



Escambia

Santa Rosa

Okaloosa

Walton

PLANNING TOOLBOX

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Mr. Thomas G. Pelham, Secretary
The Florida Department of Community Affairs

Dear Secretary Pelham:

It is with pleasure that we submit the Sustainable Emerald Coast Planning Toolbox to the Florida Department of Community Affairs (DCA). The document was prepared to support DCA's work in furthering collaborative regional vision planning around the state and the efforts of the Committee for a Sustainable Emerald Coast (CSEC), a public-private regional committee established by Executive Order in 2006 to develop recommendations concerning long-range planning issues related to ensuring sustainable growth and development in Florida's four northwesternmost counties (Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, and Walton). We hope the toolbox will enhance the committee's decision-making process and other similar regional visioning initiatives by providing descriptions and examples of planning tools for its members to consider and evaluate in their efforts to preserve the region's heritage and enhance its natural resources, economic prosperity, and quality of life.

The tools included in the toolbox were selected to help the CSEC achieve its goals to establish quality communities with a sense of place within successful urban areas and small towns; create a diverse, sustainable economy; establish an integrated and enduring process to sustain and improve the region's environment; and provide access to the highest quality education, health care, and a rich cultural heritage. In addition to a description of each tool, the toolbox includes illustrative examples of Florida communities that have put many of them into practice. These examples highlight the broad range of tools being used in our state to preserve natural resources, promote a strong, resilient economy, and plan for future livability. Also included are listings of state and national organizations with expertise in specific tools.

To ensure its technical quality, the toolbox was reviewed by a panel of experts selected for their knowledge of the tools. The peer review panel members, who are listed at the beginning of the toolbox, identified tools to be included and provided descriptions and examples. Panel members' expertise included public involvement, land use planning and development, economic development, agricultural viability, benchmarking, infill and redevelopment, financial planning and analysis, affordable housing, military-community base planning, natural systems, transportation, and water resource planning.

The Center for Urban and Environmental Solutions (CUES) at Florida Atlantic University, in coordination with the Florida Conflict Resolution Consortium at Florida State University, prepared the toolbox as part of its mission to help Florida communities and decision makers address urban and environmental issues through partnerships, education, and research. CUES plans to work with its public and private partners to expand this planning toolbox and make it an enduring resource for Florida communities.

Sincerely,

James F. Murley
Director

Sustainable Emerald Coast Planning Toolbox

*Prepared for the Florida Department of Community Affairs by the
Center for Urban and Environmental Solutions at Florida Atlantic University in
coordination with the Florida Conflict Resolution Consortium at
Florida State University and the University of Central Florida*

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NATURAL SYSTEM CONSERVATION TOOLS



Florida and its Emerald Coast are rich in natural resources that provide the basis for their highly valued quality of life and the big draw for the tourism industry. Florida has some 8,400 miles of coastline, more than 7,700 lakes and 1,700 rivers, 27 first magnitude springs, and millions of acres of open water and wetlands. Those resources provide drinking water, wildlife habitat, and recreational opportunities. Florida's Panhandle is one of the United States' top six most biologically diverse regions. It has 75 percent of Florida's plant species; 23 federally endangered and 13 federally threatened species; old growth longleaf pine forests; and multiple rivers, bays, and estuaries. However, due to the rate of growth in the state and the Panhandle, concerns are increasing about the future viability of those resources. Consequently, state, regional, and local planning organizations (governmental and nonprofit) are employing a broad range of tools to ensure that as Florida grows, a critical mass of its natural resources is protected for future generations. *(A wide variety of nonprofit organizations are involved in promoting the use of those tools across the state. Too many to name in this toolbox, among them are Audubon of Florida [www.audubonflorida.org], the Conservation Fund [www.conservationfund.org], the Nature Conservancy [www.nature.org], the Trust for Public Land [www.tpl.org], and 1000 Friends of Florida [www.1000fof.org], which in 2004 published *A Citizens' Guide to Protecting Resources in Florida's Panhandle* [www.1000fof.org/natural/main.asp]. At the state level, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection serves as the principal source of information on protecting the state's environment. Another source of information is the University of Florida's GeoPlan Center's *Florida Conservation Atlas* [www.geoplan.ufl.edu/whatsnew.html], which contains conservation-oriented spatial datasets that can be used in different scales of conservation planning.)*

Community Stewardship Organizations

A Community Stewardship Organization (CSO) is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization established to address the specific conservation needs of a community. A CSO allows developers to integrate permanent conservation, natural systems restoration, and community-building into their developments through agreements with local stakeholders. A CSO also allows community leaders, developers, and conservationists to work together to assure that development is environmentally sound. To fund a CSO, the parties involved agree to impose revenue-generating deed restrictions, binding future homeowners and businesses to underwrite and provide revenues for the CSO through the creation of long-term dedicated funding. Funding sources for a CSO may include fees (real estate transfer, commercial occupancy, golf course, etc.), monthly assessments, or other recurring revenues. Because CSO funding has an ongoing funding source tied to the development, it continues to benefit the community even after the development is completed.

Use of a CSO provides multiple developer, community, and homeowner benefits. Those benefits include higher real estate value because of the strong market for conservation-oriented communities, coupled with significant amounts of preserved open space that minimizes the impacts of development on natural areas and farmland. The protected open space next to a development also provides many benefits to residents of a development associated with a CSO, including a greater connectivity to the protected open space, a wider variety of lifestyle opportunities, and a greater sense of place. A CSO can complement other conservation programs as well as Homeowners' Associations (HOA) or Community Development District (CDD) activities. Characteristics of a successful CSO include using a vision-driven, rather than entitlement-driven, planning process to identify where development should go and what lands should be protected, and designing the CSO early in development conceptualization, including being very clear about what issues the CSO will and will not address. Funding for the CSO should utilize a permanent, recurring revenue source tied to


EXAMPLES OF CSO ROLES

- Conservation, restoration, and management of natural resources
- Protection of farmland and community-supported agriculture
- Research, monitoring, and environmental education
- Educational programs on the values of rural lands
- Outreach programs that connect people with the environment

ABACOA PARTNERSHIP FOR COMMUNITY (APC)

The APC is a CSO affiliated with Abacoa, a mixed-use community in Jupiter, Florida, planned on the principles of the New Urbanism. A project of the Center for Urban and Environmental Solutions at Florida Atlantic University, the APC offers a variety of programs and services, including those that focus on the 260-acre greenway that weaves through the heart of the community. Activities include training residents and neighbors to participate in the stewardship of the greenway, studying residents' use of the greenways and the New Urbanist design features, offering lectures and workshops on community building, convening the Florida Public Officials Design Institute at Abacoa, and documenting and sharing the community's history, its impact on the region, and its lessons learned about building community. (For more information on the Abacoa Partnership, go to www.cuesfau.org/Abacoa/index.asp.)

the development process, not to the developer, and the CSO's mission should extend beyond the associated development to reinforce the broader public role and benefits.

 For more information on CSOs, go to www.sonoran.org/programs/csolsi_cso_main.html.

Conservation Development


Conservation development (sometimes called open space development) is a residential or commercial development practice that is used when a landowner or developer wants to preserve open space and protect the natural features of the land but still retain the right to develop. In a conservation development, a significant portion (generally 50 percent or more) of a site is set aside as undivided permanently protected open space and the development is concentrated (or clustered) on a portion of the land, using smaller lots to accommodate the development on less space. For example, if current zoning allows one unit per acre, a 100-acre parcel would be permitted for 100 homes, each on one-acre lots. In a conservation development, the same number of homes would be built on half-acre or smaller lots, which would leave 50 acres or more of the land in permanent open space. By protecting the majority of a site in open space and concentrating development, conservation development brings multiple environmental and economic benefits. Environmental benefits can include better water quality, protection of wildlife habitat, and a reduction in stormwater runoff. Economic benefits include the higher price that people will pay for a house next to preserved open space and the reduced infrastructure construction and maintenance costs because of the more efficient site layout. If a community pre-plans lands that it wants to conserve, a conservation development can also be designed to provide a connection in an inter-linking greenway system, also a community benefit.

The permitting of conservation developments is regulated by local land use and zoning regulations. The regulations can specify how much of the land is to be conserved and the development practices

THE BABCOCK RANCH CONSERVATION DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Straddling the border between Charlotte and Lee counties, the 91,000-acre Babcock Ranch is one of the largest remaining undeveloped tracts of privately-owned land in Florida. Because of responsible land management and environmental stewardship, the ranch contains a diverse stretch of habitat-friendly cypress domes, swamps, mesic flatwoods, and open pastures. When the Babcock family decided to develop part of the land, they took steps to ensure that important environmental resources were protected in perpetuity. In 2006, the family sold the land to Kitson and Partners because of their commitment to sustainable land stewardship. Kitson and Partners in turn sold 73,000 acres (80 percent) of the ranch to the state of Florida and Lee County. Those lands will be conserved as publicly-owned lands. Of the remaining 18,000 acres, 9,000 acres will be placed in conservation uses (trails, greenways, and restored wetlands), which means that only 9,000 acres (less than 10 percent) of the ranch will be developed. The habitat design approach to the development means that wildlife habitat is actively conserved and integrated within and around the human settlements, and that residents are involved in the management and maintenance of the conserved lands and in learning how to be good neighbors to plants and wildlife. They will be able to walk or bike to jobs, recreation, and nature. Another feature is the use of green building techniques. (Additional information on the Babcock Ranch is available from www.babcockranchflorida.com. Information on functional habitat design is available from <http://cals.arizona.edu/pubs/adjunct/snr0704/snr07043o.pdf> or www.myflorida.com/sfdi/scenews/world/breedlove.htm.)

and standards that should be used to ensure that environmental resources are protected. When designing a conservation development, the lands to be conserved are identified first to avoid the protected open space being just left over open space. The conserved lands then become the organizing framework for planning the development and ensuring that the development enhances, rather than degrading, the protected lands. Conservation development planning uses techniques that protect the natural features of the land, such as tree stands, steep slopes, wetland areas, forests and mature trees, stream corridors, wildlife habitat, natural drainage ways, scenic views, or a working farm. One such technique is to place the development in a location that retains the natural features of the land. Other design techniques can include use of native landscaping; buffer zones to protect waterways, wetlands, habitat, native vegetation, and the view from the road, or to reduce conflicts with agriculture; wetland detention areas; and reduction of impervious surface. The design of a conservation development should also address the allowed uses in the conserved open space and how the open space will be owned and managed. The potential uses of the protected open space can vary, based on the conservation objective of the development. For example, in a conservation development designed to protect a working farm or forest, farming or, respectively, harvest forestry would be an allowed use. Other allowed uses could include passive recreation areas, trails, and greenways. The open space is usually protected through a conservation or scenic easement held by a qualified local government or land trust. It can be maintained by a CSO, a homeowners' association, a local government, or a private non-profit land trust.

 Resources on conservation developments are available from the American Planning Association [www.planning.org], Nature Conservancy

TNC LARGE-SCALE CONSERVATION AREAS IN FLORIDA

- Panhandle Longleaf Pine
- Northwest Florida Greenway
- Apalachicola River and Bay
- St. Marys River/Sea Islands
- Wekiva/Ocala
- Indian River Lagoon
- Osceola Plain
- Lake Wales Ridge
- Southwest Rivers and Flatwoods
- Everglades
- Florida Keys

(Information on these large-scale conservation areas is available from the Nature Conservancy [www.nature.org/wherewework/northamericalstates/florida/preserves/].)

THE GULF COAST PLAIN ECOSYSTEM PARTNERSHIP (GCPEP)

The GCPEP's goal is to conserve and restore the dwindling longleaf pine ecosystem and unique aquatic resources of northwest Florida and southern Alabama, a 1.1 million-acre land and water area that contains extensive longleaf pine forests and numerous examples of wetlands and riverine and estuarine systems. GCPEP was created in 1996 by a multi-party memorandum of understanding signed by 10 organizations, which include a combination of state and federal agencies, private landowners, the Northwest Florida Water Management District, and the Nature Conservancy. The partnership has worked together to stabilize the red-cockaded woodpecker population, increase the use of prescribed fire as a management tool, and restore many acres of longleaf pine. One of the areas within the Gulf Coast Plain Ecosystem is known as the Blackwater-Eglin Connector/Yellow River Ravines. Located in Santa Rosa and Okaloosa counties, this approximately 15,000-acre area has been identified by the Nature Conservancy as the single most important landscape linkage in the Gulf Coastal Plain ecosystem. When the most critical tract is protected, it will connect the 464,000-acre Eglin Air Force Base to the 275,000-acre Blackwater River State Forest-Conecuh National Forest complex. *(Additional information on the GCPEP is available from www.gcpeppartners.com.)*

[www.nature.org], 1000 Friends of Florida [www.1000fof.org], and Tall Timbers Research, Inc. [www.talltimbers.org].

Ecoregion Planning

The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) defines an ecoregion as “a large area of land or water which contains a geographically distinct assemblage of natural communities that share a large majority of their species and ecological dynamics, share similar environmental conditions, and interact ecologically in ways that are critical for their long-term persistence.” In short, as defined by the Nature Conservancy (TNC), an ecoregion is a large area of land and water defined by climate, geology, and species, rather than by political boundaries. Ecoregion planning focuses on understanding, conserving, and managing an ecoregion (what some call an ecosystem). Because of the interdependent nature of an ecosystem, ecoregion planning typically involves coordination among different governmental agencies, conservation organizations, and researchers from different disciplines. Since ecosystems do not recognize the artificial lines of the boundaries of different governmental jurisdictions, ecoregion planning also requires the cooperation of different levels of government.

Among the organizations providing information on ecoregion planning are the Nature Conservancy and the World Wildlife Fund. As part of its mission to preserve plants, animals, and natural communities by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive, TNC uses a systematic, science-based approach called Conservation by Design, organized by the world's ecoregions, to identify sites for protection. Under Conservation by Design, TNC identifies high priority sites that collectively capture the biological diversity of an ecoregion. TNC uses that information to develop customized conservation strategies to ensure the long-term survival of the native life and natural communities that make up the ecoregion. These strategies are combined with a detailed picture of the corresponding places that must be protected in a Conservation Blueprint. TNC uses the blueprint as a benchmark for measuring success.


TNC recently partnered with the WWF to launch the Marine Ecoregions of the World initiative, the first ever comprehensive marine classification system with clearly defined boundaries and definitions. The initiative is part of the WWF's Conservation Science Program, which takes a broad-scale vision

NORTHWEST FLORIDA ECOSYSTEM GREENWAY

The Northwest Florida Greenway is the result of a unique partnership of military, government, and nonprofit organizations that will conserve critical ecosystems in one of the most biologically diverse regions of the United States. The partners include the state of Florida, the U.S. Department of Defense, and the Nature Conservancy (the lead nonprofit agency), each of which signed a Memorandum of Partnership to establish a 100-mile protected corridor that connects Eglin Air Force Base and the Apalachicola National Forest. Project goals include promoting the sustainability of the military mission in Northwest Florida; protecting lands that will sustain the high biodiversity of the region, link protected natural areas, preserve water resources, and provide areas for outdoor recreation, including the Florida National Scenic Trail; and strengthening the regional economy by sustaining the mission capabilities of the military in the region and enhancing outdoor recreation and tourism. *(More information on the Northwest Florida Greenway is available from the Florida Chapter of the Nature Conservancy [www.nature.org/wherewework/northamericalstates/florida/preserves/art12820.html] and 1000 Friends of Florida [www.1000fof.org/Panhandle/Northwest%20Florida%20Greenway.asp].)*

approach to identifying priority conservation ecoregions, called landscapes or seascapes, and developing and implementing a comprehensive set of strategies to conserve the species, habitats, and ecological processes of the ecoregion. To finance the conservation of ecoregions, the WWF has developed an approach called Payment for Environmental Services (PES) that compensates landowners for the multiple benefits that people receive from nature, such as water purification and flood control by wetlands. Not unlike community-supported agriculture described in the Agricultural Land Conservation Tools section of this toolbox, PES rewards those whose lands provide a needed service with subsidies or market payments from those who benefit (for example, when downstream water users pay those who own upstream farmland or forests that purify the water). In addition to encouraging landowners to continue ownership of their land and practice sound environmental management practices, PES calls attention to the broader community benefits of an ecosystem.

Two additional organizations that focus on ecoregions are the Sierra Club through its Critical Ecoregions Program, which is developing plans for the 21 major land and water systems in the United States and Canada, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service, which publishes an ecoregions map of North America that can be used to address environmental issues that transcend agency, watershed, and political boundaries and borders.

 More information on ecosystem planning is available from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission [www.floridaconservation.org], the Nature Conservancy [www.nature.org/tncscience], the Sierra Club [www.sierraclub.org/ecoregions], the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (www.fws.gov), the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service [www.fs.fed.us/rm/analytics/publications/ecoregionsindex.html], and the World Wildlife Fund [www.worldwildlife.org/science/ecoregions.cfm].

Green Building

The goal of green building is to reduce the impact of buildings on the environment over the lifetime of the building. Green building practices apply to all phases of a building: construction, renovation, operation, maintenance, and demolition. Factors that are looked for when certifying a green building

ALYS BEACH

Alys Beach, a 160-acre mixed-use New Urbanist resort community in Walton County, is designed with the environment in mind. Special features include use of passive solar design, wind energy, parking courts with permeable paving, natural storm drainage, cisterns, narrow streets that reduce stormwater run-off, and on-site reuse and recycling of construction materials. Most home sites are positioned to allow passive heating from the sun and cooling from the Gulf breeze, and the internal temperature of the homes is regulated by a geothermal system that uses the natural temperature of the earth. Homes' sun-reflecting white exterior walls and roofs and masonry construction add to the community's energy-efficiency. To enhance its natural setting, each street leads to the Gulf of Mexico, maximizing views of the Gulf. The denser urban center is located nearer the beach, and its rural elements are located toward the preserved wetlands at the north edge of the property. (*Information on Alys Beach came from A Guidebook to New Urbanism in Florida 2005, published by the Florida Chapter of the Congress for the New Urbanism [www.cnufloida.org]. Additional information on Alys Beach is available from www.alysbeach.com.)*

include energy and water efficiency, site planning, building materials, and durability. Green building techniques include thermally efficient roofs, walls, and windows; building shape and orientation; thermal mass and daylighting strategies that reduce cooling loads; smaller heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems and efficient electrical lighting strategies that capitalize on daylighting; water efficient supply and waste fixtures; and interior designs providing visual access to the outdoors and access to daylight. Green building also features interior finishes and installation methods having lower volatile organic compound emissions; landscaping strategies that require little or no irrigation, groundwater replenishment and on-site stormwater management; and siting to minimize stress on natural systems either by building on previously contaminated sites or avoiding ecologically sensitive areas. Benefits of green building include improved air and water quality, reduced solid wastes, conserved natural resources, reduced operating costs and enhanced profits, and reduced strain on local infrastructure.

Nationally, the principal resource on green building is the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC), which provides online green building tools and information from the USGBC and other organizations. USGBC administers the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Green Building Rating System®, a voluntary, consensus-based national standard for developing high-performance, sustainable buildings, and hosts educational events on green building. The USGBC has a number of chapters in Florida, including the Gulf Coast and North Florida chapters. Other Florida resources on green building include the Florida Green Building Coalition, a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the built environment that hosts a state conference called Green Trends, and Eco-\$mart, Inc., which was created by the Florida House Institute for Sustainable Development to bridge the gap between understanding and applying sustainable development principles.

An additional green building-related planning approach is LEED ND (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for Neighborhood Development), a rating system that integrates the principles of smart growth, urbanism, and green building. The rating system, which is being developed by the USGBC, the Congress for the New Urbanism, and the Natural Resources Defense Council, focuses

THE NORTHEAST EVERGLADES NATURAL AREA (NENA) MASTER PLAN

The NENA, which contains a unique cross-section of the natural communities found in Martin and Palm Beach counties, consists of approximately 145,000 acres of connected publicly-owned lands that extend from the Atlantic Ocean to Lake Okeechobee. What began as a study to identify needed facilities changed as participants realized that the NENA lands collectively represented an eco-destination that was comparable to a national park and, as such, should be treated as a unique place rather than a random collection of local, state, and federal conservation sites. As a result, the master plan, which established a vision that will guide decisions over time, proposed a cohesive approach to managing the NENA lands in a way that will create an interconnected series of environmental facilities and protected habitat not found in any other area of the state. Plan recommendations call for greater coordination in the acquisition of additional natural lands, environmental educational programs, and trail development and maintenance; the protection of historic landscapes; and establishment of an interpretative wayfinding system created through a public arts program. (*More information on the NENA Master Plan is available from Palm Beach County's Department of Environmental Protection [www.pbcgov.com/erm/vena.asp].*)

more on the location, design, and construction of neighborhoods and buildings than other LEED products, which focus primarily on green building practices, with only a few credits regarding site selection. In contrast, LEED ND will rate how a development protects and enhances the natural environment and the overall quality of the surrounding communities. Important LEED ND best practices emphasize developments that reduce vehicle miles of travel and the locations of jobs and services within walking distance of where people live or transit. People interested in learning more about LEED ND can participate via the Corresponding Committee. Committee members are invited to comment on draft versions of the LEED ND rating system and will have the first opportunity to respond to the call for pilot LEED for Neighborhood Development projects. Another resource is the *LEED for Neighborhood Development Public Health Report*, which was sponsored by the LEED for Neighborhood Development Partnership with funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Centers for Disease Control. One of the first to document the built environment's impacts on health, the report summarizes the relationship between how communities are designed and public health outcomes, such as physical activity, traffic crashes, respiratory health, and mental health.

For more information on green building, green communities, and LEED ND, go to the Congress for the New Urbanism [www.cnu.org], Eco-\$mart, Inc., [www.ecosmartinc.com/index.html], the Florida Green Building Coalition [www.floridagreenbuilding.org], the Natural Resources Defense Council [www.nrdc.org], the U.S. Green Building Council [www.usgbc.org], the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, which publishes a Green Communities Assistance Kit [www.epa.gov/epahome/partners.htm], and Building Green [www.buildinggreen.com].

