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COMMUNITY LEADERS SET SIX NEW ECONOMIC INITIATIVES

Sarasota, FL (October 3, 2008) – Sarasota County’s economy was the topic of a collaborative action summit held today. Nearly 200 people gathered at the Re-energizing Our Local Economy (ROLE) Summit to reach agreement on a set of actions that will help jumpstart the local economy.

Attendees, chosen from a nomination process, included representatives from the business community, government, neighborhood groups, non-profit organizations, and educational institutions.

Participants were asked to develop ideas for measurable and actionable improvements related to job creation, business support, government and community collaboration, and business climate.

Through small group discussions and action plan presentations, participants identified the following action items as priorities:

- Make Sarasota County Florida’s leader in clean energy technology
- Encourage regulatory flexibility within government to enhance growth, development, and recruitment of businesses
- Create opportunities for innovative people and businesses to thrive; promote Sarasota as Florida’s innovative coastal community
- Attract new and grow existing businesses through the use of incentives and best practices
- Create a plan to retain our community’s college and university talent
- Build a community-wide consensus on a new, sustainable economic identity

Next steps for the identified initiatives will be discussed at a November 12 meeting open to ROLE Summit attendees and other community members interested in getting involved in the initiatives.

The summit, coordinated by SCOPE, was a collaborative effort of public and private entities including: City of North Port, City of Sarasota, Economic Development Corporation of Sarasota County, Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce, Sarasota Convention & Visitors Bureau, and Sarasota County Government.

Sponsors for the summit include the Gulf Coast Community Foundation of Venice, Abel Band, Chartered, Sarasota Tomorrow, Community Foundation of Sarasota County, AM Engineering, the Economic Development Corporation, Lido Beach Resort, Positive Change Media, Sarasota and her Islands and FPL.