

# I. INTRODUCTION

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## Introduction

*We are a community that values a vibrant, healthy environment with substantial open space, equally distributed throughout the County. Our citizens enjoy pristine water bodies and clean air, with County standards that are the strictest in the state. All of our cities are our partners and have adopted best management models for sustainability, stewardship, landscape maintenance, and green building. County divisional practices and codes reflect and further the Board's policies and vision.*

### Commission Vision: A Pristine, Healthy Environment

The issue of climate change (also known as global warming) has emerged as a phenomenon of critical concern worldwide. In response to well-substantiated and compelling scientific evidence supporting the validity and urgency of climate change and the public's desire for action, a political environment has been created for local, state and federal lawmakers to press for real changes in public policy related to energy/climate change. Broward County, the Florida Legislature, the U.S. Congress, and governments globally are engaged in the development of initiatives to reduce the impacts of climate change. In May of 2008 the Florida Legislature passed landmark Energy/Climate Change legislation (HB 7135) that, if approved by the Governor, will put Florida in the forefront of climate change initiatives with states like California and others that have been leading the way for many years.

On June 12, 2007, the Broward County Board of County Commissioners adopted Resolution 2007-391 (**Exhibit A**) to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in Broward County and to support the U.S. Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement. By promulgating this resolution, Broward County committed to strive to meet or beat the Kyoto Protocol target of reducing GHG emission levels to 7% below 1990 levels by 2012, committed to urge the federal and state government to enact policies and programs to meet the Kyoto Protocol target of GHG reductions at national and state levels, and committed to encourage city and town governments within Broward County to sign on to the Agreement. This resolution establishes the Board's commitment to climate change protection and creates a framework to guide the planning and implementation of related measures.

Consistent with the commitments under this resolution, the first Broward County action to carry out the mandate of the resolution was to develop this Broward County Government Operations Climate Change Report (Report).

In efforts to reduce energy consumption from electrical and fossil fuel use, and increase the efficiency of its operations, Broward County has already taken many early voluntary GHG reduction actions and implemented various energy savings programs over the past several years. As a positive consequence of these actions, the County has already started the move toward reducing GHG emissions consistent with established climate change efforts. The following are a few examples of actions already being taken by various County agencies for which there is a demonstrable reduction in GHG emissions:

- Certification of the South Regional Library as a Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design-New Construction (LEED) Project;
- Placement of trees around buildings to provide shading and the use of native plants to reduce irrigation;
- Perform energy efficient building lighting retrofits;
- Use of alternative fuels in the County's fleet including: biodiesel, compressed natural gas, and hybrid electric vehicles.

A complete list of actions is included in Section V of the Report.

Broward County convened a Climate Change Inter-agency Task Force (Task Force) with the objective of preparing a Climate Change Report and future recommendations. Due to the wide scope of issues associated with government operations' GHG emission reductions, multiple County departments under the jurisdiction of the County Administration are represented in the Task Force. The operations under the jurisdiction of Constitutional Officers are not included as part of this Report. Diverse issues which need to be addressed include, but are not limited to, energy efficiency and conservation, transportation, utilities, air quality, resource recovery, recycling, protection of green spaces, water resource management, building and construction standards, alternative energy and fuels, sustainable development, and education and outreach.

For the purposes of this Report, the Task Force discussed and selected a goal of reducing GHG emissions to 7% below 1997 levels, by 2015. The Task Force made this decision based on operational data available to calculate a base year emissions inventory for County operations. The purpose of the Report is to:

- Review potential climate change related impacts;
- Establish a numerical GHG emissions reduction goal for Broward County operations;
- Identify a baseline year and calculate the associated GHG emissions inventory;
- Quantify and credit early voluntary actions already implemented towards the reduction target; and
- Recommend GHG emission reduction strategies for future consideration.