Green Infrastructure

Green infrastructure is defined as a strategically planned and managed network of wilderness, parks, greenways, working lands, and other open spaces that have conservation values that support native species, maintain natural ecological processes, sustain air and water resources, and contribute to the health and quality of life of people and wildlife. A green infrastructure network can be composed of a

BISCAYNE NATIONAL PARK GREENPRINT

In Miami-Dade County, TPL's greenprinting model was used by the Biscayne National Park to identify the lands that should be conserved in order to protect its natural, cultural, and aquatic resources and demonstrate the impacts of proposed land use changes on the Bay, which was important because of pressure from encroaching development on the Park's marine resources. The goals of the three-phase planning process were to protect and restore water resources; repair mangrove, tidal, and freshwater wetlands; and preserve wildlife habitat. The conservation priorities highlighted in the greenprint were combined with conservation lands identified in other programs, such as the county's Environmentally Endangered Lands Program and the Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands footprint of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Program, which further refined the conservation priorities. Because the greenprint model allows the Park to identify each priority parcel and its individual score among all the goals and criteria, the model can be used to help target particular funding sources for protection and convey to the surrounding community why these lands are important to save. (*More information on the Biscayne National Park Greenprint is available from Amy Condon, the Trust for Public Land, amy.condon@tpl.org.*)

variety of landscapes that include natural areas, such as wetlands, woodlands, waterways, and wildlife habitat, and public and private conservation lands, such as nature preserves, wildlife corridors, greenways, and parks. A green infrastructure network also includes public and private working lands that have conservation value (for example, forests, farms, and ranches) and can incorporate outdoor recreation and trail networks.


Green infrastructure planning provides an alternative to what is common practice in many communities: conserving land on a piecemeal basis without the benefit of a large framework plan that allows a comprehensive approach to land conservation. It does that by placing planning for the green resources (the green infrastructure) of a community at the same level with planning for the built and social infrastructure (for example, utilities, roads, sewer, hospitals, schools, and public facilities). The practice of green infrastructure planning is the same one communities use to plan for the rest of their infrastructure: planning in advance where it should be, designing it, and deciding how to fund it. Principles for green infrastructure planning include identifying what is to be protected in advance of development; providing for linkage between natural areas; and designing a system that operates at different functional scales, across political jurisdictions, and through diverse landscapes. Additional principles include grounding green infrastructure in sound scientific and land use planning practices, providing funding upfront as a primary public investment (for example, through a dedicated tax or other funding mechanism), emphasizing the benefits to people and nature, and using the green infrastructure as the planning framework for conservation and development.

Green infrastructure planning provides multiple benefits. A benefit to a developer is greater certainty and predictability about where development can go because the lands to be protected, how they are to be protected, and the best locations for development are laid out in advance. A developer can also benefit from developments that utilize the amenities created by protected open space. The public benefits from cleaner air and water and because highly valued natural and water resources and processes, parks, and greenways are protected. Green infrastructure can also be used to provide urban services

LOXAHATCHEE GREENWAY NETWORK PROJECT

The Loxahatchee River, part of Florida's statewide system of greenways and trails, is one of the last remaining free-flowing subtropical rivers in the United States and was the first river in Florida to be designated as a National Wild and Scenic River. Because of concerns about growth, in the 1990s the Conservation Fund and 1000 Friends of Florida joined together to create a working relationship among the 18 local (Martin and Palm Beach counties), regional, state, and federal agencies with an interest in the river and its 500,000-acre watershed. The intent was to establish a consensus-based regional green infrastructure network that would protect the Loxahatchee River and its wildlife, vegetation, wetland systems, and water supply. Important to creating a consensus was the use of GIS (Geographic Information Systems) to demonstrate the greenway corridors that would connect the remaining undisturbed lands in the river's watershed. Local and regional planning agencies, businesses, and communities have incorporated the greenway plan into their planning efforts. (*More information on the Loxahatchee Greenway is available from the Conservation Fund [www.conservationfund.org/pages/pinner.asp?article=2288&back=true] and 1000 Friends of Florida [www.1000fof.org/PUBS/loxahatchee/DEFAULT.asp].*)

more efficiently and at a lower cost (for example, retention and treatment of stormwater and provision of areas for recreation).

 Much of the information for the description of green infrastructure was taken from the 2006 Island Press book, *Green Infrastructure: Linking Landscapes and Communities*, by Mark A. Benedict and Edward T. McMahon, and from the Green Infrastructure website [www.greeninfrastructure.net/], sponsored by the Conservation Fund and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service [www.fs.fed.us/]. Additional information on green infrastructure is available from the Conservation Fund [www.conservationfund.org/], Sprawl Watch [www.sprawlwatch.org/], and 1000 Friends of Florida [www.1000fof.org/], which in 1995 partnered with the Conservation Fund to publish the *Apalachee Greenways Report*. The report outlines the framework for a system of green infrastructure in the Apalachee Region of North Florida.


Greenprinting

Greenprinting is a GIS spatial analysis mapping technique used by the Trust for Public Land's (TPL) Conservation Visioning Service to help a community map its conservation priorities (hence the name greenprinting). A greenprint, which is based upon unique community values and on local data, can be used to identify lands to be protected and plan networks of conserved working, heritage, natural, and park lands to meet public needs for recreation, land-based economies, resource protection, and wildlife habitat. A greenprint can also be used to examine the best approach to conserving land, including determining the highest priorities for protecting watersheds, improving access to parks and recreational opportunities, reconnecting fragmented landscapes, creating trails, and forecasting development impacts on conservation lands. A greenprint plan can also be used to make more informed decisions about land conservation and growth management and to catalyze support for conservation goals. Other uses include identifying land that, when conserved, would create contiguous natural resources such as forests, wetlands, and wildlife habitat, and avoid fragmentation; finding opportunities to link or expand existing trail systems; and projecting which lands – including important conservation lands – are most likely to be developed for commercial or residential uses. Examples of greenprints in Florida include Lake County, where TPL employed the criteria established in a successful bond measure to determine land acquisition strategies that met voters' expectations; and Putnam County, where TPL is focusing on access to the St. Johns River for recreational and economic opportunities. TPL will greenprint four more Flor-

TALLAHASSEE BLUEPRINT 2020 AND BEYOND

Blueprint 2020 and Beyond integrates transportation, stormwater, and greenway planning into one process. The initiative was the result of a year-long planning process by the Economic and Environmental Consensus Committee (EECC). The EECC's report recommended a plan to tie gray and green infrastructure improvements together and use them to stimulate economic development in targeted areas. The initiative was funded through a one-cent sales tax to help pay for a series of critically needed community initiatives focusing on stormwater and flood control projects, greenspace acquisition and parks/recreation improvements, and additional transportation projects. The city of Tallahassee and Leon County also have an extensive greenway program, which is designed to protect natural systems; link, like the area's roads, those systems and neighborhoods to each other; and incorporate greenways and open space into infrastructure design. (For more information on *Blueprint 2020*, go to www.blueprint2000.org/home.html. For more information on the greenway program, go to [www.talgov.com/planning/viron/viron.cfm](http://www.talgov.com/planning/environ/viron.cfm).)


ida communities in 2007, including Martin, Sarasota, and Osceola counties and the city of Coral Gables. TPL helps communities identify and raise funds from federal, state, local, and philanthropic sources to carry out greenprinting projects.

 More information on greenprinting is available from the Trust for Public Land [www.tpl.org/].

Greenways Planning

A greenway is a connected corridor of undeveloped land set aside for conservation or recreation purposes. Greenways generally follow natural land features, such as streams, ridges, or a manmade feature (for example, a canal or abandoned railroad). Greenways can be multi-use; they can be used for a pedestrian trail or a biological corridor to protect wildlife habitat, vegetation, and water quality. Greenways can also help protect downstream properties from erosion and flooding. A number of techniques can be used to reserve land for greenways. The land can be acquired using public or private funds or through subdivision and site plan exactions. In turn, developers can use the greenway as an amenity for residents. Communities can also use public rights-of-way for greenways. Private businesses (for example, a utility company) can also provide right-of-way that can be used as a greenway. Another way to create greenways is through the conversion of railroad rights-of-way. The program for the approach is called Rails-to-Trails, a concept promoted by the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy.

The Florida Rails-to-Trails Conservancy is working to create a network of rail-trails throughout the state. The organization provides technical assistance and education and publishes the *Official Rails-to-Trails Florida Guidebook*, a guide to Florida's rail-trail system. The principal resource on greenway planning in Florida is the Office of Greenways and Trails, which works directly with local communities, developers, private landowners, and state and federal agencies to facilitate the establishment of a statewide system of greenways and trails for recreation, conservation, and alternative transportation, and hosts an on-line guide to the state's greenways and trails.

 For more information on greenway planning, go to the Florida Office of Greenways and Trails [www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt/], the Florida Trail Association [www.florida-trail.org/], the Florida Rails-to-

NOKUSE PLANTATION

Nokuse Plantation is a 50,000-acre private conservation initiative in the Florida Panhandle that is designed to be a model and catalyst for future public-private landscape level conservation projects. Conceptualized and funded privately by entrepreneurs M.C. Davis and Sam Shine, the founding premise of Nokuse is that the only way to maintain biodiversity and a healthy regional ecosystem is to preserve, restore, and connect large blocks of biologically diverse lands. To accomplish this, Nokuse Plantation (a nonprofit organization) conducts research on landscape level conservation and is working to secure a conservation corridor between existing federal and state lands in the Florida Panhandle that will serve as the first link in a biodiversity chain connecting Conecuh National Forest in south Alabama, through northern Florida, and into Georgia at the Okefenokee Swamp – a connected land area of one million acres owned by a combination of governmental agencies, private corporations, and individual landowners. (Almost half of the area [460,000 acres] is owned by Eglin Air Force Base.) Nokuse has used state and federal acquisition funds, such as the FDEP Florida Forever funds and USDA Florida National Scenic Trails funds, to protect 20,580 acres out of a target 50,000 acres to be protected under conservation easements. (More information on the Nokuse Plantation is available from www.nokuse.org/.)

Trails Conservancy [www.railtrails.org/field/florida/default.asp], and 1000 Friends of Florida [www.1000fof.org/natural/main.asp].

Land Acquisition


Florida has the largest and most aggressive state land acquisition and conservation program in the country. Through December 2006, collectively the state of Florida has protected over 535,643 acres of land with \$1.8 billion in Florida Forever funds. (Florida Forever replaced the highly successful Preservation 2000 Program, which was the largest program of its kind in the United States and responsible for the public acquisition and protection of 1,781,489 acres of land.) In addition to allocating \$300 million each year to purchase environmentally sensitive lands, the Florida Forever program provides a blueprint for the conservation of the state's natural resources. It encompasses a wide range of goals, including restoration of damaged environmental systems, water resource development and supply, increased public access, public lands management and maintenance, and increased protection of land by acquisition of conservation easements. Many counties and some cities in Florida leverage and extend Florida Forever funds with locally-generated funds (for example, from local ad valorem revenues or from local option sales taxes) that are dedicated to conserving environmentally sensitive land. The Florida Community Trust (FCT) is one of the Florida Forever-funded land acquisition programs frequently used by local governments and eligible non-profit environmental organizations to acquire community-based parks, open space, and greenways that further outdoor recreation and natural resource protection needs identified in local government comprehensive plans.

The Division of State Lands within the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has primary responsibility for the Florida Forever program. The Division is assisted by the Acquisition and Restoration Council, which reviews applications for Florida Forever funds. The Council meets twice a year to evaluate and select acquisition projects, which can be full-fee projects, less-than-fee projects, and small parcel projects. Federal, state, and local government agencies, conservation organizations, and private citizens may propose areas for conservation under the Florida Forever program. Sponsors are required to inform landowners that their property has been nominated for state acquisition. The negotiated purchase price is submitted to the Governor and Cabinet. Approval by the Governor and

THE NORTHWEST FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT (NFWFMD) LAND ACQUISITION PROGRAM

The NFWFMD's Land Acquisition and Management Program uses Florida Forever funds as part of its land acquisition program. Combined with other programs, such as Save Our Rivers and Preservation 2000, Florida Forever funds have been used by the NFWFMD to purchase more than 200,000 acres throughout the Panhandle. The acquisitions are designed to protect important wetland and natural vegetation communities, including river floodplains, headwater wetlands, coastal marshes, springs, and bottomland hardwood and associated upland forests. More than 85 percent of the floodplains along the Choctawhatchee and Escambia rivers and the Econfina Creek have been acquired by the District. Targeted acquisition projects include lands in the Perdido, Escambia, Blackwater, Yellow/Shoal, and Choctawhatchee river basins. District-owned land is available to the general public for a wide variety of resource-based recreational activities. At present, some 2.5 percent of the District's total land area of 7,168,000 acres is protected explicitly for water resource purposes by lands acquired by the District. *(More information is available from www.nwfwmd.state.fl.us/pubs/lands/workplan.pdf.)*


Cabinet is required for the purchase of lands under the Florida Forever program. Participation in the Florida Forever program is voluntary.

 *For more information on Florida's land acquisition programs, go to www.dep.state.fl.us/lands/acquisition.*

Land Trusts

A land trust is a nonprofit organization that, as all or part of its mission, actively works to conserve land by undertaking or assisting in land or conservation easement acquisition or by its stewardship of such land or easements. Land trusts have been around for over 100 years and have proven to be very effective tools in conserving land. They are experts at helping interested landowners find ways to protect their land in the face of ever-growing development pressure. A land trust can be used to protect land that a community values; and the land can be farmland or scenic, recreational, or environmentally significant areas.

Typical land trust roles include working with landowners who wish to donate or sell a conservation easement; acquiring land outright to maintain working farms, forests, and wilderness, or for other conservation reasons; and working cooperatively with government agencies by acquiring or managing land, researching open space needs and priorities, or assisting in the development of open space plans. Other land trust roles can include mediating between a developer and government and helping shape development plans, providing site and land use planning assistance, conducting community outreach and education, serving as an advocate for good development, assisting with designing or managing recreation and trail systems, and marketing agricultural products. Land trusts are typically funded through endowments, fundraising, public and private grants, donations, and fees tied to development. A land trust's board is important, and board members should represent a variety of professional skills needed by the land trust (for example, lawyers, bankers, accountants, realtors), have good community contacts, and bring a commitment to the goals of the land trust.

 *For more information on creating a land trust, go to the Land Trust Alliance [www.lta.org], the Trust for Public Land [www.tpl.org], and the American Farmland Trust [www.farmland.org].*

Scenic Easements and Overlay Zones

Communities that want to protect the particular character of a scenic or rural area can promote use of scenic easements or adopt a scenic overlay zone. A scenic easement is a type of conservation easement

TALL TIMBERS LAND CONSERVANCY (TTLC)

TTLC is the land trust for Tall Timbers Research, Inc., and is the largest regional land trust holding conservation easements in North Florida and Southwest Georgia. TTLC is dedicated to conserving the ecological, scenic, and historical resources of the Red Hills Region and its traditional rural land uses. It works to conserve working forests, farms, and recreational lands in Southwest Florida. Since 1990, more than 100,000 acres have been conserved by Tall Timbers and other conservation partners, with the goal of protecting another 100,000 acres by 2020. Those easements protect in perpetuity land that buffers the rivers and lakes, park-like pine forests, and scenic vistas that distinguish the Red Hills rural countryside. The easements protect the region's high water quality, clean air, wildlife, and distinctive canopy roads. The easements and management plans are tailored to the needs of the owner and the land. Goals are established based on principles of ecological forestry. *(For more information on the TTLC, go to www.talltimbers.org.)*

aimed at protecting a scenic resource. Scenic easements work the same as an agricultural easement (described in the Agricultural Land Conservation Tools section of this toolbox): a deed restriction landowners voluntarily place on their property to limit land to specific uses and protect it from development. Where an agricultural easement is designed to protect farmland, a scenic easement is designed to preserve a particular scenic view and can overlap with other conservation goals such as the protection of open space, wildlife habitat, forests, or wetlands. Consequently, many conservation easements are prepared as a mixed-purpose easement. The easement can be held by a designated governmental agency (local, state, or federal) or by a qualified nonprofit organization, usually a land trust.


A scenic overlay zone is another way to maintain a highly valued scenic view. For example, a local government could use the overlay zone to restrict building heights in a scenic corridor and set criteria for how development should be set back from the road to minimize the impact on the view from the road (or from the homes of neighbors). An overlay zone can also be used to address the retention or restoration of contributing landscape features, such as stone walls, mature tree stands, or hedgerows. In a scenic viewshed protection program, the first step is to identify and map the scenic viewsheds that should be protected from development. A complementary tool used by local governments seeking to protect a scenic viewshed is to withhold the extension of public infrastructure. Because a scenic viewshed can cross local government boundaries, a multi-government agreement may be involved. For example, in Lexington, Kentucky, three local governments agreed to a zoning overlay to protect the viewshed on an historic rural road through the middle of Bluegrass horse country.

The national and state scenic highway programs can also be used to call attention to a scenic highway. In Florida, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) administers the Scenic Highway Program. The purpose of the program is to promote awareness of the state's cultural, historical, archeological, recreational, natural, and scenic views, which collectively enhance the overall traveling

LEON COUNTY TREE CANOPY ORDINANCE

Recognizing the contribution of canopy roads to quality of life, Leon County and the city of Tallahassee have designated a 76-mile tree protection zone of canopy roads (20 miles of the roads are in the city and 56 miles in the county). The zone extends 100 feet from the centerline of the designated road. In 1994 the two governments entered into an interlocal agreement that authorized the implementation of a Canopy Road Management Plan, which is jointly implemented by the city forester and the county canopy roads coordinator, a member of the Public Works Department's Canopy Road Division, which was established to create, maintain, manage, and preserve the county's canopy roads. The plan's requirements address vegetation removal, protected trees, tree removal, pre-development reviews, commercial site standards, and best management practices for conservation and preservation areas. Implementation includes the review of tree removal requests, the planning and acquisition of scenic easements, the pruning and removal of high risk trees, and the planting of trees and shrubs for canopy creation and enhancement and buffer establishment. *(More information on Leon County's Canopy Road Ordinance is available from www.leoncountyfl.gov/PUBWORKS/oper/canopy/Documents.asp.)*

experience. The 11-mile Pensacola Scenic Bluffs Highway Corridor (U.S. 90, S.R. 10A) in Escambia County was the first Scenic Highway to be so designated by the FDOT. The highway offers scenic vistas of Escambia Bay and represents the highest point along the entire coastline of Florida.

 For more information on scenic easements and overlay districts, go to the Land Trust Alliance [www.lta.org], the Nature Conservancy [www.nature.org], the Trust for Public Land [www.tpl.org], and Scenic America [www.scenic.org]. For more information on the Florida Scenic Highway Program, go to Scenic Florida [www.scenic.org] or to the Florida Department of Transportation Scenic Highway Program [www.dot.state.fl.us/emo/scenichwy/default.htm].

WATER RESOURCE PLANNING TOOLS

2

TOOLS

- ▶ Aquatic Buffers
- ▶ Blueway Planning
- ▶ Impervious Surface Reduction
- ▶ Regional Water Supply Plans
- ▶ Source Water Protection Overlays
- ▶ Watershed Management Plans

Protecting Florida’s water resources is fundamental to planning sustainable communities. The state’s water resources provide residents with a safe and adequate supply of drinking water, support economic development activities, maintain agriculture, sustain Florida’s water- and eco-based tourism industries, and protect the state’s rich aquatic life. With the state’s high rate of population growth, Florida communities are increasingly employing a variety of planning tools to maintain an adequate and reliable supply of water and protect both ground and surface water from contamination due to the inappropriate use of land. The importance of the state’s water is reflected in the number of organizations that provide information on water planning tools. Among those are the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), responsible for protecting the state’s water resources, and the state’s five water management districts, which were created by the Water Resources Act of 1972. The Emerald Coast is served by the Northwest Florida Water Management District (NFWFMD), which works to protect and manage water resources for a 16-county, 11,305-square-mile region that extends from the St. Marks River Basin in Jefferson County to the Perdido River in Escambia County. The University of South Florida’s Center for Community Design + Research maintains a County Water Resources Atlas (www.wateratlas.org) that consolidates surface water-related information from multiple agencies and disseminates it via an interactive website. Other sources of information include the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which offers smart growth guides and model ordinances to protect local resources, and the Local Government Environmental Assistance Network (LGEAN), a partnership organization developed and managed by the International City/County Management Association. LGEAN is an online first-stop shop that provides environmental management, planning, funding, and regulatory information for local government elected and appointed officials, managers, and staff and enables them to interact with their peers. Another principal source of information used for preparing this description of tools is *The Environmental Planning Handbook for Sustainable Communities and Regions* by Tom Daniels and Katherine Daniels, published by the American Planning Association in 2003. (For more information on Florida water resource planning tools, go to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection [www.dep.state.fl.us] and the Florida Water Environment Association [www.fwea.org]; in the Emerald Coast, the Northwest Florida Water Management District [www.nwfwmd.state.fl.us] and the U.S. Geological Survey in Florida [www.usgs.gov/state/state.asp]. Other resources include the American Planning Association [www.planning.org], the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency [www.epa.gov/owow], the Local Government Environmental Assistance Network [www.lgean.org], and the Water Environment Federation [www.wef.org/Home].)

Aquatic Buffers

Aquatic buffers serve as natural boundaries between local waterways, including streams, wetlands, lakes, rivers, and floodplains, and existing development. They help protect water quality by filtering pollutants, sediment, and nutrients from runoff. Other benefits of buffers include flood control, stream bank stabilization, stream temperature control, and room for lateral movement of the stream channel. Good aquatic buffer ordinances specify the size and management of the stream buffer and are a planning tool to specifically protect stream quality and aquatic habitat. A buffer ordinance generally provides guidelines for buffer creation and maintenance. Such an ordinance would delineate the boundaries of the buffer and contain requirements that restrict vegetation and soil disturbances and describe allowable uses within the buffer. Many buffer programs include a public education component.

