Fields and Business Intelligence Chair who leads the scorecard initiative for the Partnership.

The Partnership will address the challenges documented in the scorecard at its upcoming Regional Leadership Conference, on May 21-23, in Sarasota. The conference will bring together leaders from across the seven-county Tampa Bay region to discuss the challenges and opportunities the region faces in the ever increasing worldwide competition for business and investment. In addition to sessions on competitiveness, regionalism, infrastructure and sustainability, the Partnership will continue its work on a three-year strategic action plan for the region.

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4300 W. Cypress St., Suite 250 Tampa Bay, Florida 33607  
phone: 813-878-2208 fax: 813-872-9356  
[www.TampaBay.org](http://www.TampaBay.org)

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“In tough economic times, we must focus our efforts and make meaningful choices for our future. This conference is an important proactive effort to address these issues by bringing leadership together from across the region to share perspectives, discuss the issues and develop measurable solutions we can all work toward together,” said Stuart Rogel, President & CEO of the Tampa Bay Partnership. For more information about the 2008 Regional Leadership Conference, visit [www.TampaBay.org](http://www.TampaBay.org).

The information contained in the Regional Economic Scorecard is the most recent data available from widely used and reliable sources that has been compiled in a fashion that is easy to read and observe comparisons. Partnership leaders have described it as a “dashboard viewpoint” enabling them to quickly review key data necessary for decision-making.

**About Tampa Bay Partnership:**

The Tampa Bay Partnership is the regional organization that brings the communities of Tampa Bay together to accelerate life’s possibilities through advocacy, marketing, research and leadership. Founded in 1994, the Tampa Bay Partnership provides regional economic development for the metro areas of Tampa/St. Petersburg/Clearwater, Lakeland, and Sarasota/Bradenton/Venice and the counties of Hernando, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, and Sarasota.

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