

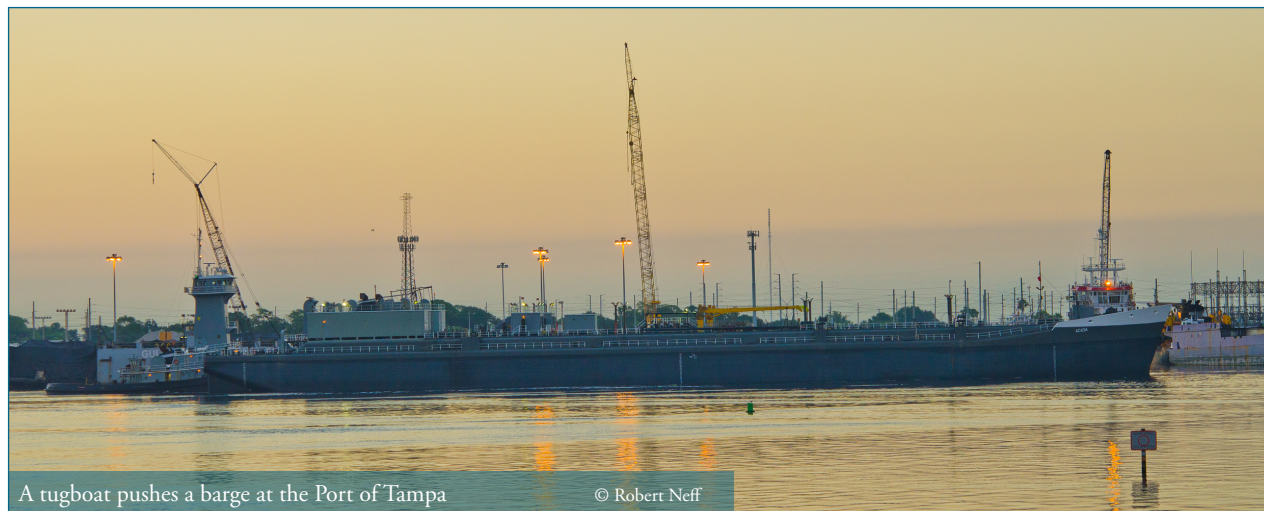
Tampa Bay: Becoming an Export-Oriented Economy

The Tampa Bay region comprises close to one fourth of Florida's economy, with a highly diversified economic base that employs professionals in a number of industries, including professional and business services, trade, and transportation. The primary regional port, Port of Tampa, handled nearly 40 percent of all cargo moving in and out of Florida in 2011. However, the region only generates 15.6 percent of Florida's merchandise exports. Given the region's size and availability of transportation infrastructure, there is an opportunity to increase exports.

Tampa Bay's Current Export Profile

According to the Brookings Institution in their 2012 report, *Export Nation*, the value of exports in the Tampa Bay region in 2010 was \$10.9 billion and represents 6.8 percent of the area's GDP. Some of the top exporting industries (by dollar value) include business services and travel, and computers and electronics. This aligns with the fact that Tampa Bay has a higher share of service exports than the nation: 47.8 percent of Tampa Bay's exports are services, compared to 33.2 percent for the US.¹ The top markets for Tampa Bay's exports are the United Kingdom, Canada, Ireland, Switzerland, and Germany.

While services make up a large part of Tampa Bay exports, there is existing infrastructure to handle an increase in export of goods. The Tampa Bay area has two deepwater ports, Port of Tampa and Port Manatee, as well as three international airports – Tampa International, St. Petersburg-Clearwater International, and



A tugboat pushes a barge at the Port of Tampa

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¹ Brookings *Export Nation*, 2012. Aggregate of Metropolitan Profiles

Sarasota-Bradenton International—that are used for the international shipment of air freight.

Port of Tampa has significant experience and capacity to handle bulk and break-bulk cargo.² During the past decade, the Port of Tampa has increased its container-handling capabilities, including the Tampa Gateway Rail Terminal discussed in the September 2012 *Economic Commentary*.³ Additionally, Port Manatee is expected to open Phase One of its South



Port Container Terminal in 2013. This is a 52-acre container facility aimed at attracting new cargoes expected in the Gulf of Mexico due to the expansion of the Panama Canal.

The Brookings Institution Program

Tampa Bay was selected by The Brookings Institution, a Washington D.C. think tank, as one of only eight U.S. metro areas for a unique export planning process, creating a new opportunity to expand the region's exporting efforts; this will increase high-skilled, high-wage job creation in Tampa Bay, and help increase Florida's international balance of payments.