For more information about aquatic buffers, go to the Northwest Florida Water Management District [www.nwfwmd.state.fl.us], the Center for Watershed Protection [www.cwp.org], and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency [www.epa.gov].

Blueway Planning

Blueway planning takes an integrated approach toward a connected system of waterbodies (for example, a system of streams, ponds, and wetlands). Typical blueway planning goals include preserving and enhancing the natural communities that contribute to the health and quality of the water bodies that compose a blueway and bringing attention and providing access to the blueway. Examples of blueway program activities include development of marked water trails through the blueway (for example, directional and interpretive signage for canoeists and kayakers), acquisition of land


MARTIN COUNTY BUFFER REQUIREMENTS

The Martin County Comprehensive Growth Management Plan has required wetland buffers and shoreline protection zones since 1982, making the county an early pioneer in developing buffer requirements to protect wetlands and shoreline areas. No impacts to wetlands are permitted except in limited cases, and impacts are not allowed within the buffer to the wetland. Mitigation is allowed only in the case of an exception or waiver to a wetland impact. Current requirements provide for a 50-foot buffer to isolated wetlands and a 75-foot buffer to wetlands connected to Waters of the State. A construction setback requires buildings to be placed either five feet or ten feet from the buffer. The county also has shoreline protection requirements and a Barrier Island Ordinance. (More information on Martin County buffering requirements is available from www.martin.fl.us/portal/page?_pageid=355,852143&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL, and www.municode.com/resources/gateway.asp?pid=13592&sid=9.)

NORTHEAST FLORIDA BLUEWAY

The Northeast Florida Blueway contains a combination of private and publicly-owned lands that run along both sides of Florida’s Intracoastal Waterway, two rivers and selected tributaries that extend from the Duvall County line to the Flagler County line and closely follow the Atlantic coastline. The goal is to form a conservation lands corridor along the waterway by connecting existing natural areas and greenspace. State funds are being used to acquire lands along the corridor (over half of the 28,678 acres have been acquired). The area will support primitive camping, nature study trails, and areas for archeological interpretation. The Blueway is managed by the city of Jacksonville, the Florida Division of Forestry, and DEP’s Division of Recreation and Parks. (More information on the Northeast Blueway is available from www.dep.state.fl.us/cmpl/programs/files/ne_fl_blueway_projec_des.pdf and www.co.st-johns.fl.us/BCC/growth_mgmt_services/planning/Environmental/index.aspx.)

along the blueway, and development of recreational opportunities (for example, camping and nature study trails). The Florida Department of Environmental Protection is using blueway planning to create a policy framework that will integrate management across the state's coastal, nearshore, and marine environments. The approach, called the Florida BlueWays Project, is a multiyear marine resource management project of the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's Florida Marine Research Institute in conjunction with the Florida Coastal Management Program. The long-term goal of the Florida BlueWays Project is to graphically depict the inherent spatial connectivity of Florida's marine resources, coastal activities (human use), and related stakeholders and develop innovative methods, tools, partnerships, and processes to address ecological and sociological concerns about coastal and ocean systems. The Charlotte Harbor region has been selected as a case study, and current work focuses on creating the ecological, human use, and management characterizations for this area.

 Much of this information was taken from the Florida's BlueWays Project website [www.dep.state.fl.us/cmp/programs/blueways.htm].


Impervious Surface Reduction

Traditionally, water resource management programs have focused on removing stormwater from a site as quickly and efficiently as possible, rather than on improving the absorption of stormwater by reducing the amount of impervious surface. Impervious surface mitigation standards do that by replacing development standards that create large expanses of impermeable surfaces, which increase stormwater runoff, with standards that reduce the amount of those surfaces. Site design (how development is placed on the land and the type of materials used) plays a powerful role in determining the amount of impervious surface. Two primary components of site design are the transportation system (the places for moving and storing vehicles, such as streets, parking spaces, and driveways) and rooftops (the size of the building footprint). Transportation design techniques to reduce the amount of impervious space focus on changing requirements for streets, parking lots, driveways, and other paved surfaces. Those surfaces account for a large percentage of the impervious surface in a community. Techniques include requiring or encouraging narrower streets (discussed in Transportation Tools) and applying what the Center on Watershed Protection calls green parking techniques. Those techniques

PROTECTING WATER RESOURCES WITH HIGHER-DENSITY DEVELOPMENT

EPA's report, *Protecting Water Resources with Higher-Density Development*, documents that increasing development density is a strategy that communities can use to protect water resources and water quality, particularly at the lot and watershed levels. Higher-density development uses land more efficiently and protects more undisturbed natural land, which enables a community to grow while still protecting its water resources, the report concludes. To understand the impacts of development patterns on water quality, EPA examined stormwater runoff from three different development densities at three different scales (one-acre, lot, and watershed levels). The analysis demonstrated that the higher-density developments produced less stormwater runoff per house at all scales and, for the same amount of development produced less impervious cover than lower-density development. The analysis also demonstrated that for the same amount of growth, lower-density development had more impacts on watersheds. (For more information on *Protecting Water Resources with Higher-Density Development*, go to www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/water_density.htm)

include reducing the number of required parking spaces by using the actual average parking demand instead of the more common practice of requiring enough spaces to accommodate the highest hourly parking during the peak season or time of day, and reducing the size of parking lot spaces. Other parking-reduction techniques include using alternative, more pervious pavers in overflow parking areas; encouraging shared parking; and providing incentives for structured parking. Techniques to reduce the amount of impervious surface dedicated to cars (streets, driveways, sidewalks, parking lots, etc.) also include the use of permeable or semi-permeable surfaces instead of asphalt or concrete, thus reducing stormwater runoff because more water is absorbed into the ground. Another site design technique for decreasing the amount of impervious surface is to reduce the development footprint of a building by requiring more compact, higher-density development in urban areas (discussed in Land Use and Development Tools and in the EPA report, *Protecting Water Resources with Higher-Density Development*, described in this section) and using conservation development practices (discussed in Natural System Conservation Tools) in rural areas.

 Much of the information on reducing the amount of impervious surface through site design was taken from the Center for Watershed Protection [www.cwp.org/better_site_design.htm]. Information on the EPA study is available from www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/water_density.htm.

Regional Water Supply Plans

Florida's water management districts are required to prepare water supply plans for areas where, based on the districts' assessment to determine the existing and future water needs and evaluate the adequacy of existing and potential sources to meet those needs for the next 20 years, water sources are not adequate to


IMPERVIOUS SURFACE REDUCTION IN PALM BEACH COUNTY

Over the past year, Palm Beach County has begun exploring the use of pervious pavement as a possible tool to reduce the amount of impervious surface that has been or will be created. By working with the South Florida Water Management District, the county hopes to revise codes in the future to make it easier for those who wish to use pervious pavements in development and redevelopment. The county advantages of pervious over impervious pavement include reducing the peak runoff into local canals and streams, thereby offering better flood protection within a basin, and enabling water to soak into the ground, which helps recharge the surficial aquifer. (More information on *impervious surface reduction in Palm Beach County* is available from Ken Todd, Palm Beach County Water Resource Manager, ktodd@co.palm-beach.fl.us.)

NWFWMD REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY PLAN

Prepared by the NWFWMD in 2001, the regional water supply plan for Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, and Walton counties addresses a significant lowering of groundwater levels in the coastal area centered under Fort Walton Beach and extending into both Santa Rosa and Walton counties. (Lower groundwater levels raised concerns about the long-term viability of the Floridan Aquifer as a source of water supply and the movement of saline, non-portable water into the aquifer zone.) The regional water supply plan identifies two sets of activities to promote alternative water supplies: water resource and water supply development projects, which include additional inland groundwater development to serve coastal areas, reuse of highly treated wastewater, conservation, and facility improvements. (More information on the *Regional Water Supply Plan for Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, and Walton counties* is available from www.nwfwmd.state.fl.us/pubs/2006Rwsp/rwsp.htm.)

meet future needs. The regional water supply plans, which must be updated every five years, identify water resource development and water supply development options that could meet the projected needs of the region. They also identify water resource planning tools, including further development of fresh groundwater and surface water, demineralization of brackish groundwater, desalination of seawater, reuse of reclaimed water, water conservation, increasing water storage capabilities through surface reservoirs and aquifer storage and recovery facilities, and recharging the aquifer by using stormwater runoff and reclaimed water.

 For more information on Florida's regional water supply plan requirements, go to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection [www.dep.state.fl.us/water/waterpolicy/rwsp.htm]. For additional information on the NFWFMD regional water supply plans, go to www.nfwfmd.state.fl.us.

Source Water Protection Overlays


Source water protection overlay zones are used to protect the current and future supply and quality of a community's water resources. The overlay zone, which overlays the existing zoning, supplements and prevails over the underlying zone. The zone is designated on a map adopted by a local government as part of its zoning and land development regulations. Two techniques to protect water resources are a Water Supply Watershed Overlay Zone, which is used to protect surface water by restricting development around a reservoir or other water body, and a Wellhead or Aquifer Protection Overlay Zone, used to protect groundwater, including aquifers, aquifer recharge areas, and wellheads. The overlay zones regulate activities, including land use and development practices, within the zone to reduce the potential for groundwater contamination and conserve natural resources. Because watersheds often cross more than one governmental jurisdiction, protection techniques may need to involve a partnership among a number of local governments and agencies.

Effective water protection overlay zones share a number of features, one of which is defining the area to be protected on a large enough scale to ensure that the entire source water recharge zone is protected.

SPECIAL DEVELOPMENT ZONES (SDZS)

Leon County and the city of Tallahassee use SDZs as overlays designed to regulate development that impacts designated waterbodies. The zones are determined by elevations unique to each watershed. Land disturbances are inversely proportional to proximity to the waterbody. Most waterbodies have two zones: Zone A, which typically restricts development to a maximum of 4,000 square feet of disturbance, and Zone B, which requires that 50 percent of a lot must be kept natural. The SDZs also require that shoreline vegetation be maintained in its natural state. More recently, Leon County adopted a SDZ for Lake Lafayette that addresses tributaries to the lake in addition to buffering the primary waterbody. Leon County and Tallahassee also protect Lake Jackson through a Lake Protection Zoning District, which allows passive and active recreational uses, community services, and low density residential uses (at one unit per two acres or two units per gross acre if clustered on 25 percent of the property with the balance placed under a conservation easement). Existing non-residential uses are considered conforming if they meet all applicable water quality standards. Industrial land uses are prohibited although minor commercial and minor office may be permitted. (More information on the Leon County and Tallahassee water body protection programs is available from the Planning Department's Comprehensive Plan website [www.talgov.com/planning/pdf/compln/conserv.pdf].)

For surface water, that means the size of the area should be sufficient to protect the source water resource as well as the streams and other water sources that contribute to the resource. For groundwater, the overlay zone should be large enough to include, in the case of an aquifer, the entire aquifer recharge area. Another feature is to provide clear descriptions that specify allowable (and prohibited) land uses and activities within the zone to be protected (for example, the storage and handling of hazardous materials, the disposal of solid waste, use of septic tanks, allowed land uses, and acceptable development and agricultural practices). An effective ordinance should also contain specific procedures and criteria for reviewing proposals that potentially impact water resources and for enforcing ordinance requirements.

 Much of the information for this tool description was taken from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency website [www.epa.gov/lowow/nps/ordinance/sourcewater.htm]. For additional information on water protection overlay zones and plans in Florida, go to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection [www.dep.state.fl.us/mainpage/programs/water.htm].

Watershed Management Plans

The purpose of a watershed management plan is to ensure an environmentally healthy watershed, generally defined as the land area that drains into a particular body of water (a stream, river, lake, or ocean). The approach recognizes that water quality and ecosystems are most often addressed at the watershed, rather than the individual waterbody, level. Because most watersheds cross political boundaries and are made up of human, animal, and plant life, watershed planning typically involves a broad base of public and private stakeholders in a joint partnership to develop and implement a coordinated watershed planning and management framework. Typical steps involved in preparing a watershed management plan include using sound scientific practices to develop a clear understanding of the natural, social, and economic features of a watershed, prioritizing problems, and establishing a set of goals and objectives (for example, protecting or improving water quality or restoring or protecting habitat) and an agreed-upon set of regulatory and voluntary integrated management strategies that maximize the expertise and authority of participating agencies, followed by implementing the strategies and monitoring progress.


THE BAY AREA RESOURCE COUNCIL (BARC)

The Pensacola Bay is a two-state (Florida and Alabama), multi-county (in Florida Escambia, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, and Walton counties) basin. The BARC was formed in 1987 to improve the area's quality of life and the Bay waters through an interlocal agreement that now includes Escambia and Santa Rosa counties and the cities of Pensacola, Gulf Breeze, and Milton. BARC enters into agreements with public and private organizations to assist in planning, financing, and managing the physical, chemical, biological, economic, and aesthetic aspects of the Bay system; share information for local planning purposes; and develop a Bay restoration program. A Citizens Advisory Committee discusses issues of interest to the general public and a Technical Advisory Committee (composed of scientists) gathers and evaluates trend information related to the health of the bays, develops annual goals and identifies projects. The West Florida Regional Planning Council serves as BART staff. (More information about the BARC is available from www.wfrpc.dst.fu.us/barc/barc.htm.)

According to DEP, in Florida the Surface Water Improvement and Management Program (SWIM) is the only program that addresses a waterbody's needs as a system of connected resources rather than as isolated wetlands or water bodies. To accomplish this, SWIM works across governmental lines and creates partnerships in water resource management. Created in 1987 to protect and restore the state's surface waters, SWIM grew out of the concern that, although point pollution sources (for example, from industrial wastes or sewage) were being controlled, pollutants that entered the waterways from indirect (nonpoint) sources were not being controlled. The state's water management districts and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection are responsible for the SWIM program. They work in concert with federal, state, and local governments and the private sector to develop and fund SWIM plans and programs for priority water bodies, restore damaged ecosystems, prevent pollution from runoff and other sources, and educate the public. In addition to guiding water protection activities, SWIM plans are used by state programs, such as the Florida Forever program, to help make land-buying decisions, and by local governments to help make land use management decisions.

THE SWIM PLAN FOR THE EMERALD COAST

The NFWFMD's SWIM program focuses on the two major watershed systems of the Emerald Coast that discharge in the Gulf of Mexico: the Pensacola Bay and the Choctawhatchee Bay. The watersheds share similar characteristics and historically have supported diverse ecological communities, productive fisheries, and recreational opportunities; provided an important resource for commercial shipping and military activities; and enhanced the region's aesthetics and property values. The SWIM plans for the bays include strategies designed to protect and restore watershed resources and functions by managing and improving water quality (for example, by addressing nonpoint sources of pollution, such as stormwater runoff, and fish and wildlife habitat throughout the watersheds, both in the water and on the land). Plan updates will be completed in 2007. (For additional information on the SWIM plans, go to www.nfwfmd.state.fl.us/pubsdata/techpubs.html.)

 More information on watershed management planning is available from a number of sources, including, at the national level, the U.S. Department of Environmental Protection [www.epa.gov/lowow/watershed], which publishes a watershed planning handbook and sponsors a watershed academy; the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service [<http://wmc.ar.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/watershed.html>], which offers watershed planning assistance, consultation, and training; and the Center for Watershed Protection [www.cwp.org], which publishes a self-assessment tool that can be used to make better decisions about watershed restoration priorities and determine how a community compares to others. In Florida, watershed planning and SWIM information is available from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection [www.dep.state.fl.us/water/watersheds/index.htm] and [www.dep.state.fl.us/water/watersheds/swim.htm], respectively; Florida's water management districts; and the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences [<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/AE265>], which provides information on Florida's watersheds and watershed planning approaches.

AGRICULTURAL LAND CONSERVATION TOOLS

3

TOOLS

- ▶ Acquisition in Fee
- ▶ Agricultural Research
- ▶ Agricultural Zoning
- ▶ Conservation Easements
- ▶ Contingent Valuation Survey
- ▶ Economic Incentives for Agriculture
- ▶ Florida Rural and Family Lands Protection Act
- ▶ Purchase of Development Rights (PDR)
- ▶ Rural Land Stewardship Program (RLSP)
- ▶ Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)

Florida communities, as well as others across the country, have put in place a combination of planning tools to ensure the continuing presence of agriculture and prevent the development of productive farmland -- the infrastructure for agriculture. Those tools recognize that viable agriculture is the backbone of maintaining a functioning network of agriculture, open space, and natural areas and that a range of strategies should be used to ensure the value of agricultural land. They also recognize that any program to maintain agriculture must address the current pressures on farming and that if the income generated from agriculture is not sufficient to sustain farming, or if development offers a higher return, agricultural land will be converted to development. Tools to preserve the viability of agriculture, many of which are described in this section, include public acquisition programs and techniques that use the development associated with growth to protect rural lands in ways that maintain the value of those lands that remain in agriculture (for example, the Purchase and Transfer of Development Rights Programs and Florida's Rural Land Stewardship Program). Tools to sustain agriculture also include establishing programs that offer economic incentives to farmers, such as community-supported agriculture and creating a supportive local regulatory and business environment, and developing a mutually-supportive relationship between urban and rural communities. (Much of the information for the descriptions of farmland conservation tools is taken from materials published by the American Farmland Trust [www.farmlandinfo.org] and its publication, *Saving American Farmland: What Works; Holding Our Common Ground – Protecting America's Countryside*, by Tom Daniels and Deborah Bowers [Island Press, 1997]; *The Purchase of Development Rights, Agricultural Preservation and Other Land Use Policy Tools – The Pennsylvania Experience*, by Tom Daniels, [www.farmfoundation.org/1998NPPEC/daniels.pdf]. In Florida, information on planning tools to conserve farmland and on Florida's agricultural industries is available from the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services [www.doacs.state.fl.us]; 1000 Friends of Florida [www.1000fof.org]; the Conservation Trust for Florida [www.conserveflorida.org]; the Florida office of the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources and Conservation Service [www.fl.nrcs.usda.gov], which has field offices throughout the state; and the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences [www.ifas.ufl.edu] Agricultural Extension offices.)

Acquisition in Fee

Fee simple is the most basic type of ownership, wherein the owner has the right to use and dispose of the property at will. Fee simple acquisition for land conservation might involve a local government or agency or land trust purchasing farms outright from willing sellers. The farms are then deed-restricted to permanently preserve them for agricultural use and can be leased or sold to a buyer interested in farming. Purchase criteria might include percentage of high quality soils; percentage of tillable acres; suitable boundaries and buffers, such as other adjacent preserved farms and open space; the local commitment to agriculture (e.g., right to farm ordinances, financial support); size of the farm; agricultural density of the area; and imminence of development. Fee simple acquisition for conservation can boost an area's agricultural industry by providing other farmers with opportunities to purchase farmland at affordable prices that reflect only farm value, not development value.

Agricultural Research

Research related to agriculture and rural issues can play an important role in an overall program to retain and enhance agriculture. Research may be conducted by public and private individuals and institutions, often through grants from the U.S. Department of Agriculture or other governmental entities. Research can be used to discover methods and strategies that make local agriculture operations more competitive. Research can also be used to document and quantify the economic, community, or environmental contributions of agriculture. In Florida, the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) at the University of Florida is the primary source of agricultural research. IFAS is a federal-state-county partnership throughout Florida dedicated to improving life by developing and providing knowledge in the areas of agriculture, natural resources, and life sciences.

PALM BEACH COUNTY AGRICULTURAL RESERVE

The purpose of Palm Beach County's 21,000-acre Agricultural Reserve is to preserve agricultural activity and environmental and water resources in an area under increasing development pressures. In 1999 the county approved a \$150 million bond program to conserve agricultural and environmentally sensitive lands. With the bond funds nearly depleted, the county has acquired 2,487 acres. Of that total, 1,782 acres have been leased back to the original farm owner, 131 acres have been sold, and 574 acres are owned by the South Florida Water Management District. The intent of the program, which includes a mandatory Transfer of Development Rights Program (a planning tool discussed later in this section) for density increases, is to allow development on approximately 50 percent of the area and preserve the remaining half through the retirement of development rights. *(More information on the Agricultural Reserve is available from www.pbcgov.com/pzb/planning/comprehensiveplan/landuse.pdf.)*

PALM BEACH COUNTY AGRICULTURAL ENHANCEMENT COUNCIL (AEC)

The 2005 Palm Beach County economic summit examined the current conditions and opportunities for future growth for seven sectors of the economy, including agriculture (both the equestrian and agribusiness industries). One set of recommendations was to capitalize on research supporting the emerging high-growth agri-bio and alternative fuel markets that utilize resources unique to the county. To pursue that strategy, the AEC (the county's agricultural advisory board.) is providing local funding for research on using crops grown in the area as a biomass source, a current research focus of the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS), which is the research and development center for Florida's agricultural and natural resources industries. *(More information on the Economic Development Council is available from www.pbcgov.com/coopext/btm.)*

Agricultural Zoning

Agricultural zoning is a specialized form of zoning where the type and intensity of land use and land development are compatible and consistent with food and fiber production. Agricultural zones are typically adopted in areas interested in protecting, stabilizing, or preserving the agricultural land base and, at the same time, keeping individuals employed in the production of food and fiber crops. There are two general types of agricultural zoning: exclusive and nonexclusive. The more widely used and least restrictive is nonexclusive agricultural zoning, which recognizes agriculture production as the preferred use in certain areas but does not prohibit other land uses in the agriculturally zoned area. Nonexclusive agriculture zones typically allow non-farm uses of land if approved by a local zoning agency. Nonagricultural land use usually must be compatible with agriculture production (for example, livestock feed stores, farm implement dealers, retail nurseries, and greenhouses), and limit population density by requiring large lot sizes for residential units (usually in the range of one dwelling unit per 20-acres and above). The intent is that the larger lot sizes should represent the minimum size land base needed for sustainable agriculture production. Exclusive agricultural zoning is more restrictive. Usually non-farm residences, non-agriculture activities, and retail businesses are prohibited. Examples might be roadside farm sales from producing farms or nursery retail sales from producing nurseries within the agricultural zone. In some instances, other uses, which can be placed on lower quality land but which also provide services to the agricultural uses, are allowed in exclusive agricultural zones. Examples of these uses include cemeteries, landfills, schools, churches, and animal hospitals.

MARTIN COUNTY AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT ZONE

The goal of Martin County's agricultural development future land use policies is to preserve areas with soils that are important for agricultural-related uses. Of the 250,974 acres outside the county's Primary Urban Services District (PUSD), the majority (210,552 acres) are in the agricultural designation. In this area, residential development is restricted to one single-family unit per gross 20-acre tract and no centralized water or sewer service is allowed. Farm-related uses, such as congregate housing for farmworkers, are permitted. To further protect the agricultural area, the land areas between it and the PUSD are designated for lower-density rural residential development (one unit per one acre or one unit per two acres) that does not require urban services (centralized water and sewer). *(More information on Martin County's agricultural zoning is available from Goal M of the county's comprehensive plan policies [www.martin.fl.us/portal/page?_pageid=355,1&_dad=portal&_schema=portal].)*

SARASOTA COUNTY AGRICULTURAL RESERVE (AR) RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AREA (RMA)

Sarasota County's AR limits nonagricultural land uses to those that directly relate to a permitted AR agricultural use. The purpose is to strengthen the agricultural economy and protect agricultural resources by permitting a range of small-scale agricultural production and farm-related businesses, such as roadside farm stands and agritourism. Supportive policies include the ability to transfer existing development rights (discussed later in this section) while preserving the agricultural production rights, and prohibiting the construction of major public infrastructure in the AR. The AR is defined in the Sarasota 2050 Plan, which operates as an incentive-based overlay and provides for a tiered approach that moves from urban west of the Interstate to the rural Agricultural Reserve in the eastern of part of the county. *(More information on the Sarasota 2050 Plan and the Agricultural Reserve RMA is available from http://scg.co.sarasota.fl.us/Sarasota2050/support/ORD_2001-076_with_Exhibit_A.pdf and [A Guidebook to New Urbanism in Florida 2005 \[www.cnufloida.org\]](http://www.cnufloida.org).)*

Conservation Easements

A conservation easement is a deed restriction landowners voluntarily place on their property to limit land to specific uses and protect it from development. Agricultural conservation easements are designed to protect farmland. Conservation easements can also be used to protect resources such as productive agricultural land, ground and surface water, wildlife habitat, historic sites, or scenic views. Conservation easements are flexible documents tailored to each property and the needs of individual landowners. They may cover an entire parcel or portions of a property. In a conservation easement, the landowner (grantor) authorizes a qualified conservation organization or public agency (grantee) to monitor and enforce the restrictions set forth in the agreement. Landowners granting an easement retain title to their property and the right to use their land for agricultural purposes, and can still restrict public access. Landowners can also use the land as collateral for a loan or sell their property and continue to be eligible for any state or federal farm programs that they were eligible for before entering into the conservation agreement. Most agricultural conservation easements are permanent. (Less-than-permanent or “term” easements impose restrictions for a specified number of years.) Regardless of the duration of the easement, the agreement is legally binding on future landowners for the agreed-upon time period. The value of an agricultural conservation easement is generally the fair market value of the property minus its restricted value, as determined by a qualified appraiser. A landowner can donate an easement for conservation purposes, thus providing significant income and estate tax deductions if the donation meets the criteria established by the Internal Revenue service and helping to avoid capital gains taxes that would have resulted from selling the entire property. Through a Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) (discussed later in this section) a landowner can also sell the conservation easement to a land trust or a local government.

Contingent Valuation Survey

Contingent valuation is a survey-based economic technique to determine the value of non-market resources, typically environmental or agricultural areas. A survey is used to directly ask people how

INDIAN RIVER LAND TRUST (IRLT)

The IRLT's mission is to promote the preservation and conservation of natural and historic resources and agricultural lands in Indian River County. It accomplishes this mission through educational programs on the county's land and water resources and by working with landowners who want to conserve the unique and natural features of their properties. The IRLT uses a variety of land protection methods that are designed to meet the individual conservation goals of the landowner, including tools such as the purchase and donation of conservation easement agreements and acquisition in fee. The IRLT has established a Land Protection Fund, which enables it to act as an intermediary to secure important parcels of land that become available for sale. In 2004, the IRLT successfully promoted the passage of a \$50 million county bond referendum that allows for the acquisition of lands to protect water resources, agricultural lands, environmentally sensitive lands, historic sites, open space, and wildlife habitat. Acquisition can occur through a variety of techniques: fee simple and less than fee simple interest, conservation easements, and the purchase of development rights. To date, bond funds have been used to protect 7,750 acres of land. *(More information on the Indian River Land Trust is available at www.indianriverlandtrust.org. Information on the county bond issue is available at www.irccdd.com/Code_Enforcement_Division/Environmental_Planning_Section/ELP/Index.htm.)*

much they would be willing to pay for specific environmental or agricultural services. In some cases, landowners are asked for the amount of compensation they would be willing to accept to provide the specific environmental or agricultural services. The technique is called “contingent” valuation because people are asked to state their willingness to pay, contingent on a specific hypothetical scenario and description of a service. Contingent valuation surveys are useful for measuring the benefit people receive from having a view of a mountain or open-space or the benefits of local agriculture, for example. Communities have used contingent valuation surveys to determine support for a bond issue to fund a PDR program or to make environmental planning decisions.

Economic Incentives for Agriculture

Economic incentives are used to help farmers stay in business by remaining profitable, thereby keeping their land in agriculture. Agricultural incentive programs are based on the recognition that preserving rural character needs to make economic sense and achieve public objectives. They are also based on the need to recognize farms as a business, which means including the agricultural sector in state, regional, and local economic development programs that typically do not include that segment of the economy in their incentive programs. Agricultural economic incentive programs practiced by states and communities include providing loans and grants, assistance with direct marketing and preparing business plans, helping with the distribution of farm products and the development of new products and processing facilities, removing zoning and land use regulation obstacles to diversifying a farming operation, and facilitating access to capital for business development and expansion.

LAKE COUNTY PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY

In September 2004, the Trust for Public Land (TPL), a national land conservation organization, conducted a telephone-based poll for Lake County. The county conducted the survey to assess the level of support for a possible ballot measure to finance land conservation, the level of funding voters would support, the purposes that they found compelling, and the fiscal safeguards that made a difference. The survey showed a high level (63 percent on the initial test and 68 percent on the re-test) of support for a \$36 million bond issue and a .3 mill property tax increase for 20 years to acquire and improve land to protect drinking water sources, Wekiva Springs, wildlife habitat, and open space. Support was strongest for the protection of drinking water, followed by protection of rivers, lakes, and streams. A proposal for an annual audit of how the funds would be spent also received a high level (80 percent) of support. In November 2004 the voters approved a \$36 million bond measure, structured as described in the survey, with 71 percent support. *(For more information on the Lake County Survey and bond issue, go to www.tpl.org and click on Conservation Services.)*

GREEN PAYMENTS

According to the American Farmland Trust, green payments reward farmers for the environmental benefits of their land (for example, for carbon sequestration, controlling floodwaters, providing wildlife habitat and cleaner air and water, and supplying groundwater recharge areas). Under the 2007 Farm Policy Bill recommendations, green payments provide a reliable annual revenue stream of funds to agricultural producers for achieving an agreed-upon level of individual environmental performance. The higher the level of environmental services provided, the higher the payment. *(More information on green payments is available from the American Farmland Trust [www.farmland.org/programs/campaign/documents/Agenda2007-GreenPayments.pdf].)*

Two additional strategies used by communities to enhance the business of farming are to establish a community-supported agriculture program and to employ an agricultural coordinator or manager.

Community-Supported Agriculture

Community-supported agriculture is generally centered in or near urban areas and is used to help farmers direct market their products to residents of nearby communities. In one form of community-supported agriculture, farm customers agree to pay for farm products at the time of harvest and, in return, receive regular delivery of products during the growing season. The benefit to the farmer is less risk because of the guaranteed income. Other methods of supporting local agriculture include community-supported farmers' markets and programs that enable farmers to sell their products directly to restaurants and other food retailers. A growing number of nonprofit organizations focus their work on encouraging and establishing a network among farmers and users of farm products.

Another form of community-supported agriculture involves viewing crops as only one of a range of products associated with the benefits of agriculture and the rural lands that agriculture maintains. In that form of community-supported agriculture, a local government creates programs that look first to rural lands to provide services that those lands are well equipped for and that have a clear economic value which can be quantified and is important to viable communities. Such services include the necessary environmental functions that urban areas have to pay for when provided in other ways, including stormwater attenuation and treatment (through retention, filtration, or reuse on appropriate lands) and provision of wildlife habitat and open space and areas for recreation. The economic value of those services can represent an additional revenue source for agricultural landowners that would contribute to making it financially feasible to keep private lands in agriculture or open space. The production and marketing of those services could become part of the rural landowner's business plan. Establishing a program that makes use of the services requires a mutually-supportive relationship between urban and rural communities.

THE HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (AIDP)


The Hillsborough County AIDP (a component of the county's Economic Development Department) creates a business atmosphere that is conducive to the continuation and expansion of agricultural businesses and that discourages the premature conversion of farmland. Operating under the guidance of an Agricultural Economic Development Council and coordinated by an Agricultural Development Manager, activities include helping to resolve agribusiness problems related to county government agencies; minimizing regulatory process impacts on, and removing barriers to, agriculture's ability to conduct business; and increasing marketing options, alternative crops, value-added processing, and capital financing opportunities. The newest program initiative is the Agriculture Stewardship Program (ASP), which recognizes and rewards the community benefits or services provided by agricultural land. In the ASP, a landowner agrees to not convert agricultural land to a non-agricultural use for 10 years in exchange for an annual Agriculture Stewardship Grant, which is based on a percentage of the ad valorem taxes paid to the county in the prior calendar year on the taxable value of land classified as agricultural and agriculture production-related structures located on the land. *(More information on the Hillsborough County programs to retain agriculture is available from www.hillsboroughcounty.org/econdev/agriculture.)*

Agricultural Coordinator

An agricultural coordinator or manager is typically charged with actively promoting agricultural activities, educating the public on the needs of agriculture, developing and implementing strategies that will result in more profitable farming, and providing technical assistance to farmers. Technical assistance can include help with economic development activities or with meeting city permitting and regulatory requirements. In Florida, both Miami-Dade and Hillsborough counties have agricultural coordinators.

Florida Rural and Family Lands Protection Act

The 2001 Florida Rural and Family Lands Protection Act was enacted to bring a focus to maintaining Florida's agricultural land base and continuing the economic viability of agriculture, similar to the focus that Preservation 2000 and Florida Forever brought to preserving the state's natural environment. Although the act has never been funded (a fact that many Florida land conservation organizations hope to rectify), a report called for in the act was completed in 2001 by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' (DOACS) Division of Forestry. The *Agriculture and Resource Conservation Assessment: a Requirement of the Rural and Family Lands Protection Act* report contains information on agriculture in Florida and forecasts funding needs for the program.

 *Information on the Rural and Family Lands Protection Act and the assessment report is available from www.fl-dof.com/forest_management/acquisitions_index.html.*

Purchase of Development Rights (PDR)

In a PDR program, in order to protect their land from development landowners voluntarily sell a conservation easement to a designated private conservation organization or, more typically, a governmental agency. An easement is placed on the landowner's deed and runs with the land, either in perpetuity or for a period of time specified in the easement document. The landowners receive compensation in return for the restrictions placed on their land. As with conservation easements, landowners selling their development rights retain title to their property and the right to use their land for agricultural purposes, and can still restrict public access. Landowners can also use the land as collateral for a loan or sell their property and continue to be eligible for any state or federal farm programs

VOLUSIA FOREVER

Volusia Forever is a \$191 million long-term land conservation program. It was created in 2000 when Volusia County voters endorsed a tax (.2 mills) over the next 20 years to protect the county's natural resources in perpetuity. The county is stretching these funds further by matching them with other funds and forming partnerships. To date, the funds have been used to protect 26,500 acres through a combination of fee simple acquisitions (40 percent of the protected acres) and purchase of conservation easements (60 percent of the protected areas). The decision to sell is voluntary. Examples of lands protected include environmentally sensitive land, water resource protection and outdoor recreation land, and agricultural lands (by purchasing easements, or what is commonly called the purchase of development rights). Agricultural lands protected through easements include silviculture, cattle operations, and sod operations. A nine-member citizen advisory committee provides assistance to county staff, who administer the program through the county's Land Acquisition and Management Division. *(More information on the Volusia Forever program is available from <http://volusiaforever-echo.com/forever/>.)*

that they were eligible for before entering into the conservation agreement. The value paid for development rights is typically the difference between the fair market value of the land and its agricultural or conserved value. A professional appraiser generally determines easement value. A numerical scoring system that evaluates the suitability for agriculture or environmental conservation purposes can also be used to determine value.

Two tax strategies can facilitate the use of PDRs: 1031 Like-Kind Exchanges and Installment Purchase Agreements.

1031 Like-Kind Exchanges: Section 1031 of the Internal Revenue Code provides, in general, that no gain (or loss) is recognized on an exchange of property held for productive use in business (e.g., land used for agriculture) or for investment solely for “like kind property” also held for productive use or for investment. The exchange of different kinds of business or investment property is treated as “like kind property” under Sec. 1031. For example, improved realty or agricultural land exchanged for apartments has been held to qualify as a like-kind exchange. The IRS has treated a conservation easement and a fee interest in real estate as like kind under Sec. 1031. Therefore, a properly structured sale of a conservation easement used to buy other agricultural land, a business, or investment property should be treated as a like-kind exchange. Landowners should consult their own advisors about the tax consequences of a potential transaction.

Installment Purchase Agreements: An installment purchase agreement (IPA) is an innovative payment plan sometimes used by jurisdictions with a PDR program. IPAs are intended to make PDR programs competitive with developers by providing unique financial and tax advantages. In an IPA, a state or local government issues a long-term bond which is used to purchase development rights over time. In general, state and local governments can enter into IPAs if they have the authority to issue general obligation bonds. Because IPAs constitute long-term debt, agreements typically require the same approval process as bonds. An IPA program requires dedicated funds to cover the interest and principal payments. Use of an IPA benefits landowners and the participating government. IPAs spread out payments so that landowners receive semi-annual, tax-exempt interest over a term of years (typically 20 to 30). The principal is due at the end of the contract term. That payment option enables jurisdictions to use accumulated and future dedicated revenues to protect land while it is still available and relatively affordable.

COLLIER COUNTY RLSP

Adopted in 2002, the Collier County RLSP is designed to preserve 90,000 acres of environmentally sensitive land and to maintain an additional 75,000 acres of agricultural lands. It does that by transferring land-based rights through stewardship credits from sending areas designated for natural and agricultural resource protection to receiving areas designated for development. The stewardship credits are based on the natural resource value of the land, with the amount of credits driven by the land characteristics that the public most valued. Compact new towns and villages based on traditional town planning principles serve as the receiving area. Because of the approach, the overall development footprint is one-tenth of the prior Comprehensive Plan, and natural resources are protected through market-based incentives without the need of public funds. *(More information is available from the Collier County Comprehensive Planning Department [www.colliergov.net/compplanning/index.htm] and WilsonMiller [www.wilsonmiller.com].)*

A PDR program provides benefits to landowners and communities. By selling only their development rights, landowners can convert some of the wealth tied up in their land into cash without relinquishing ownership of the land or use of its productive capacity. That assists landowners who are land-rich and cash poor (a high level of equity and little income). A PDR program provides landowners with a viable financial alternative to selling for development and ensures liquid capital that can be used to reinvest in farm operations or other forms of investment. Landowners may use proceeds from a sale of development rights in any way they choose – purchasing additional acreage, upgrading equipment, paying taxes, or investing for retirement. Removing the development potential from land can also help reduce its market value, thus facilitating the transfer of the land to children of farmers and making the land more affordable for other farmers who want to buy it for agricultural purposes. Removing the development may offer significant tax savings by reducing the taxable value of the land or by reducing future inheritance taxes. PDR programs provide communities a way to share the cost of maintaining farmland with farmers, meet public goals for the protection of farmland, open space, and environmentally important lands, and achieve a more cost-efficient form of development.

A TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS (TDR) PROGRAM:

- Allows landowners to transfer the right to develop from one parcel of land to a different parcel of land.
- Helps shift development from agricultural areas to designated growth areas with access to services.
- Enables communities to conserve farmland using the market forces of growth.
- Enables agricultural landowners to retain the underlying agricultural and natural resource values in their land while realizing the development value.

Rural Land Stewardship Program (RLSP)

The RLSP is an incentive-based system that uses the market economy to encourage preservation and private stewardship of natural resources, retain agriculture, and promote economic growth and diversification in a sustainable rural environment. Established by the Florida legislature in 2001 [Section 163.3177(11)(d), F.S.], the Rural Land Stewardship Program enables counties to designate all or portions of lands classified in the future land use element as predominantly agricultural, rural, open, open-rural, or a substantively equivalent land use as a Rural Land Stewardship Area. Within those areas, planning and economic incentives are applied to encourage the implementation of innovative and flexible planning and development strategies and creative land use planning techniques.

RLSP objectives are to direct development to suitable locations within rural areas; maintain the economic value of rural areas (agriculture, silviculture, mining, hunting/fishing, outdoor recreation, and tourism); and protect valuable ecosystems and habitat areas. Steps involved in the process include:

- Designating the location of the Stewardship Area and assigning “transferable rural land use credits” to the Stewardship Area;
- Dividing the Stewardship Area into credit “sending” and credit “receiving” areas and transferring credits from sending to receiving areas;

- Within receiving areas, using credits to construct the desired development and transferring credits ensures protection of the rural economic base and environmental resources.

Rural Land Stewardship Areas may be designated within areas identified in a county's future land use map as agriculture, rural, open or a similar category; outside municipal boundaries; or outside established urban growth boundaries. Stewardship Areas may be multi-county.

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)

TDR programs enable landowners to transfer the development potential from one parcel of land to another, either on the same site or another site in a designated growth area, thereby shifting development from agricultural and environmentally sensitive areas to locations with full municipal services. TDRs are often used by local governments to protect farm and forest lands, scenic areas, and wetlands. A local government establishes a TDR program by identifying areas to be protected (called sending areas) and by transferring development rights to areas designated to receive the development rights (called receiving areas). The number of development rights that can be transferred depends on how many development rights credits the government allocates and how much development potential the government allows in growth areas.

To establish a TDR program, a local government first identifies and maps areas for preservation (the sending areas) and then issues development rights credits to landowners in the sending areas. Next, the government identifies and maps the receiving areas and requires that developers who wish to build at increased densities in the receiving areas first purchase a certain number of development rights credits from the landowners in the sending areas. Landowners in receiving areas are generally able to develop at higher densities because of the use of the transferred development rights. A permanent conservation easement is used to restrict the land after the development rights are transferred. In most TDR programs, the transaction is between private landowner and a developer. The prices of development rights are determined by developers' bids and landowners' asking prices, the same as in private market real estate transactions. The role of government is to approve and record the transaction and monitor the easement. To facilitate a TDR program, a local government can also establish a TDR bank as a means of providing insurance to landowners in sending areas. The bank, which is funded by the

NORTH ST. LUCIE COUNTY TOWNS, VILLAGES, AND COUNTRYSIDE PLAN (TVC PLAN)

The TVC plan for the 28-square mile North St. Lucie County area will replace the current planning instructions with a new model that shapes future growth into sustainable towns and villages and uses the market forces of growth as a tool to:

- retain large areas of the countryside
- comprehensively plan for water management
- address traffic and infrastructure needs
- maintain the urban service boundary in its current location
- accommodate the next 50 years of growth in a predictable manner that ensures the preservation of the residents' quality of life.

A TDR program is a core component of the TVC plan. The TDRs are used to change the pattern of settlement by enabling landowners to transfer density from the countryside to be protected to the towns and villages where development is encouraged. *(For more information on the TVC plan, go to www.tcrpc.org/departments/studiolst_lucie_charrettel_citizen_master_plan.htm.)*

government, purchases development credits from landowners if they are not otherwise able to sell them. A TDR bank can also serve as a center of contact between landowners and developers, facilitating sales and reducing transaction costs for participants.

TDR programs provide benefits to landowners and communities. Landowners benefit by being compensated for placing land use restrictions on their land, keeping farmland prices affordable for agricultural uses, and removing land uses that impede farming. The public benefits because private sector funds are used to purchase the development rights, thus avoiding large public expenditures, farmland and environmentally sensitive areas are protected, and development occurs in suitable areas, resulting in more efficient public services. Over time, a local government can preserve a significant amount of land while channeling new development into growth areas that make full use of public infrastructure and services, thus helping achieve a balanced growth strategy. Successful TDR programs are a part of the locality's comprehensive plan, involve all stakeholders in the design of the program, and include strategies that nurture the program and create opportunities and incentives for its use.