The Brookings Institution first analyzed exports at the metropolitan level in the United States in their 2010 study *Export Nation*, which was updated with a second version of the study in 2012. According to their latest study, increased export sales provided 600,000 additional jobs in the first year of economic recovery.⁴

In 2011, Brookings developed the Metropolitan Export Initiative (MEI), which was comprised of one-year pilot programs in four metropolitan areas: Los Angeles, CA; Minneapolis-Saint Paul, MN; Portland, OR; and Syracuse, NY. These pilot programs helped groups of civic, business and political leaders create and implement regionally customized export plans.

After successfully carrying out the pilot programs, Brookings created the Metropolitan Export Exchange, a program that will use training, peer learning opportunities, team work assignments and targeted advice to help the selected areas design and implement their own metropolitan export plans (MEPs). This is the program for which Tampa Bay was selected, along with Charleston, SC; Chicago, IL; Columbus, OH; Des Moines, IA; Louisville-Lexington, KY; San Diego, CA; and San Antonio, TX.⁵

² Tampa Port Authority. www.tampaport.com/about-the-port.aspx

³ Florida Invests in Competitiveness, *Economic Commentary*, September 2012, The Florida TaxWatch Center for Competitive Florida

⁴ Export Nation 2012: How U.S. Metropolitan Areas are Driving National Growth. www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/reports/2012/3/08exports/0308_exports

⁵ Tampa Bay Partnership. "Tampa Bay Region Selected for Brookings Metropolitan Export Exchange" <http://partnership.tampabay.org/documents/NR-Brookings%20Metro%20Export%20Exchange.pdf>

In order for regions to deliver successful MEPs, Brookings recommends that ten key steps be followed. As the 10 steps are completed, Tampa Bay will prepare an export market assessment, export strategy, implementation plan, and policy recommendations. Companies and organizations involved in the effort include JPMorgan Chase, Tucker/Hall, Enterprise Florida, FedEx, the University of South Florida, Tampa Port Authority, Port Manatee, Tampa International Airport, and several consulting, educational and nonprofit organizations. The effort should help existing and emerging companies that are looking to export to international markets but lack the resources, expertise and strategies needed to reach out to those markets.

Following the announcement in September, the Tampa Bay Partnership, a non-profit organization committed to promoting the Tampa Bay region as a destination for business relocation and expansion, developed and executed an online survey that elicited 219 responses. These responses were then combined with phone interviews of more than 400 manufacturers and service firms in the Tampa Bay region, and more than three dozen extensive interviews with successful exporters to help develop the strategies that will be used in the program. The Tampa Bay Partnership and their partners in this endeavor are currently workshopping the strategies in the community in an effort to have a public rollout of the plan in June of this year.

According to Stuart L. Rogel, President and CEO of the Tampa Bay Partnership, “We have all the right ingredients in Tampa Bay. We have excellent service providers like Enterprise Florida, the Small Business Development Center, and the U.S. Department of Commerce’s Export Assistance Center—all of whom have helped our companies learn how to become regular exporters. Plus, every day we discover additional small and medium-sized businesses in our region that are ready to benefit from an increase in exporting.” Rogel added, “Our efforts going forward will focus on moving exports from the periphery to the mainstream of economic and business development in our region.”

The Tampa Bay area has been working to be more global-oriented, to take advantage of the fact that foreign markets are growing at faster rates than the U.S. market. This is a multifaceted process involving several entities, including business and education. One such effort to create more globally-engaged professionals has been undertaken by University of South Florida. Through its Global Citizenship General Education Program, students have the opportunity to earn a Certificate in Global Citizenship by taking seminars on global issues, enrolling in courses focused on cultural diversity, and earning a partial scholarship to study abroad. Similarly, Florida State University, the University of Florida, the University of Central Florida, and several other academic institutions in the state have incorporated global-oriented classes into their curricula and offer study abroad programs. Having a workforce ready to undertake these new export-focused challenges is vital to export expansion in Florida.

Conclusion

The joint efforts of the Brookings Institution, together with regional public and private partners, will help expand Florida exports, create more jobs, help promote small business products, and will help transfer some of the knowledge and experience to other cities in Florida in order to create a more export-oriented state. All of these outcomes will help diversify Florida’s economy and increase high-wage jobs in our state.

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