MILITARY GROWTH COMMUNITY PLANNING TOOLS

4

TOOLS

- ▶ Comprehensive Growth Management Plan (GMP)
- ▶ Conservation Partnering Authority
- ▶ Economic Diversification Plan
- ▶ Florida Military Base-Community Coordination
- ▶ Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) Program

Florida's Emerald Coast is home to eight military installations that are a major contributor to the regional economy and quality of life. The bases include the largest air force base in the world, Eglin Air Force Base (AFB), which covers 724 square miles within the reservation. In the next four years (by 2009), Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) training, as well as the Army's 7th Special Forces Group, will be realigned to the Eglin AFB, which will significantly increase the number of military and civilian personnel and their families in Okaloosa, Walton, and Santa Rosa counties. The Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) is the U.S. Department of Defense's (DOD) primary source for assisting communities that are impacted by such Defense program changes. The OEA has experienced staff to help communities put together an adjustment program that can be used to plan for the growth from the expansion of a military base installation. The OEA also offers a number of planning tools and related grants to help communities work with their local military installations on compatible land uses and reduce economic dependence through diversification planning. Those tools and grants provide a way for a local government to work in partnership with a local military base installation to assess the potential impacts of growth on the community (for example, off-base community services and facilities and off-base housing); develop an adjustment strategy and plan; and implement the plan using local, state, and federal resources. *(Information about Office of Economic Adjustment Planning Tools is available at www.oea.gov/oeaweb.nsf/Home?readform. Florida's Department of Community Affairs also provides information on military base-community planning tools [www.dca.state.fl.us/fdcp/dcp/militarybase].)*

Comprehensive Growth Management Plan (GMP)

The GMP is a tool designed to help a community plan for military-induced growth caused by new military personnel and their dependents. The OEA offers assistance to communities to help themselves by developing a GMP developed through a partnership between the impacted communities and the local military installation. The first step in developing a GMP is to form an ad hoc organization composed of public and private community leaders to assess the likely impacts of the military-induced growth, plan for the community's response, and implement any identified activities. The ad hoc organization is formed under the auspices of a local or state sponsor. Local participants in the organization can include elected officials, business leaders, representatives from the school district, community facility and service providers, affected neighborhood organizations, homebuilders, local economic development organizations, the lodging industry, appropriate state officials, and representatives of the local military installation. The organization begins the process with an analysis of the amount, timing, and important demographic characteristics (for example, the number of school-age children) of direct population growth. It also analyzes the number of Department of Defense civilian jobs, support-contractor jobs, and construction jobs needed to support the growth. In addition, the organization conducts an initial assessment of the important issues that need to be addressed, such as transportation, housing availability, utilities, public services, and education, and creates working committees to address those issues.

A successful GMP planning process includes the involvement of all interests and stakeholders and decisions by consensus. The GMP process also involves the development of an implementation strategy and action plan that include identifying the sources of capital funding needed to create the capacity to accommodate future growth. Such capital funding needs might include creating additional capacity in the areas of transportation, water and sewer systems, public schools, health care, and social service systems. It can also include providing the housing and commercial developments needed to support the new population and create employment for military spouses and dependents.


Additional OEA growth management planning programs can be found at www.oea.gov/oeaweb.nsf/Growth?readform.

Conservation Partnering Authority

The U.S. Department of Defense is authorized to enter into service partnership agreements with eligible non-federal entities that share an interest in preserving and protecting land not under military control,


COMPREHENSIVE TRI-COUNTY GMP
Okaloosa, Walton, and Santa Rosa counties and 10 cities have joined together to develop a GMP for the tri-county area. Okaloosa County is serving as the lead agency, and Eglin AFB is an active participant. The GMP will include information from multiple sources, including an Environmental Impact Statement, housing and road studies, economic diversification studies, and a study of local comprehensive plans. The GMP process also involves the creation of a new OEA-supported position, a Growth Management Coordinator, who will coordinate the GMP study and assist with implementation. *(Additional information is available from www.co.okaloosa.fl.us/planinsp.html.)*

particularly where incompatible development and/or loss of natural habitat does or would impact military base operations and readiness. Under the agreement, DOD funds can be used to acquire real estate in the vicinity of military installations to protect military training, testing operations, and readiness. Eligible entities include state and local governmental agencies and private conservation organizations, including local land trusts. The partnership agreement must provide for the acquisition of all rights, title, and interest, or any lesser interest, in real property by the eligible entity. The agreement must also provide for the sharing of acquisition costs.

 *Additional information on DOD's Conservation Partnering Authority is available in the [Practical Guide to Compatible Development Near Military Installations](#) [www.oea.gov].*

Economic Diversification Plan

For communities with a local economy dependent upon defense industries and military installations impacted by a military base realignment or closure, OEA's Defense Industry Adjustment (DIA) program includes an Advanced Planning Grant (APG) that can be used to develop an Economic Diversification Plan (EDP). The EDP is designed to help local governments develop a strategic plan for diversifying their economies to reduce defense dependency. The planning process includes identifying challenges and opportunities and recommending specific industries to target for business development. It also includes economic diversification strategies designed to broaden and strengthen the local tax and employment base in a community impacted by military base realignments.

 *Additional information can be found at www.oea.gov under the Programs tab, Defense Industry Adjustment (DIA). At the bottom of the DIA page, click on DIA Guide.*

CONSERVATION BUFFERING IN ESCAMBIA COUNTY

As a result of the Escambia County Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) that addressed concerns related to encroachments possibly jeopardizing the mission of local military installations, the Department of the Navy partnered with Escambia County to acquire property adjoining NAS Pensacola for conservation buffering purposes. The Navy provided 30 percent of the purchase cost in exchange for a recreation easement in perpetuity to prohibit residential development in the accident potential zone next to the base. *(Additional information on Escambia County's JLUS is available at www.co.escambia.fl.us/departments/planning_zoning/speciallandusestudies.php.)*


SANTA ROSA ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION AND BRAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

In preparation for the possible 2005 base realignments and closures in Florida's Panhandle, Santa Rosa County (along with Okaloosa, Walton, Escambia, and Bay counties, which also have major military installations) received APGs to prepare an EDP. Santa Rosa County's plan focuses on how the county can attract and retain the businesses and labor force needed to build a strong and diversified economy, thereby becoming less dependent on military jobs. The plan, which was developed through a one-year research study to determine ways to diversify the economic base, was funded by an economic diversification grant from the U.S. Department of Defense. *(For more information on the Santa Rosa Economic Diversification Plan, go to www.teamsantarosa.com/SRC_grant_final.pdf.)*

Florida Military Base-Community Coordination

In 2004, the Florida legislature enacted SB 1604 that amended Florida's Growth Management Act to require more active communication between local governments and military bases to avoid potential conflicts between future developments and military base installations. The act requires that each county in which a military base is located and each affected municipality notify a military base's commanding officer of a proposed change to the government's comprehensive plan and land development regulations that would affect the land use adjacent to the military base. It also required that local governments amend their comprehensive plans by June 2006 to include criteria that would call for compatible uses of land adjacent or located close to lands with military installations, and created a defense infrastructure grant program coordinated by the Florida Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic Development. The Florida Department of Community Affairs (DCA) has been assisting communities surrounding military bases and the Florida Defense Alliance with planning strategies and land acquisition to protect existing bases. (The Florida Defense Alliance is an initiative of Enterprise Florida, which was created in 1998 to ensure that Florida, along with its military bases and their host communities, is best positioned to support and enhance the transformational initiatives of the Department of Defense.)

These strategies focus on retaining Florida's military bases, developing best practices guides (see a sampling of best practices in the box), sponsoring Joint Land Use Studies (described next) to identify specific actions to remedy encroachment, and coordinating land acquisition through the Florida Communities Trust and Florida Forever (described in the Natural System Conservation section of this toolbox). One of these strategies, also discussed in the Natural System Conservation section, led to the Northwest Florida Greenway, which has a major military base buffering element.

 *For more information on Florida's legislation supporting military base and community coordination, go to www.dca.state.fl.us/fdcp/dcp/militarybase/index.cfm.*


FLORIDA MILITARY BASE-COMMUNITY COORDINATION BEST PRACTICES

In its 2004 training on SB 1604, DCA outlined a set of military base-community best planning practices. The following highlights a sampling of those practices:

- Conduct economic studies of military installations.
- Map high-noise and potential accident areas and study encroachment impacts.
- Acquire critical properties.
- Modify comprehensive plans and land development regulations to establish compatible land use near military bases.
- Adopt appropriate development standards within land development codes and establish multiple strategies in comprehensive plans to ensure compatible development near military bases.
- Notify the military of comprehensive plan or zoning changes and of proposed development in impact areas.
- Disclose and record hazards prior to the development or sale of land.
- Maintain formal and informal communication and coordination.
- Respond as a team to inappropriate development requests.

Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) Program

OEA's Joint Land Use Study program is a cooperative land use planning effort between affected local governments and a military installation. The goal is to ensure that development near a military installation is compatible with the base's mission, while at the same time ensuring the public health, safety, and quality of life of the community. The JLUS program has become more important as urban development in many areas has gotten closer to a military base that was once in a remote location. Communities can receive a Community Planning Assistance Grant to support the cost of a JLUS. A JLUS study sponsor can be a local or state government, an office of planning, an airport authority, or a qualified council of governments. JLUS recommendations provide a policy framework and justification to support the adoption and implementation of compatible development measures. OEA provides the technical and financial assistance for the community to work collaboratively with its local military installation to identify existing or potential future incompatible development and to develop JLUS recommendations with the assistance of a consulting team. Each JLUS involves a Technical Advisory Committee and a Policy Committee that are composed of public officials, military base representatives, and representatives from the community. The key to a successful JLUS is keeping the public informed and involved throughout the process by using public workshops and hearings. Examples of implementation measures include changes to the local comprehensive plan and land use regulations, such as height restrictions; amending local building codes to require increased sound attenuation in existing and new buildings; land exchanges; transfer of development rights; real estate disclosure; and conservation partnering. OEA publishes two resource documents: a *Joint Land Use Study Program Guidance Manual* and *The Practical Guide to Compatible Civilian Development Near Military Installations*.

 Additional information is available at www.oea.gov/oeaweb.nsf/BND?readform.

TRI-COUNTY JOINT LAND USE STUDY

Okaloosa County is sponsoring and leading a JLUS for Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, and Walton counties. The study involves the three counties, 10 cities, Eglin AFB, Hurlburt Field, Duke Field, and Choctaw Field. A JLUS has been completed by Escambia County for the Naval Air Station (NAS) Pensacola and by Santa Rosa County for the NAS Whiting Field. The Eglin AFB JLUS is to be completed by fall 2007. In order to ensure that compatible land use planning is a prerequisite for land development, the JLUS will be initiated before the GMP, which will allow it to become one of many planning factors that will be considered in the GMP. *(Additional information is available from www.co.okaloosa.fl.us/planinsp.htm.)*


LAND USE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT TOOLS



Whether they are large or small or located in an urban, suburban, or rural location, Florida communities are increasingly employing a variety of land use planning and development tools to grow more efficiently and to achieve the type of communities their citizens want. Those tools, described in this section, address not only the use of land (whether for housing, shops, jobs, or open space) but also the pattern, character, and form of development – where the development is located, what it looks like, and the livability of the places it creates. They address the problems with the way Florida communities have grown, including increased traffic congestion, more time spent in cars, and loss of community identity and open space, often putting at risk environmentally sensitive lands that are important to the state's water supply and wildlife habitat. *(A number of Florida organizations serve as a resource on land use and development planning tools. They include the Florida Chapter of the Congress for the New Urbanism [www.cnuflorida.org], the Florida Chapter of the American Planning Association [www.floridaplanning.org], the Florida Department of Community Affairs [www.dca.state.fl.us], the Florida Planning and Zoning Association [www.fpza.org], 1000 Friends of Florida [1000fof.org], Florida's Regional Planning Councils [listed at www.nefrpc.org/links.htm], and the District Councils of the Urban Land Institute [www.uli.org]. At the national level, resource organizations include the American Planning Association [www.planning.org], the Congress for the New Urbanism [www.cnu.org], the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy [www.lincolninst.edu], the Local Government Commission [www.lgc.org], the National Center for Smart Growth Research and Education [www.smartgrowth.umd.edu], Smart Growth America [www.smartgrowthamerica.org], and the Smart Growth Network [www.smartgrowth.org].)*

Compact Building Design

Compact building design encourages higher density development where buildings are more vertical and less horizontal, which means that less land is required to accommodate development needs. One method of enabling higher densities is local zoning that allows a greater variety of housing types, such as multifamily units, cottages, live-work units, townhomes, housing over retail, and single-family homes within the same development. For a variety of reasons, Florida communities are turning to compact building design as an alternative to the large lot, single-use suburban development called for in most zoning ordinances. Developers can provide a greater range of housing choice because their per-unit cost is lower and they have a greater ability to respond to changes in market demand because of the flexibility to build a variety of housing types at different prices, which benefits consumers. Because more people are located in close proximity, more compact development can support retail and other services within walking distance of residents and create more riders for transit, which means less traffic, reduced need to expand roads, less air pollution, and lower transportation costs for consumers. Compact building design also benefits the environment by reducing the footprint of buildings, thus creating more greenspace to absorb and filter rainwater and decrease flooding from stormwater. It also benefits local governments because, like developers, their per-unit cost is less, which means that it is cheaper to provide and maintain water, sewer, communication, and electrical utilities.

 (More information on compact development can be obtained from the *Congress for the New Urbanism* [www.cnu.org], the *National Association of Home Builders* [www.nahb.org], the *National Realtors' Association* [www.realtors.org], *Smart Growth America* [www.smartgrowthamerica.org],

ROSEMARY BEACH

Located near Panama City, 105-acre Rosemary Beach is a compact traditional town development that offers a wide variety of housing types within walking distance of a town center featuring a mix of shops, services, and public spaces. Contributing to the compact design, Rosemary Beach offers 12 housing types, including studio flats, lofts, live-work units over attached ground floor commercial space, carriage houses, and family cottages. In addition, residential units are offered above the retail space, typical of traditional Florida downtowns, and apartments called granny flats are over many of the garages. (More information is available from www.rosemarybeach.com and from *A Guidebook to New Urbanism in Florida 2005*, published by the Florida Chapter of the Congress for the New Urbanism [www.cnuflorida.org].)

URBAN DESIGN & TOWN PLANNING STUDIO

The Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council (TCRPC) led the state with its emphasis on urban design when, in 1989, it started providing town planning and urban design assistance to local governments. Today, design assistance is a service of the TCRPC's Urban Design & Town Planning Studio, a team of urban designers, architects, and graphic technicians who provide a variety of services, including conducting charrettes and visioning processes; preparing master plans, design guidelines, comprehensive plan amendments, and codes; and recommending transit-oriented development and traffic calming strategies and plans. The studio also conducts plan reviews, before and after imaging, and charrette training. The TCRPC's attention to urbanism and design earned it the first John Nolen medal from the Florida Chapter of the Congress for the New Urbanism. (More information on the TCRPC Design & Town Planning Studio is available from www.tcrpc.org/departments/studio.html.)

ica.org], and the *Urban Land Institute* [www.uli.org]. An additional resource is *Visualizing Density* [www.lincolnst.edu/pubs/PubDetail.aspx?pubid=1178], an illustrated book published by the *Lincoln Institute of Land Policy* in 2007 to help planners, designers, public officials, and citizens better understand, and better communicate to others, the concept of density as it applies to the residential environment. *Visualizing Density* is also available in an interactive, online format at www.lincolnst.edu/subcenters/visualizing-density/index.aspx.)

Design Centers and Institutes

Design centers are a tool used by communities to enhance the quality of the built environment. Many design centers are located in a downtown location to reinforce redevelopment activities (for example, the downtown design center in Chattanooga, Tennessee). Typical functions include educational programs and forums on the role of design; events that involve the public in design initiatives; and design staff and students who serve as a resource for the community on planning and design issues and provide design assistance on civic, private, and other development projects. A design center can be a part of government, a project of a university school of architecture, or a separate nonprofit organization. Some centers charge a fee for service when working with community groups or developers.

Design institutes and design centers can serve as a source of information, technical assistance, and training on community design. A design institute offers training to public officials who are interested in promoting better design in their community. In Florida, the Florida Public Officials Design Institute (FPODIA) offers elected officials in South Florida training in urban design. The officials who participate select a specific site in their community for study, and a team of special consultants is brought in to address the design and planning challenges. Each official leaves with an enhanced understanding of the urban design opportunities available and is provided with a short


MIAMI-DADE COUNTY URBAN DESIGN CENTER

The Miami-Dade County Urban Design Center, which serves unincorporated areas of the county, conducts charrettes to develop future growth visions within a selected study area. After the charrette, the center's urban design staff presents a vision report that includes a prioritized set of recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners. Upon acceptance of the report, the county's Area Planning Implementation Unit works to implement the recommendations, actions which can include preparation of graphic zoning regulations that would ultimately result in the community's vision. (More information is available from www.miamidade.gov/planzone/udclhome.asp.)

WATERCOLOR

Developers of WaterColor, a walkable mixed-use coastal community in Walton County, used design guidelines to create the traditional southern vernacular architecture of a small town on the water. The community's attention to design is articulated in *A Guide for the Creation of WaterColor: Patterns for Place-Making*, which outlines materials, colors, details, building techniques, and landscaping patterns. Homes, for example, draw from a regional palette of colors and are oriented toward the street, and landscaping incorporates native plants. Nearly half of WaterColor is devoted to open space and conservation areas. WaterColor's design earned an Award for Excellence from the Urban Land Institute. (More information on WaterColor is available from www.watercolor.com and from *A Guidebook to New Urbanism in Florida 2005* [www.cnu.org].)

and long range set of actions for design of his or her project site. FPODIA can host a design session in another region and can provide training on how to establish a design institute. On the national level, the National Endowment for the Arts, the American Architectural Foundation, and the United States Conference of Mayors co-sponsor the Mayors' Institute on City Design (MICD). The MICD achieves its mission by organizing sessions where mayors engage leading design experts to find solutions to the most critical urban design challenges facing their cities. Each mayor presents a problem from his or her city for the other mayors and designers to discuss. The problems relate to a range of issues, including waterfront redevelopment, downtown revitalization, transportation planning, and the design of new public buildings such as libraries and arts centers.

 Information on design institutes is available from FPODIA [www.floridadesigninstitute.org], the MICD [www.usmayors.org/uscm], and the University of South Florida School of Architecture and Community design [www.arch.usf.edu].

Design Guidelines

Design guidelines provide communities with a way to address issues related to the visual quality of the built environment that are not covered by zoning laws or building codes. Local leaders who want to influence the appearance of their community use design guidelines to reinforce and enhance (or, in some cases, regain) the character and identity of an area and improve the quality of development and ensure that it is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. Design guidelines can be applied at the community, neighborhood, site, or individual building levels, in both historic and non-historic areas. They can also be applied to a new or existing road corridor or to a natural area that has certain visual qualities that the community wants to maintain. Design guidelines typically address site issues, such as the location, setback, and orientation of buildings; the location of parking; the transition and connectivity between land uses; and pedestrian and vehicular access and circulation. For individual buildings, design guidelines can be used to address issues such as building height, materials, scale, and color; the relationship of buildings to each other; lighting; and signage. To link them to the enforcement

THE CITY OF DELRAY BEACH DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

The city of Delray Beach's development standards implement the objectives for its central business district (CBD) zone: to enable development that preserves the downtown's historic, moderate scale and promotes a balance of mixed-uses that will result in a self-sufficient downtown and compact, pedestrian-oriented growth that will support downtown businesses. To help create such an environment, higher residential densities are allowed in the downtown, and on Atlantic Avenue, the city's main street, ground floor uses must be pedestrian-oriented (i.e., restaurant, retail, or service use, not office uses). The downtown development standards (which are in the process of being updated) further the pedestrian environment by establishing a relationship between the width of the road and the height of the buildings (currently limited to 60 feet). Buildings must front the street, and upper floors must be set further back from the lower levels to create a vertical stepped back appearance. Open space, if required, can include courtyards, plazas, and landscaped setbacks to add interest and to provide relief from building mass. Architectural guidelines address building proportions and material configurations, rather than style. (More information on the city of Delray Beach's downtown development standards is available from www.mydelraybeach.com/DeRay/Departments/Planning+and+Zoning/Quick+Links/LDRs.htm, starting at Section 4.4.13 [F].)

mechanisms of government, design guidelines are typically adopted by ordinance and referenced in a local government's zoning code.

Design guidelines achieve a number of community objectives, including protecting public investment by ensuring quality growth. In commercial areas, design guidelines enhance retail activities and promote new private investments by making an area more attractive. In residential areas, they give property owners the assurance that new development or redevelopment will be compatible with the character of their neighborhood. Design guidelines also provide a tool for planners to provide information about the desired building design at the earliest stages of planning before significant funds are invested in costly design. Successful design guideline programs involve a high level of participation among developers, residents, business owners, and the local government in the creation and application of the standards or guidelines. Successful programs also have guidelines that are clearly written and well-illustrated through easy-to-understand graphics, provide an objective basis for review, and provide enough flexibility within the overall vision to accommodate change and allow for a variety of architectural styles, an important ingredient in the success of Seaside in Walton County. (See the New Urbanism section below to learn more about Seaside.) Typically, the guidelines are articulated in a design handbook or manual.

Design guidelines are usually administered by local planning staff in cooperation with an architectural review board that provides advice on the appropriateness of a development proposal. Because of the importance of the visual quality of development in creating successful and livable communities, a growing number of planning offices in Florida have added one or more design staff members. The city of West Palm Beach was the first planning office to hire an architect trained in urban design. A more recent example is Orange County, which has an Urban Design Section within its Planning Division. Staff members, working with an Urban Design Commission, are charged with developing policies, design guidelines,


DOWNTOWN KENDALL MASTER PLAN AND CODE

The Downtown Kendall Master Plan and Code are designed to guide change for a 250-acre area along Kendall Drive in Miami-Dade County. They are reshaping the current suburban form of development (a series of parking lots and non-connected strip malls with poor pedestrian accessibility) into a mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly downtown center with an interconnected network of streets and a series of public spaces and squares. Large and small increments of development can be accommodated, which means that the market and infrastructure availability can determine the pace of development and that even an individual property improvement can contribute to a unified whole. (Information on the Downtown Kendall Master Plan and Code is available from [Dover Kohl & Partners \[www.doverkohl.com\]](http://www.doverkohl.com) and from [A Guidebook to New Urbanism in Florida 2005 \[www.cnuflorida.org\]](http://www.cnuflorida.org).)

DOWNTOWN WEST PALM BEACH URBAN CODE


The West Palm Beach downtown urban code was adopted to ensure that development was consistent with the goals of the Downtown Master Plan and that building construction was predictable in order to ensure stable real estate values. The code requires that new buildings be compatible with each other and with the existing urban fabric. It also addresses building design and how buildings, including retail, front the street and relates to the pedestrian. Other provisions address how locations designated for terminating vistas and how areas marked for special landscaping are treated and encourage in-building cross-block pedestrian passages to shorten routes from street to street. (Information on the Downtown West Palm Beach Urban Code is available from [Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company \[www.dpz.com\]](http://www.dpz.com).)

and regulatory controls that will improve the aesthetic quality of the county's physical environment and create a strong sense of place and community identity.

 Information on design guidelines can be obtained from the American Institute of Architects' Center on Communities by Design [www.aia.org], the Congress for the New Urbanism [www.cnu.org], the National Governor's Association [www.nga.org], the National Trust for Historic Preservation [www.nthp.org], and the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions [www.sed.uga.edu/psol/programs/napc].

Form-Based Codes

By providing a method to regulate the visual form of development through clear graphic prescriptions, form-based codes offer an alternative to conventional land use regulations that focus on controlling the use of land. The codes are used to achieve a specific urban form based on a community vision by regulating the physical form (the desired physical characteristics) of what is built on the land – the buildings and how they relate to one another and to the appearance and quality of the public realm, such as streets and sidewalks. Form-based codes allow the use of a building to change over time (for example, a warehouse that becomes loft apartments), which encourages reinvestment and provides a landowner or developer greater flexibility in meeting changing real estate markets. For example, if a building's size, form, and placement conform to the community's vision, as described in the form-based code, a developer may have the flexibility to build a variety of uses. Form-based codes can replace the existing zoning for the affected area or can be established as an overlay zone that supersedes the underlying code. Form-based codes can be used to guide development in a variety of settings, including a neighborhood, downtown, or suburban area. Two early form-based codes in Florida (described on the prior page) are the Downtown Kendall Master Plan and Code, adopted to convert a suburban strip corridor to a mixed-use pedestrian-friendly downtown center, and the West Palm Beach Urban Code, adopted to encourage development that implements the goals of the Downtown West Palm Beach Master Plan.


 Information for this description was largely drawn from the Form-Based Code Institute [www.form-basedcodes.org] and *A Guidebook to New Urbanism in Florida 2005* [www.cnuflorida.org].

CITY OF ORLANDO INCENTIVE ZONING

The Southeast Orlando Sector Plan (for a 19,300-acre greenfield area located adjacent to the Orlando International Airport) provides incentives for development that is consistent with the plan. Key plan concepts include building livable neighborhoods and mixed-use centers that are compact and walkable, accommodating all modes of travel, focusing on traditional design and civic amenities, protecting the environment, and creating a healthy jobs-housing balance. Incentives for development consistent with the plan's vision include expedited administrative and environmental review; smaller street sections, increased densities, and opportunities for mixed-use development where Traditional Design Standards are used; and reduced transportation impact fees (approximately 30 percent) where certain criteria are met. An additional incentive is fee waivers for growth management plan amendments, rezonings, master plans, and subdivision platting for five years from the initial master plan approval. (More information is available from www.cityoforlando.net/planning/dept/pagel/sep/sesp.htm.)

Incentive Zoning

Incentive zoning provides incentives (sometimes called carrots) that reward developments that achieve community goals (for example, providing affordable housing or other public benefits such as parks or pedestrian amenities, protecting specific natural resources, or adding certain design features). Incentive zoning can also be used to achieve a specific form of development such as transit-oriented development, mixed-use development, or the development of traditional neighborhoods. Incentive zoning is different from traditional zoning, which limits what can be done on a piece of land but does not provide rewards. Commonly used rewards are those that help improve a development's profitability. They include density bonuses, which allow developers to build more units than would normally be allowed in a zoning district; expedited permitting; tax breaks or reductions or exemptions from certain impact or other fees; reductions in parking space requirements; and public provision of infrastructure or low-interest loans. Another incentive particularly effective in downtown areas allows increases in building heights or floor-area ratio. In administering incentive zoning, it is important to structure the program to ensure that the incentives achieve, and are in proportion to, the benefits of the desired planning outcomes, while at the same time adding value for a developer.

 More information on incentive zoning is available from the American Planning Association [www.planning.org].

Mixed-Use Development


Mixed-use developments are becoming a common practice in Florida. A mixed-use development integrates retail and commercial uses, as well as public spaces, with residential development, suburban infill sites, and new towns or neighborhoods. Mixed-use developments can take different forms, including neighborhood commercial centers and smaller town main streets with residences above retail and offices, higher density urban mixed-use town centers, suburban infill sites, conversion of single-use malls and strip centers to create a town center where none existed before, and new towns or neighborhoods. By providing a mix of uses, such as shopping, parks, and opportunities for employment and entertain-

BALDWIN PARK

Baldwin Park, a compact, mixed-use development based on the principles of the New Urbanism, is on the site of a former naval training center located near downtown Orlando. Designed in the Florida architectural style of pre-1940s era central Florida to blend into the surrounding neighborhoods, the 4,100 homes come in a variety of styles and price ranges, including single-family homes, town homes, live work units, condominiums, and apartments. The development is served by 950,000 square feet of commercial space, which includes neighborhood offices, live-work units, and a Village Center with retail space and apartments above. Underscoring the economic value created by mixed-use developments, Baldwin Park provides \$2.0 billion-plus in property value to the community and 6,000 permanent jobs. To ensure a high level of connectivity and walkability, the roadways form an interconnected network with numerous entries and exits to disperse traffic and provide easy access to nearby developments. Development is concentrated on one-half of the 1,100-acre site, enabling 450 acres of conserved open space. (More information on Baldwin Park is available from the Baldwin Park Development Company [www.baldwinparkfl.com] and from *A Guidebook to New Urbanism in Florida 2005* [www.cnuflorida.org].)

ment in close proximity to where people live, traffic is reduced because many needs are within walking or bicycling distance of residences, earning mixed-use developments the title of places to live, work, shop, and play. In addition, opportunities for transit are enhanced.

Employees of businesses as well as residents in a mixed-use development benefit from close access to daily needs, such as a dry cleaner, bank, and shopping. Transportation costs are reduced, and owning a car to take care of routine needs is no longer essential, benefiting elderly residents who, in a suburban development where homes are segregated from shopping, medical services and other conveniences, lose their independence when a car is no longer practical. Local governments can take a number of steps to encourage and facilitate mixed-use developments in their community. Those steps include expressly providing for mixed-use developments in the comprehensive plan; adopting Form-Based or Traditional Neighborhood Development codes; designating mixed-use areas in single-use areas; using zoning and development regulations to enable conversion of large vacant sites or buildings to mixed-use developments (for example, Baldwin Park in Orlando); and adopting incentives, such as expedited approvals, one-stop permitting, and density bonuses.

 More information on mixed-use developments can be obtained from the American Planning Association [www.planning.org], the Congress for the New Urbanism [www.cnu.org], the National Association of Home Builders [www.nahb.org], the National Realtors' Association [www.realtors.org], Smart Growth America [www.smartgrowthamerica.org], and the Urban Land Institute [www.uli.org].

New Urbanism

The New Urbanism – or what is also called Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) – has its roots in Florida's Panhandle. The country's first New Urbanist development was the now 25-year old Seaside in Walton County. Since Seaside, the number of New Urbanist developments has multiplied. Today, Florida has the most New Urbanist developments in the United States, and the principles of the New Urbanism have been used in Florida to achieve a wide variety of community


SEASIDE, FLORIDA

Eighty-acre Seaside is a new community designed according to the scale and character of an historic, small southern town, including the layout of streets and squares and the location of uses (a mix of single- and multi-family residential units and commercial and public space). The interconnected network of streets encourages walking, and the public realm extends throughout the neighborhoods in the form of sandy paths that provide a variety of routes for moving about the town. Retail is in the form of a civic downtown with a common green, an inn, a conference center that doubles as town hall, and other civic amenities. Small kiosks provide an inexpensive place for retailers, and a beach pavilion is one of the community's focal points. The design of public and private buildings reflects the regional vernacular architecture, and the development makes use of native landscaping. The success of Seaside is evidenced in the sale of its lots, which have increased from \$15,000 to as much as \$1 million today. *(This information was taken from [A Guidebook to New Urbanism in Florida 2005](#), published by the Florida Chapter of the Congress for the New Urbanism [www.cnuflorida.org]. More information on Seaside is at www.seasidefl.com and from Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company [www.dpz.com].)*

and regional goals. The developments range from providing affordable housing, protecting natural systems and farmland, and redeveloping inner city areas and outdated strip malls to revitalizing downtowns, creating mixed-use town centers for single-use suburban neighborhoods, and designing new towns.

Seaside's designers based the town on a study of the planning principles that made Florida's traditional small towns – places like Apalachicola, downtown Pensacola, and DeFuniak Springs – so successful. Those planning principles form the basis of today's New Urbanism, which promotes compact mixed-use developments that begin with neighborhoods sized for walking as the basic building block. New Urbanist neighborhoods offer a variety of housing choices located within easy walking distance of most daily needs and an interconnected network of pedestrian-friendly streets and accessible public spaces, making it possible to live, work, shop, and play without getting into a car. Town and neighborhood centers, public spaces, civic uses, and other features are designed at the human scale to foster a sense of community.

The New Urbanism provides an alternative to the suburban development patterns required by most zoning ordinances that are based on a separation of land uses, large lots, deep building setbacks, and wide streets and do not permit the mix of land uses and pedestrian-oriented, more compact development called for in the New Urbanism. As a result, a change in local zoning is usually required. To solve that problem, an increasing number of Florida communities have adopted a Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) code to specifically enable and promote the New Urbanism. Those codes can be voluntary or mandatory and can be applied citywide or to a specific geographic area. Another option is called a floating code – one that is authorized by law but not assigned to a specific property or geographic area. The use of a floating code is triggered by an application from a landowner to rezone a property under the zone.

 More information on the New Urbanism and TND codes is available from the Congress for the New Urbanism [www.cnu.org], the Florida Chapter of the Congress for the New Urbanism [www.cnuflorida.org], and the New Urbanism Division of the American Planning Association [www.planning.org]. A complete listing of Florida resources on the New Urbanism is contained in [A Guidebook to New Urbanism in Florida 2005](#) [www.cnuflorida.org]. The Seaside Institute [www.theseasideinstitute.org], located in


NORTH MIAMI BEACH NEW URBANISM ZONING DISTRICT

The intent of the North Miami Beach New Urbanism Zoning District, which was enacted in 2002, is to create a traditional town center that provides a community gathering point and pedestrian environment and creates a sense of place. The creation of such a center addressed the lack of a downtown. The district, which covers 20 city blocks, requires mixed-use buildings that front sidewalks, prohibits buildings from being set back, reduces parking requirements and locates parking behind buildings, and requires a two-story minimum height, along with minimum densities. The district's zoning also addresses building form, such as massing and windows, and establishes a unique character for primary and secondary streets. The intent of each requirement is illustrated. *(More information on the North Miami Beach New Urbanism Zoning District is available from www.citynmb.com, or [A Guidebook to New Urbanism in Florida 2005](#) [www.cnuflorida.org].)*

Seaside, is also a full-source location for information on Seaside and the New Urbanism.

Overlay Zones

An overlay zone can be used to protect particular natural, cultural, or built features in a community that are under pressure from development. Such zones can be used to carry out a variety of community objectives: to protect the character of a neighborhood, downtown, waterfront, or road corridor; to protect a scenic view, an aquifer recharge area, natural slopes, wetlands, and watersheds; and to address safety and compatibility issues, such as airport, fire, and flood hazard areas. An overlay zone can also be used to promote a type of development in designated areas (for example, to provide affordable housing as a use by right or to promote mixed-use, transit-oriented development in certain areas). The overlay zone, which is mapped, is superimposed over the existing zoning. In that way, it establishes standards and criteria that build on the underlying zoning. Overlay zones provide a community with a flexible tool to provide a higher level of protection or quality of growth within a defined area (for example, to achieve higher densities or reduce parking requirements in downtowns or to apply design guidelines to protect the character of a neighborhood or commercial area).

 Information on Overlay Zones is available from the American Planning Association [www.planning.org].

SmartCode

The SmartCode is a model ordinance designed by the Miami-based architecture and design firm of Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company (DPZ). Conceived as an alternative to existing zoning ordinances that generally are based on suburban-era standards and address only land use and density, the SmartCode combines


HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY THONOTOSASSA MAIN STREET OVERLAY DISTRICT

Thonotosassa is a predominantly rural community within a 20-minute commute from downtown Tampa. The Main Street Overlay District (which implements the Main Street Plan element of the county's Comprehensive Plan and the Thonotosassa Community Plan) was developed in response to residents' concerns about increasing pressures from suburban-scale development. The intent is to enhance the Main Street experience by establishing buildings, signage, lighting, landscaping, and building placement requirements that will result in a rural form of development. Building entrances and fronts, such as covered walkways and porches (not parking lots), must face Main Street; service areas must be screened; and parking and loading areas must be located to the side or rear of the principal building façade. (*More information on the Thonotosassa Main Street Overlay District is available from the Hillsborough County Department of Planning and Growth Management [www.hillsboroughcounty.org/pgm/].*)

THE CITY OF GAINESVILLE COLLEGE PARK AND UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS SPECIAL AREA PLANS

In 1994, the city of Gainesville adopted an overlay set of development regulations for two older, historic neighborhoods flanking the University of Florida. The overlay was in response to problems (for example, overcrowded parking and new development inconsistent with the existing community character) associated with the growth of student rental housing in traditional single-family owner-occupied neighborhoods. To address those problems, the regulations outline and illustrate requirements for pedestrian-oriented building placement, unobtrusive parking, landscaping materials, sidewalk and sign treatment, and façade improvements. The city has subsequently adopted similar overlays on a major gateway street south of downtown and neighborhoods east of downtown. (*The overlay regulations can be viewed in the Special Area Plans section of Chapter 30 of the city of Gainesville's Land Development Code [www.municode.com/Resources/gateway.asp?pid=10819&sid=9].*)

zoning, subdivision regulations, urban design, and architectural standards into one compact document. A type of form-based code, the SmartCode addresses the physical form of buildings and development. Using the code, planners can regulate appropriate density, road and block dimensions and design, the design of parks, building frontages, the mix of uses, building design, parking, and other aspects of the human environment for each area in the transect hierarchy. The SmartCode can be applied at the regional, new community, existing community, infill, and individual lot levels. It combines a means to protect the environment, open space, and water quality with methods that determine where growth should go and how it will be implemented by using a planning concept called the Transect (also designed by DPZ) as the organizing framework. The Transect divides a region into six zones that move along a continuum from the most rural areas that should be preserved in perpetuity to the urban downtown core where high densities are appropriate. Between those zones are a range of uses that increase in intensity as they move from the rural to the urban. Development is concentrated in hamlets, villages, and towns to protect open spaces and water quality. That hierarchy of rural and urban intensities allows planners and developers to determine appropriate uses and design elements for each zone.

 For additional information, contact Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company [www.dpz.com] or the Congress for the New Urbanism [www.cnu.org]. The Smart Code can be downloaded at no charge from www.dpz.com.


Urban Growth Boundaries (UGB)

An Urban Growth Boundary (UGB), or what some call an urban development or service boundary, is a planning tool that limits land development beyond a politically-designated area. A UGB establishes a line on a map that is drawn to concentrate new development within the UGB, where there are existing urban services and facilities, and limits development in rural areas with a high natural resource or agricultural value. UGBs are established to accommodate growth over a particular period, generally 20 years. Typically, urban services are offered only within the UGB. Communities have used UGBs to curb sprawl, protect open space, encourage more compact and cost efficient development patterns, and promote redevelopment. UGBs can be effective in preventing development in rural areas, and, by encouraging or requiring higher density development within the UGB, reduce the amount of

SARASOTA DOWNTOWN CODE

Sarasota's Downtown Code is based on the *SmartCode*, reformatted to work within the city's Zoning Code and tailored to the needs of Sarasota. The code implements the land use components of the city's Downtown Master Plan 2020, which covers an area that encompasses the downtown, two waterfront districts, and several neighborhoods. The code provides a description of the type of development that should occur in each of the Master Plan's four downtown districts in order to create urban communities that are diverse and compact and offer a high quality environment that is comfortable and an interesting place to live and work. The four downtown districts parallel the urban portion of the transect: Downtown Neighborhood, Downtown Edge, Downtown Core, and Downtown Bayfront. An important element of the code is the frontages along the street edges (the area between the facade of the building and the lot line), used to create a positive and stimulating experience for the pedestrian. (*More information on the Downtown Code can be obtained from the city of Sarasota Department of Planning, www.sarasotagov.com/Planning/PlanningHome/PlanningHP.html.*)

land needed to accommodate future population growth. To avoid limiting the supply of land, with the resulting higher housing costs, a UGB can contain a supply of land that is greater than the market demand for housing. In Portland, Oregon, for example, which has a process for expanding its Urban Growth Boundary, studies show that housing prices are more affordable than in other west coast cities. Features of some UGB programs include delineating a permanent urban edge where it is needed to protect important natural resources and establishing clear standards for expansion through contiguous growth around existing centers to enable efficient use of urban services. Other UGB programs require minimum densities within the UGB to achieve compact development, reduce the need to consume more open space, and provide funding to assist with local public services within (but not outside) the UGB.

 Information on UGBs can be obtained from the American Planning Association [www.planning.org], the Smart Growth Network [www.smartcommunities.ncat.org], and Smart Growth America [www.smartgrowthamerica.org].

Walkable Neighborhoods

Walkable communities are designed to make it safe, convenient, and interesting to walk from one destination to another. Benefits of establishing (or re-establishing) walkable, more pedestrian-friendly places include more social interaction and a greater sense of community among residents, who are also healthier because they can walk and exercise with greater ease; less air pollution; reduced transportation costs; and more independent seniors (and youth) who cannot operate a car. The concept of making a place more walkable and pedestrian-friendly can be applied to a full-range of places – small and large towns, neighborhoods, downtowns, suburban subdivisions, and roadway corridors – and to both new and existing development.

As with the New Urbanism, walkable communities are nothing new to Florida. Most of Florida's successful older downtowns (places like Apalachicola, Key West, St. Augustine, and Winter Park)

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY'S URBAN DEVELOPMENT BOUNDARY (UDB)


The Miami-Dade County UDB distinguishes where urban development may occur through the year 2015 and where it should not occur. Public expenditures for urban services and infrastructure improvements are focused within the UDB to accommodate the intended land uses. An Urban Expansion Area Boundary is used to delineate the area where current projections indicate that further urban development beyond the UDB is likely to be warranted sometime between the years 2015 and 2025. For designated agricultural lands outside the UDB, business and industrial uses are limited and residential development must be at a density of no more than one unit per five acres. (*More information on the Miami-Dade County UDB is available from www.miamidade.gov/planzone/cdmp.asp.*)

SARASOTA COUNTY URBAN SERVICES BOUNDARY (USB)

Sarasota County's USB has been in place since 1971, when the comprehensive plan recognized the proposed I-75 alignment as the boundary to contain urban sprawl, minimize the cost of community services, and maintain agricultural and conservation lands to the east. Recent plans continue to recognize I-75 as the demarcation in a transect that goes from urban coastal development to its west to rural countryside to its east, starting with semi-rural zoning immediately outside the USB and changing to rural and then large lot (160-acre agricultural zoning) further west. The Sarasota 2050 Plan Overlay requirement for higher densities is anticipated to reduce the need for future USB expansions. (*More information on the Sarasota USB is available from apoxsee.co.sarasota.fl.us/chap9/summary.asp.*)

are designed to be highly walkable and accessible to pedestrians. The trend away from creating walkable communities started with the suburban form of development adopted by most communities after World War II. In that form of development, the principal elements that make a place walkable were prohibited: a mix of land uses that make it possible to walk from home to nearby places to shop for daily conveniences (the bottle of milk or to pick up a prescription or dry cleaning), to participate in recreational activities and entertainment, to learn, or to work. As a result, residents of most communities have had no choice but to drive for even basic needs, which has led to an increase in vehicle miles of travel and wider streets designed to carry cars, not pedestrians.

To recapture the walkability of communities, many places are using strategies that put in place, or remove the obstacles to, the features that make places more inviting to pedestrians. In addition to establishing a mix of land uses that provides multiple destinations within close proximity, those features include compact development so that buildings are located closer together and pedestrian-friendly streets and public places. In a walkable community, streets are narrow and designed for slower speed, creating a safe, attractive environment for all transportation modes (pedestrians, cars, and transit). Streets are also interconnected to provide for better dispersal of traffic and have on-street parking, street trees, and other features that slow local traffic. Buildings are set close to the street, and the fronts of buildings open onto the street, creating a sense of enclosure and safety by providing eyes (doors and windows) on the street. Parking is located on the street, which helps create a buffer between pedestrians and the street, or to the rear of buildings, and street and building signage and lighting are oriented toward the pedestrian. To encourage walking, blocks are short and lined with trees and sidewalks and connect to a variety of commercial and public places that serve as community gathering places and focal points. Other elements contributing to the pedestrian experience include sidewalk benches, attractive trash receptacles, paving materials that denote pedestrian zones, and bicycle amenities.

 Much of this information was provided by the Florida-based Walkable Communities, Inc., [www.walkable.org]. Information on walkable communities can also be obtained from the Congress for the New Urbanism [www.cnu.org], the Urban Land Institute [www.uli.org], and the Smart Growth Network [www.smartgrowth.org].

HAILE VILLAGE CENTER

Located in Gainesville, Florida, the 55-acre Haile Village Center is a walkable community designed to meet the daily needs of residents. Residences are located within a five-minute walk of the village green, shops, schools, a community meeting hall, restaurants, and other services located in the heart of the development. To further the pedestrian experience, an interconnected network of curving streets is lined with brick-paved sidewalks, shade trees, and street lamps, and in the village center, buildings front the sidewalk, creating a sense of enclosure. Parking is either parallel on the street or behind the buildings. A combination of apartments, townhouses, garage apartments, residences above shops, and single-family homes creates a compact, walkable form of development. Open space in the form of small parks and squares is also located in close proximity to residences, and a network of walking and bicycle trails converge in the village center. (*This information was taken from [A Guidebook to New Urbanism in Florida 2005](#), published by the Florida Chapter of the Congress for the New Urbanism, www.cnuflorida.org. More information is available from www.hailevillagecenter.com.*)

INFILL AND REDEVELOPMENT TOOLS



Infill and redevelopment planning tools enable communities to direct more of new development and the accompanying investments into existing urban and suburban areas that already have services. They do that by developing, redeveloping, and re-using existing sites and buildings in neighborhoods and commercial corridors and centers. Communities use infill (which applies to filling in vacant parcels) and redevelopment (which applies to constructing new development on previously developed land) to make more efficient use of existing infrastructure, such as streets, water, and sewer lines, and to lower the cost of public services, such as fire, police, and emergency service providers. Infill and redevelopment are also used to provide affordable housing, reduce pressures to expand urban and suburban areas further into the countryside or nearer to environmentally sensitive lands, and reduce traffic congestion by shortening commuting distances or eliminating the need to commute by providing houses closer to jobs. Infill and redevelopment programs also help revitalize downtowns and enable greater use of transit and alternative modes of transportation. *(Information on infill and redevelopment tools is available from a number of organizations, including, in Florida, the Florida Redevelopment Association [www.redevelopment.net]. At the national level, information is available from the American Planning Association [www.planning.org], the Congress for the New Urbanism [www.cnu.org], the National Trust for Historic Preservation [www.nationaltrust.org], Smart Growth America [www.smartgrowthamerica.org], the Smart Growth Network [www.smartgrowth.org], and the Urban Land Institute [www.uli.org].)*

Brownfields

A brownfield is an abandoned or under-used commercial or industrial site that has, or potentially has, low concentrations of hazardous waste, pollutants, or contaminants. Brownfields are generally located in the industrial areas of a community or in areas that have older, often abandoned factories and commercial buildings. They can also be found in older residential neighborhoods (for example, the site of a former dry cleaner or gas station). The redevelopment of brownfields is used by communities to help revitalize neighborhoods, create housing, and promote development in established areas of a city that are already served by transportation and other community facilities. Redevelopment of brownfields also adds to the tax and job base by returning under-utilized property to more productive, higher-value uses and facilitating job growth. Brownfields redevelopment also opens up additional land for development, which removes the pressure to expand urban and suburban development into undeveloped rural areas to accommodate growth.


In 1995, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) established a brownfield program to encourage states, communities, and other stakeholders to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and reuse brownfields. To facilitate the clean-up and reuse of brownfields, EPA offers grants to both the public and private sectors. The grants can be used to fund brownfield inventories, planning, environmental assessments, and community outreach. EPA also sponsors a Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund Grant that provides funding to capitalize loans used to clean up brownfields; Brownfields Job Training Grants, which provide environmental training for residents of brownfields communities; and Brownfields Cleanup Grants, which provide direct funding for cleanup activities at certain properties with planned greenspace, recreational, or other nonprofit uses. EPA's investment in the Brownfields Program has resulted in many accomplishments, including leveraging more than \$6.5 billion in brownfields cleanup and redevelopment funding from the private and public sectors and creating approximately 25,000 new jobs.

In Florida, the state's Brownfield Redevelopment Act encourages, through the use of financial and regulatory incentives, the voluntary clean-up and redevelopment goals of existing commercial and industrial sites that are abandoned or underused because of environmental and public health hazards. The two primary brownfield resource organizations in the state are the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) and the Florida Brownfields Association. FDEP offers comprehensive information on brownfield redevelopment. One of its services is the Brownfields GeoViewer,

THE EASTWARD HO! BROWNFIELDS PARTNERSHIP

Created in 1997, the Eastward Ho! Brownfields Partnership brings together local, state, regional, and federal agencies and private sector, non-profit and community organizations to remediate and reuse contaminated and abandoned or underused sites. The partnership is part of the larger Eastward Ho! effort that seeks to revitalize and improve the quality of life in Southeast Florida's historic urban areas. The partnership focuses on decreasing development pressure and reducing urban sprawl into environmentally sensitive lands to the west needed to restore the Everglades ecosystem and ensure future regional water supplies. The Partnership was designated a National Brownfields Showcase Community in 1998. *(For more information on the Eastward Ho! Brownfields Partnership, go to www.sfrpc.com/brownflds.htm.)*

a mapping tool designed to identify Florida brownfield sites. The Florida Brownfields Association is a nonprofit organization that works in cooperation with EPA and FDEP to provide brownfields information and redevelopment strategies to communities and the public at large.

 *More information on brownfield redevelopment is available from EPA [www.epa.gov/brownfields], the Florida Department of Environmental Protection [www.dep.state.fl.us/mainpage/programs/brownfields.htm], the Florida Brownfields Association [www.floridabrownfields.org], and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development [http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/economicdevelopment/programs/bedi/index.cfm].*

Community Redevelopment Agency


Many Florida communities use a Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) to redevelop and revitalize their urban areas. Under the Florida law (Chapter 163, Part III) that enables a local government to create a CRA, certain blight conditions must exist. Examples of those conditions include substandard or inadequate buildings or infrastructure, defective or inadequate street layout and parking facilities, unsanitary or unsafe conditions, tax or special assessment delinquency, and diversity of property ownership. The activities of a CRA are administered by a board created by the local government. The board can create more than one Community Redevelopment Area in a community. The board also prepares, through the CRA staff, a Community Redevelopment Plan for each CRA area. CRA plans have been used in Florida to address a wide range of issues, including downtown, waterfront, road corridor, and neighborhood redevelopment.

A unique financing tool available to a CRA is Tax Increment Financing (TIF). TIF enables a local government, through its CRA, to leverage public funds to promote redevelopment activities in the targeted redevelopment area. A TIF captures the future tax benefits of real estate improvements in the CRA area to pay the current cost of making those improvements as part of the redevelopment plan. In a TIF project, the value of all property within the CRA area is frozen as of a fixed date. After that date, increased property tax revenues that come from an increase in the value of property within the redevelopment area that are over the amount of revenues on the fixed date (the tax increment) are deposited in the CRA Trust Fund and dedicated to the redevelopment area. The approach enables a local government to make improvements in a distressed area as an incentive for new private investments that

CITY OF GAINESVILLE COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY (CRA)


The city of Gainesville established its CRA in 1981 to develop the central city district into a dynamic mixed-use center. The CRA carries out its activities in four redevelopment districts: Downtown, Fifth Avenue/Pleasant Street, College Park University Heights, and Eastside. Redevelopment projects are implemented by a team of partners that includes the CRA, other city departments, and private citizens. Each district has its own advisory board to provide guidance on projects and plans. Activities include redeveloping outdated commercial strip centers; preserving historic homes; constructing new buildings, parking lots, garages, and sidewalks; developing neighborhood parks; providing affordable housing; and installing streetscape improvements. The CRA also offers a number of housing assistance and rehabilitation programs. One such program is the Model Block Program, which uses tax increment funds with other funds to renovate clusters of historic houses. *(More information on the Gainesville CRA is available from www.redevelopgainesville.org.)*

would not have otherwise occurred. The TIF does not impact current revenues to the local government or other taxing authorities. They continue to receive property tax revenues from the frozen value.

 *More information on Community Redevelopment Agencies is available from the Florida Redevelopment Association [www.redevelopment.net] and from the Center for Urban and Environmental Solutions at Florida Atlantic University [www.cuesfau.org].*

Development without Displacement

In a development without displacement program, a community puts in place strategies that enable redevelopment of an area to occur without displacing lower-income residents because their home is torn down or they can no longer afford to live there. The goal of a development without displacement program is to avoid what is often an unintended consequence of redevelopment projects. As redevelopment occurs, lower-income people are driven out by a variety of forces: buildings and infrastructure are upgraded; property values increase and rents go up as an area becomes more desirable; rental property and smaller, often deteriorated homes are torn down or converted to other uses; and affordable housing becomes scarce or extinct. Other causes of displacement can include a higher cost of living in an area; stricter enforcement of codes; and loss of a support infrastructure, such as local businesses and service providers who leave because they can no longer afford the rent or their building is demolished. A number of strategies, several of which are discussed in other sections of this toolbox, can be used to avoid the displacement of low-income residents. They include requiring or providing incentives for mixed-income housing (housing designed to allow people with different incomes to live within a development), providing low-interest loans or grants for home rehabilitation, creating a community land trust, and using land assembled through a land bank for affordable housing.

 *More information on Development without Displacement is available from the South Florida Regional Resource Center [www.sfrrc.org] at the Center for Urban and Environmental Solutions at Florida Atlantic University [www.cuesfau.org] and from the Local Initiatives Support Corporation [www.lisc.org].*

DELRAY BEACH: REDEVELOPING WITHOUT DISPLACING

As a city that is approaching build-out, Delray Beach has shifted its growth management focus to renewal and redevelopment. The success of that focus is evident in reinvestment in the city's downtown and its resurgence as a place to live, shop, and work, along with rising housing values. Because a successful redevelopment program must plan for possible rises in property values that make it difficult for low and moderate income residents to afford housing in the redevelopment area, the Delray Beach CRA initiated a number of affordable housing initiatives to help ensure that residents were not displaced. The CRA acquires lots and provides downpayment subsidies to moderate income families, buys land and buildings that can be used for the development of affordable housing, and, along with the city and the Delray Beach Housing Authority, established a community land trust. It has also worked with developers to set aside units that are affordable to low- and moderate-income buyers. *(More information on the Delray CRA programs to promote development without displacement is available from www.delraycra.org.)*

Greyfield Redevelopment

Greyfield redevelopment refers to giving new life to declining, underperforming, or vacant shopping centers, malls, or big box stores or other vacant property that is mostly paved over. Typically, greyfield locations are in older suburbs that have been left behind as retailers move to newer suburbs or because a newer, larger retail center locates nearby and draws away customers. Greyfields are also created by changing retail practices and demographics. Communities promote greyfield redevelopment for a variety of reasons, including increased tax revenues from the higher property values generated by returning non-productive locations to higher-density, higher-value mixed-use development and more efficient use of existing infrastructure and services. Greyfield redevelopment can be used to revitalize a declining neighborhood, reduce traffic by bringing jobs and stores closer to where people live, provide new housing and sites for local retail, and provide a town center for a suburban community without a downtown. The practice of redeveloping greyfields involves reincorporating the freestanding superblocks created by big malls or big box stores into the existing community by building new streets through the site that connect it to the surrounding streets. The new streets can be used to divide a super big mall site into city blocks that can be developed as a mixture of housing, retail, civic uses, and parks.

 For more information on the redevelopment of greyfields, contact the Congress for the New Urbanism [www.cnu.org] and the Urban Land Institute [www.uli.org].

Historic Districts

Historic districts are used to recognize and sometimes protect a city's neighborhood or area that is recognized as having significance related to the history of the community, state, or nation. The tool can also be applied to historic natural or cultural landscapes. Historic districts are put in place for a variety of reasons: to protect an area from encroaching development or from housing and building renovations that are not consistent with the character of the surrounding area, retain an image, and maintain property values.

Two types of historic districts are most typically used. The first is a National Register historic district, which must be approved by the State Historic Preservation Officer and listed by the National Park

MIZNER PARK GREYFIELD REDEVELOPMENT

Mizner Park was developed as a catalyst to revitalize Boca Raton's downtown in the face of competition in the western areas. A CRA project, it replaced an outdated 15-year-old enclosed mall with a downtown mixed-use development (often called the village-within-the-city) that offers shopping, dining, cultural facilities, and residences. The CRA purchased the land through a bond issue that was repaid through tax incremental financing and rent payments from the underlying leases. The CRA leases the land to the commercial developer. The 28.5-acre project area is configured as a two-city block traditional downtown with four main mixed-use buildings, four parking garages, and on-street parking. Two-thirds of the site is devoted to public areas, including an amphitheater, broad arcade walkways, and the park-like Plaza Real, which serves as a community-gathering place. The success of Mizner Park has spurred additional development in the downtown, resulting in dramatic increases in property values (from \$160.8 million taxable value in tax year 1990-1991 to almost \$1.1 billion in tax year 2006-2007). During that same time period, the taxable value of Mizner Park increased from \$26.8 million to \$152.9 million. (More information on Mizner Park is available from www.miznerpark.com and from *A Guidebook to New Urbanism in Florida 2005* [www.cnuflorida.org].)

Service; the second is a locally-designated historic district established under the purview of local land use laws. In general, a National Register listing provides recognition that the area meets established criteria for significance and integrity. It does not directly limit how property owners may treat the resource. If federal funds are used in a way that may affect the resource, a consultation process with the State Historic Preservation Officer is required. A tax credit for the certified rehabilitation of eligible income-producing properties is also available for resources listed as contributors in a National Register district. To be listed, properties must meet criteria established by the Secretary of the Interior. Resources need not be of "national" significance in order to be listed in the National Register; properties of state or local significance that meet the criteria are also eligible. In a locally-designated historic district, the government may establish requirements that alterations, new construction, and other improvements be approved, and in some cases demolition may also be subject to review. Most local governments use criteria for listing that are similar to those used by the Secretary of the Interior. An area can be designated both in the National Register and also under local ordinance.

Typically, an ordinance establishing an historic district will also set forth design guidelines addressing the elements that contribute to the historic character of the district. The design guidelines, which are used when making decisions about historic buildings and structures, usually apply to both new construction and renovation. Elements of historic design guidelines can address features such as the architectural style and placement of buildings, landscaping, sidewalks, alleys, parking lots, fences, public spaces, and vistas. The intent is to prevent inappropriate changes that will change the historic character of the district over time. Such changes can include window alterations, a change in the building set-back line, and additions or new buildings that are out-of-scale with the surrounding buildings. The design guidelines for a commercial historic district may also address issues such as street lighting, signs, and awnings. To work well, design guidelines should create a uniform standard that is easy to understand (many guidelines include illustrations to clearly communicate the desired outcome) and is fairly applied, typically by a government-appointed board or commission. Design guidelines can be prescriptive (calling for a specific design solution) or more performance-oriented (describing a desired outcome while allowing a range of alternative solutions).

PENSACOLA HISTORIC DISTRICTS

Settled in the 1700s, the city of Pensacola has many structures dating back to the 1800s. The city uses historic districts to maintain the historic character of its neighborhoods and downtown. The city has five historic districts, two of which are also on the National Register of Historic Places. The historic district design guidelines are tailored to maintaining the individual character of each district. The guidelines are intended to preserve the development pattern and distinctive architectural and landscape character of a specific district through the restoration or rehabilitation of existing buildings and the construction of compatible new buildings. A city-appointed Architectural Review Board (ARB) helps to preserve and protect the architectural integrity of structures in the districts. The ARB reviews and acts on any change that will affect the exterior appearance of a property, from new construction to demolition, including any repairs or renovations, and, in three of the districts, grants or denies zoning variances. (More information on the city of Pensacola's historic districts is available from www.ci.pensacola.fl.us/live/pages.asp?pageID=1648] and Section 12-2-10 of the city's municipal code [www.municode.com/resources/gateway.asp?pid=11418&sid=9].)

In addition to locally-written design guidelines for historic districts, the U.S. Secretary of the Interior publishes standards and guidelines for the treatment of historic properties. These are used in consideration of federal undertakings affecting National Register districts and often are adopted by local governments to use with their locally-designated districts. Of these, the Secretary's Standards for Rehabilitation are used most frequently in local historic districts. They contain ten basic principles intended to help preserve the distinctive character of an historic building and its site, while allowing for reasonable change to meet new needs. The standards (36 CFR Part 67) apply to historic buildings of all periods, styles, types, materials, and sizes. They apply to both the exterior and the interior of historic buildings. The standards also encompass related landscape features and the building's site and environment as well as attached, adjacent, or related new construction. Rehabilitation projects that meet the standards, as interpreted by the National Park Service, may qualify as certified rehabilitations eligible for the rehabilitation tax credit.

In Florida, information on creating an Historic District is available from the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation [www.floridatrust.org], a nonprofit organization established in 1978 to promote the preservation of the architectural, historical, and archaeological heritage of Florida, and the State Historic Preservation Officer [SHPO] [www.flheritage.com], who serves as the liaison with the national historic preservation program conducted by the National Park Service [www.nps.gov]. The Florida SHPO is a part of the Division of Historical Resources [www.cr.nps.gov/hps]. At the national level, in addition to the National Park Service, a principal source of information on historic districts and other preservation programs is the National Trust for Historic Preservation [www.nationaltrust.org], which provides a wide range of educational, technical assistance, and training services and is home to the National Main Street Center [www.mainstreet.org]. Information is also available from the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation [www.achp.gov], the Preservation Directory [www.preservationdirectory.com], the National Center for Preservation Technology & Training [www.ncptt.nps.gov], and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Information Center [www.nal.usda.gov/ric/ricpubs/preserve.html]. For the U.S. Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, go to www.cr.nps.gov/hps/TPS/tax/rhbl. Much of the information on historic districts was developed from www.winterandcompany.net.

Incentives for Infill and Redevelopment

In Florida, cities and counties, as well as CRAs, utilize incentives to encourage infill and redevelopment. These can include permitting incentives, such as density bonuses, expedited permitting, reduction in impact fees, reducing or eliminating parking requirements, providing tax incentives, or creating an area-wide stormwater facility to minimize onsite detention and retention infrastructure. Three other redevelopment incentives include allowing the transfer of development rights, leveraging publicly-owned real estate, and land banking. In a transfer of development rights program, a landowner or developer is allowed to purchase development rights from certain properties and transfer those rights to other properties to achieve higher densities than normally allowed through zoning (for example, to build six instead of four units per acre). The higher density serves as an incentive for the developer to purchase the development rights. Government-owned real estate leveraging strategies can include the donation of property or its sale or lease at a nominal or below market rate, providing access easement or assistance with infrastructure, and selling or leasing air rights over public property. In land banking, a CRA or another governmental or non-profit entity acquires property to later sell or lease

for a nominal fee or below market rate price to induce a desired type of development (for example, affordable housing or a development that facilitates the use of transit [transit-oriented development]). In some communities, a land bank authority is established to administer a land-banking program. A land bank can be used as a type of public broker to acquire property such as abandoned or tax delinquent properties or properties sold for taxes. The land bank holds the property and readies it for redevelopment (by clearing the title, for instance). A land bank can also assemble properties into larger redevelopment parcels.

Much of the information for redevelopment incentives was provided by Real Estate Research Consultants [www.rercinc.com]. Additional information on redevelopment incentives is available from the American Planning Association [www.planning.org], Smart Growth America [www.smartgrowthamerica.org], and the Smart Growth Network [www.smartgrowth.org].

Main Street Program

The 25-year old Main Street program is used to encourage commercial revitalization or enhancement within the context of historic preservation. In addition to preserving a community's historic resources, a Main Street program revitalizes downtowns, creates jobs, and stabilizes and expands the tax base. The program also helps build a positive community image, protect community investments in downtown infrastructure, and attract new business investments through the Main Street experience. In many instances, Main Street programs are established to revitalize a traditional central business district which is suffering from abandonment and declining property values because of the movement of retail and other businesses to the suburbs. A Main Street program can be incorporated into a local economic or downtown development program, a historic preservation program, or a community planning program.

Florida's 50 active Main Street programs include cities ranging from 1,650 to over 100,000 population, a county, and county districts. A local Main Street program is run by a downtown manager and

CITY OF WEST PALM BEACH INCENTIVES FOR INFILL AND REDEVELOPMENT

The city of West Palm Beach Planning Department offers a number of special programs to encourage implementation of the city's downtown master plan and code. These include a transfer of development rights (TDR) program and a residential incentives program (RIP). The TDR program uses market forces to preserve historic buildings and create public open spaces by allowing developers the right to acquire unused development rights from properties occupied by historic buildings or public open spaces and transfer those rights to designated receiving areas. The RIP, which expired in the summer of 2006 because it had achieved its purpose, was used by the city to encourage the development of residential units in the downtown by providing additional height for residential projects and creating public open space that encouraged a pedestrian environment. The 1,200 additional residential units created as a result of the RIP also helped the city meet transportation concurrency exception area (TCEA) goals. (The city is now evaluating new district-specific incentives as part of the update of its downtown master plan.) In addition, the ad valorem tax exemption is designed to encourage restoration, renovation, and rehabilitation of historic properties and stabilize and improve property values in the city. *(More information on the West Palm Beach incentives for infill and redevelopment is available from www.cityofwfpb.com/plan/udspecial.htm.)*

a broad-based Main Street Board that includes representatives from the public and private sectors. The Board plays a critical role in the local program by establishing policy, determining priorities, and assisting the manager with implementation of activities in the areas of organization, promotion, design, and economic restructuring. Local Main Street programs establish committees that correspond to the four core points of the Main Street approach: organization, which involves working with public and private sector community leaders to develop consensus and coordinate resources to revitalize the downtown; promotion, which involves creating and marketing a positive downtown image; design, which encourages quality building and public improvements; and economic restructuring, which involves programs to strengthen existing businesses and attract new ones. Other special purpose committees or task forces can also be established (to address parking, for example).

Main Street programs are supported by a network of other programs that provide information and technical assistance. In Florida, the Main Street program is administered by the Bureau of Historic Preservation, a part of the Division of Historical Resources in the Florida Department of State. The bureau provides design and technical assistance, Main Street basic training, and consultant team visits to Florida Main Street communities. It also sponsors quarterly meetings and an annual statewide Main Street Conference. Main Street cities receive a one-time \$10,000 grant and up to three years of technical assistance from the bureau. At the national level, the Main Street Center (a part of the National Trust for Historic Preservation) provides information to some 1,200 active Main Street programs. It also administers the Main Street accreditation process designed to reward organizations and help them garner attention within their communities.

Complementing the Main Street program, Visit Florida's Downtown and Small Towns program is a multi-year tourism development and marketing initiative that promotes the local color of Florida's downtowns and small towns. The purpose of the program is to generate economic benefits through increased downtown visitation while helping to preserve and enhance a community's natural, heritage, and cultural resources. The first state tourism-related activity of its kind, the Downtown and Small Towns program is designed to highlight the unique art, cultural heritage assets, historic districts,

THE CITY OF DELAND MAIN STREET PROGRAM

The city of DeLand used its Main Street program (one of the first five Florida projects) to turn around a downtown that had begun to decline with the post-World War II movement to the suburbs. Established in 1985, the Main Street program's economic restructuring and business-recruitment plan converted a downtown that was 75 percent vacant with many buildings boarded up to a downtown where the ground-floor retail and office spaces are fully occupied and \$1.2-plus million in private investments generated some 450 jobs. The program includes a design committee, which offers a façade grant program and works on downtown aesthetic issues; an economic development committee, which seeks to improve the economic climate and assist with business recruitment; and a promotion committee, which markets the downtown through special events and advertising campaigns. In 1997, DeLand was the Great American Main Street Award™ winner, and from 1999 through 2003, was voted as the best Main Street in Florida. The leaders of DeLand's Main Street program credit a lot of their success to the ability to create collaborative partnerships and coalitions across the public and private sectors. (More information about the DeLand Main Street program is available from <http://mainstreetdeland.com>.)

architectural significance, natural resources, and major festivals and events of the participating downtowns and small towns. Visit Florida is seeking communities that offer, in addition to good lodging, dining, and entertainment, distinct architecture, nationally recognized historic districts and/or a designated Main Street program, access to nature, and a walkable, pedestrian-friendly downtown. Visit Florida's goal is to connect tourism marketing to economic development efforts in order to advance the revitalization of Florida's downtowns and small towns.

For more information on Main Street programs, go to the Florida Bureau of Historic Preservation [www.flheritage.com/preservation/architecture/mainstreet/] and the Main Street Center [www.mainstreet.org]. For more information on Visit Florida's Downtown and Small Towns program, go to www.downtowns.VISIT-FLORIDA.com or to www.visitflorida.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Education&Template=/TaggedPage/TaggedPageDisplay.cfm&TPLID=10&ContentID=3186. 1000 Friends of Florida, which partnered with Visit Florida to design the Downtown and Small Towns program, also offers information at [www.1000fof.org/fl_panhandle_initiative/downtowns&small%20towns/downtowns&smalltowns.asp].


Neighborhood Conservation Districts

A Neighborhood Conservation District (NCD) is used to conserve and enhance the distinctive character of a neighborhood and give residents more say in how they want their particular area to develop. It provides a planning tool for neighborhoods that might not be historic but have distinct features residents want to preserve. NCDs are being used more often in areas where growth results in new development that is replacing or altering existing homes with buildings that erode the traditional neighborhood character. They can be used to accomplish a variety of goals: to protect and strengthen certain physical and design characteristics of an area; to reduce conflict and, in some cases, blight and loss of property values, caused by incompatible or insensitive development; promote compatible development; and provide residents with more certainty about the future character of their neighborhood. NCDs also provide property owners with a negotiating tool in a community's planning process and help build pride and civic involvement. Important to NCDs is the fact that they are developed with the involvement of the residents of the neighborhood.

CITY OF ST. PETERSBURG NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN REVIEW (NDR)


As one of the oldest cities in Florida, the city of St. Petersburg adopted NDR as a part of its Land Development Code in 1991 to protect its older neighborhoods, particularly those near the downtown, from improvements that appear out of place with the rest of the neighborhood and can harm the appeal and value of the surrounding homes. The goal of NDR is to ensure that new development, building additions, and rehabilitation of buildings are compatible with the character of the neighborhood, thereby reinforcing and upgrading the quality of the area and preserving property values. NDR requires that residential and commercial construction within designated neighborhoods (currently 11) be reviewed by the city's Development Services Department. The design guidelines used to review a project address features such as front and side yard setbacks, architectural styles, types of building materials and colors, architectural features, and types of wall or fence materials. The guidelines are illustrated in a *Design Review Manual*. (More information is available from www.stpete.org/urbdsgn1.htm.)

An NCD can utilize a variety of planning tools that apply design criteria: a neighborhood plan that guides development; modifying existing zoning to accurately reflect the traditional characteristics that the community seeks to protect; a zoning overlay for a neighborhood that contains specific design criteria; and a city- or county-wide design review system that can include distinctions among different neighborhoods. Whatever the planning tool used, most NCDs utilize some type of design guidelines or standards. Although the issues addressed in an NCD are neighborhood specific, they might include unwanted demolition; loss of large trees or natural vegetation; exterior building changes, including building materials; new buildings or additions that are out of scale with the neighborhood or lot; and streets that lose their appeal because new structures face inward, not to the street.

 Much of the information on NCDs was provided by Nore Winter and Company [www.winterandcompany.net]. Information on Neighborhood Conservation Districts is also available from Scenic America [www.scenic.org/planning/strategies_cd].

Vacant Property Program

In a vacant property program, a local government uses a variety of tools to turn vacant property into assets. Those tools are centered around three types of strategies: prevention, fixing the problem (abatement), and acquisition for future reuse. Prevention programs can include, for example, rehabilitation loan programs, home repair programs, homeownership and foreclosure prevention programs, and adoption of property maintenance codes. Code enforcement programs that target neglected neighborhoods and vacant property registration programs are two tools to fix the problem. A land bank or a community land trust (described in the Housing section of this toolbox) can be used to acquire vacant property and ready it for reuse, which often includes establishing a clear title.

 More information on vacant property programs is available from the Local Initiatives Support Corporation [www.lisc.org], the National Vacant Property Campaign [www.vacantproperties.org/index.html], and Smart Growth America [www.smartgrowthamerica.org].

HOUSING TOOLS

7

▶ Community Land Trust (CLT)
▶ Employer Assisted Housing (EAH)
▶ Housing Linkage Fees
▶ Housing Trust Funds
▶ Incentives for Affordable Housing
▶ Inclusionary Zoning (IZ)


TOOLS

A daily scan of headlines across Florida highlights what is an increasingly common occurrence: the price of a house has far outpaced incomes and the gap between incomes and housing costs grows larger each year. In many communities, the cost of housing has become a principal issue for employers who are finding it more and more difficult to hire and keep workers because they cannot afford a home near where they work and cannot afford longer and more costly commutes to distant locations that offer more affordable homes. The problem applies to most professions needed to keep a community going, such as firefighters, law enforcement personnel, teachers, health care and emergency care workers, and government employees. The magnitude of Florida's housing problem was documented in a recent report by the Florida Housing Coalition, *Florida Priced Out Report: 2005 Findings*: since 2003, median home prices in Florida have increased by 77 percent, while incomes grew by 1.4 percent. (Information on the report is available from the Florida Housing Coalition, www.flhousing.org.) In 2006, the Florida legislature responded to the housing affordability crisis by passing several programs (discussed below under Incentives for Affordable Housing) that create incentives for producing affordable housing. Those incentives build on existing state Growth Management and Land Development Regulations that require communities to include a Housing Element in their comprehensive plans. The Housing Element must show how a community will meet the housing needs of its existing and projected population, including those with special needs and low incomes. In addition, a community's future land use map must show sites for affordable housing, and, through the Development of Regional Impact process, large commercial developments are required to provide affordable housing for the employees they generate. (Complete information on housing affordability and housing programs and requirements in Florida is available from the Florida Department of Community Affairs [www.dca.state.fl.us], 1000 Friends of Florida [1000fof.org], and the Florida Housing Coalition [www.flhousing.org]. Additional information about removing barriers to affordable housing is available from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of Policy Development and Research [www.regbarriers.org], Policy Link [www.policylink.org], the Local Initiatives Support Corporation [www.lisc.org], and the Low Income Housing Coalition [www.nlihc.org].)

Community Land Trust (CLT)

A CLT is a community-based nonprofit organization that is designed to acquire and hold land for affordable housing. A CLT narrows the gap between the cost of housing and the ability of residents of a community to pay for housing by holding ownership of the land in perpetuity, thus removing the land cost from the price of a home. Because a CLT owns the land in perpetuity and sells a house with restrictions on the resale price, a house remains affordable for future, as well as the current, buyers. It also means that because the house is in private ownership, the local government still receives tax revenues. The housing on CLT-owned land operates on a long-term renewable lease (typically 99 years). A CLT can also prevent absentee ownership of housing because it keeps the land in community-controlled use. CLTs have been used in a variety of geographic settings: small towns, inner city neighborhoods, and rural areas. A CLT can serve a single neighborhood or a total community. Several local governments can come together to create a CLT.

The way a CLT operates varies with each community. It can, for example, acquire land and arrange for the development of affordable housing or other structures or it can acquire the land and the buildings on it, rehabilitating the housing when needed. A CLT can also build housing, as well as acquire existing housing, and it can work with different types of housing (multi- and single-family) and different ownership structures. For multifamily housing, for example, the CLT can own and manage the housing or it can arrange for the housing to be owned and managed by another nonprofit or, in the case of condominiums, a residents' cooperative. Another structure is for a CLT to take over the ownership of land created by a government-related project. A CLT in Lexington, Kentucky, for example, will be the owner of a large tract of land created through right-of-way acquisition for a road project. The land will be used to provide replacement housing within the same neighborhood for residents directly or indirectly displaced by the road. To add to its revenues, the CLT will receive lease income from a commercial development on a portion of the property. Many CLTs provide support services for homebuyers (for example, debt management training, homeownership counseling, and home maintenance assistance). Some CLTs use their land to enhance the livability of a neighborhood (for instance, for a park, community garden, or facility providing community services).

 More information on Community Land Trusts is available from the Florida Community Land Trust Institute [www.1000fof.org/housing/clt.asp], a collaborative organization between 1000 Friends of Florida and the Florida Housing Coalition [www.flhousing.org]. Additional information is available from the Institute for Community Economics [www.iceclt.org/clt/cltmodel.html], the Local Initiatives Support Corporation [www.lisc.org], and the National Low Income Housing Coalition [www.nlihc.org].

THE BAHAMA CONCH COMMUNITY LAND TRUST OF KEY WEST (BCCLT)

Created in 1995 as part of the Bahama Village Preservation Plan, the BCCLT is the first land trust in the state of Florida. Its primary purpose is to minimize displacement of residents by providing affordable housing on land owned by the community land trust in perpetuity. The BCCLT purchases properties for lease and resale. When a property is sold, the BCCLT holds the physical land in perpetuity to guarantee affordability in the future by eliminating the sales price of the land, and leases the land for 99 years. The housing on the land is rehabilitated as needed, and then either sold to qualified buyers or leased to low- and very low-income families. (More information on BCCLT is available from www.bcclt.org.)

Employer Assisted Housing (EAH)

In an EAH program, an employer decides to put in place programs that help employees find suitable, affordable housing in or near the community in which the employer is based. Employers with housing assistance programs are finding that employees stay longer, miss less time from work, are late less often, and are more productive. Employees also benefit from the lower costs of getting to work, in some cases saving the cost of an additional car; from having more free time for their families and community activities because of less time spent in commuting; and, for some employees, having the first-time ability to buy a house. For a community, programs that enable employees to live closer to where they work improve the jobs-housing balance, which in most communities has become out of balance, as employees are forced to commute further and further away from their jobs for affordable housing. By enabling employees to live closer to where they work, a community can reduce traffic and air pollution (as fewer people need to commute long distances from home to work), create more pedestrian activity in downtown business districts, and increase the tax base through investment in housing near business districts.

EAH programs can be used to improve the range of housing choices or help employees buy existing housing, or a combination of both. Examples of strategies used by employers include employer direct assistance with a downpayment and closing costs and an employer matching program in which the employer matches employees' savings to help them accumulate a downpayment for a house. A number of large employers can come together to create an EAH program (for example, the REACH program in Lexington, Kentucky). Some states offer tax credits and matching funds as an incentive for investing in employer-assisted housing. Another incentive is the creation of

CITY OF ST. PETERSBURG A+ HOUSING PROGRAM


The A+ Program is designed to attract and retain teachers in the city's schools by providing home purchase assistance to qualified instructional personnel who are assigned to teach in a public school within the city's municipal boundaries. The housing funds may be used for a downpayment and/or for closing costs for the purchase of a new or existing home. Ten percent of the loan is forgiven each year that the teacher teaches and lives in the city of St. Petersburg. After 10 years, the loan is forgiven. The maximum loan is \$14,000, except for purchasing housing in the city's Midtown area, where the maximum loan is \$18,000. All applicants must provide two percent of the purchase price from their own funds and must participate in required courses on home buying, family budgeting, and home maintenance. (More information on the St. Petersburg A+ Housing Program is available from 1000 Friends of Florida [www.1000fof.org] and from the city of St. Petersburg [www.stpete.org/teacherhousing.htm].)

CITY OF ORLANDO DOWNPAYMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The city of Orlando's EAH program (a part of the city's Downpayment Assistance Program), is in response to a shortage of teachers and health care professionals, which in part has been caused by the gap between salaries and the cost of housing. Moderate-income teachers and public safety employees may qualify for \$20,000 in assistance. City employees, teachers, and public safety personnel who are purchasing homes within the city limits of Orlando do not have to be first-time homebuyers. Purchasers must occupy the property as a principal residence for at least ten (10) years. The downpayment assistance becomes a grant once the period of affordability has been satisfied. (More information on the city of Orlando's EAH program is available from www.cityorlando.net/housing/default.htm, 1000 Friends of Florida [www.1000fof.org], and the Central Florida Workforce Housing Toolkit [www.orangecountyfl.net/cms/WorkforceHousing/default.htm].)

a local or regional housing fund that can be used to work with employers to match downpayment assistance (for example, the Greater Housing Fund, created by the Minneapolis Twin Cities Council).

A number of other programs can be used to bring the jobs-housing balance back into equilibrium. One option is for a local or state government economic development program to link its incentives to employers who create jobs that are close to affordable housing. An example is the new Business Location Efficiency Act in Illinois, which links the granting of economic development subsidies to jobs that are accessible by public transit and/or close to affordable housing. Another example is Location-Efficient Mortgages (LEMs), a financing strategy to encourage people to buy homes in a central location or near transit lines. An LEM allows the savings from lowering the cost of commuting to be applied to a higher loan payment.

 In Florida, information on EAH programs and related technical assistance is available from 1000 Friends of Florida [www.1000fof.org] and the Florida Housing Coalition [www.flhousing.org]. At the national level, information is available from the National Housing Institute [www.nhi.org/about/aboutindex.html]; the National Association of Realtors [www.realtor.org/housopp.nsf], which sponsors realtor EAH training; and the Smart Growth Network [www.smartgrowth.org].

Housing Linkage Fees


A housing linkage fee on nonresidential and market-rate residential development goes toward building affordable homes to help ensure that the number of homes in a community keeps up with the number of jobs, thereby improving the jobs-housing balance and reducing the need for long commutes. The fees collected are placed in a housing trust fund or separate housing account and are used by affordable housing providers to build lower-cost homes within the community. Enactment of a housing linkage fee recognizes that employers hire employees at various wage levels, triggering the need for housing at different price levels.

Although many housing linkage fee programs are applied at the city or county level, such a program can be applied at the regional level, as jobs-housing imbalances do not always occur only within one munic-

CITY OF WINTER PARK

The city of Winter Park has led the state with the creation of a housing linkage fee program, one of a number of strategies to discourage the loss of affordable housing and encourage the construction of new affordable housing. The fee is imposed on new development as a revenue source to fund the construction of affordable housing. The fee is reviewed at least once every year to determine if affordable housing needs and construction costs warrant an adjustment of the fee rate. Other city programs to promote affordable housing include establishing the Hannibal Square Community Land Trust, a land bank program, affordable housing loan programs, a technical assistance and referral service, and streamlined permitting. The city is also evaluating its land development regulations to identify barriers to affordable housing. Its initiatives to redevelop the West Winter Park neighborhood without replacing the existing lower-income residents recently won the 2007 American Planning Association's Neighborhood Innovations award in honor of Jane Jacobs. (More information on Winter Park's housing programs is available from www.cityofwinterpark.org/2005/depts/housingDiv.shtml.)

ipality. A regional housing linkage program evens the playing field among communities by creating an equivalent climate for business in each community. The Chicago region is developing a regional linkage program. Fees, which will be calculated from increasing tax bases, will be paid by municipalities rather than by developers. As with the housing linkage fee paid by a developer, the concept links economic growth to a responsibility for the creation of affordable housing. The critical difference is that the Regional Jobs/Housing Fund would not collect fees from the developers, but from the municipalities that permit and benefit from the new development. That avoids legal challenges in states that require a direct link between fees to private landowners and impact. (A sample housing linkage fee ordinance is available from the Florida Housing Coalition.)

 More information on housing linkage fees is available from the Florida Housing Coalition [www.flhousing.org], 1000 Friends of Florida [www.1000fof.org], and PolicyLink [www.policylink.org].

Housing Trust Funds

Each year an increasing number of states and communities turn to housing trust funds to address affordable housing programs. Today there are 400-plus housing trust funds, demonstrating the importance of having affordable housing programs supported by an ongoing, predictable source of public funding to support the creation of affordable housing. The predictability of dedicated funding from a housing trust fund has a number of advantages (for example, assuring developers that financing for affordable housing will be available, reducing the need for communities to draw on general funds to support affordable housing and assuring them that their housing elements will be implemented, and increasing the ability to leverage public and private grants and other forms of financing).

A housing trust fund is funded with dedicated public revenues for the purpose of providing affordable housing. The housing can be provided through new construction or through the rehabilitation of existing housing. An important feature of a housing trust fund is that it receives an ongoing, predictable revenue source that is specifically committed to housing (for example, an increase in a tax, such as a real estate transfer tax or a hotel/motel tax). A housing trust fund can also be funded through

SARASOTA HOUSING FUND AND COMMUNITY HOUSING PROGRAM

In January 2007, the Sarasota County Board of County Commissioners approved a Community Housing Fund to assist in the development and provision of affordable housing within the county. The fund, which receives dedicated revenues from the sale of escheated lots, public and private donations, and in-lieu payments, began with \$20 million from the sale of more than 2,000 tax-delinquent lots. The funds can be used for a variety of housing purposes, including acquiring developed or undeveloped land, project planning, supplementing local or state housing assistance programs, impact fees, downpayment assistance, home rehabilitation, infrastructure costs typically paid by a developer, and to leverage the fund as a local match for other housing programs. Criteria for awarding funds emphasize projects that achieve smart growth goals (for example, providing for a variety of land uses and lifestyles, reducing automobile trips, conserving water and energy, encouraging green building and development, preserving environmental resources, and promoting redevelopment and infill). (More information on the Sarasota County Housing Fund and Community Housing Program is available from the county's Housing and Community Development Department [www.segov.net].)

a housing linkage fee that is placed on industrial, commercial, or market rate housing to help offset the impacts that new employment has in a community. A governmental agency or department that handles state and federal housing programs typically administers housing trust funds.

Florida has the largest statewide housing trust fund in the country. The fund was established in 1992 through passage of the William E. Sadowski Affordable Housing Act, which dedicates a portion of Florida's Documentary Stamp Tax (Real Estate Transfer Tax) to the trust fund. The program has provided over 150,000 units of housing. It is supported by a broad-based coalition that was first convened by 1000 Friends of Florida in 1991. In addition to 1000 Friends of Florida, the coalition includes the Florida Home Builders Association, the Florida Association of Realtors, the Florida League of Cities, Florida Association of Counties, Florida AARP, Florida United Way, Florida Chamber of Commerce, Associated Industries of Florida, Florida Bankers Association, Florida Coalition for the Homeless, Florida Impact, the Florida Catholic Conference, Florida Legal Services, and the Florida Housing Coalition.

In Florida, information on housing trust fund programs and Florida's Housing Trust Fund is available from the Florida Housing Coalition [www.flhousing.org] and 1000 Friends of Florida [www.1000fof.org]. At the national level, information is available from the Center for Community Change [www.communitychange.org/issues/housing/trustfundproject] and the National Low Income Housing Coalition [www.nlihc.org].

Incentives for Affordable Housing

A variety of incentives can be used to create more affordable housing options. The June/July 2006 issue of *Florida Planning*, the newsletter of the Florida Chapter of the American Planning Association, outlines a number of those incentives, including new ones enacted by the 2006 Florida legislature. Typical incentives for developments that provide affordable housing include expedited permitting; offering density bonuses that allow a developer to develop more densely in exchange for providing affordable housing; reduction or waiver of impact fees; and allowing less costly alternative building methods and materials. Other incentives include approving permit-ready housing types for use

CITY OF ORLANDO AFFORDABLE HOUSING INCENTIVES

In 2005, the city of Orlando was awarded a Robert L. Woodson award from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for its initiatives to remove regulatory barriers to affordable housing. Under the program, an Affordable Housing Advisory Committee reviews city policies, procedures, ordinances, plans, and regulations and makes recommendations to encourage or facilitate affordable housing. The city's Housing Department offers a variety of programs to incentivize the development of affordable housing, including federal, state, and local loan funds; water, sewer, and transportation impact fee grants; alternative design standards for affordable housing (a part of the land development code); expedited permitting; and a density bonus, which allows more housing units or more commercial floor space per acre than would otherwise be permitted. (The bonus may also be awarded in exchange for an in-lieu contribution to the city's housing trust fund.) To be eligible, an applicant developer must receive an Affordable Housing Certificate, which is designed to ensure that the housing units and/or the units' occupants meet the required affordable housing definitions. *(More information on the city of Orlando's affordable housing incentives is available from www.cityoforlando.net/housing/default.htm.)*

on infill sites, government assistance with land assemblage, providing government-owned land for developments that include affordable housing, and changing building codes to make it easier to rehabilitate older structures. Allowing accessory dwelling units (a high agenda item for AARP [the American Association of Retired People]), such as granny flats in residential areas, and live-work units is another way to provide affordable housing.

Some of the specific affordable housing incentives adopted by the Florida legislature include additional residential density in Developments of Regional Impact that dedicate a certain number of units to workforce housing and a process that allows a local government to transfer density from one parcel to another if a landowner donates land to the government for affordable housing purposes. In addition, the Florida Housing Finance Corporation will competitively award \$50 million for an affordable housing pilot program, called the Community Workforce Housing Innovation Pilot Program, in high-growth, high-housing cost areas of the state that are willing to provide incentives for affordable housing.

*More information on affordable housing incentives and the 2006 Florida housing incentives is available from the Florida Housing Finance Corporation [www.floridahousing.org] and 1000 Friends of Florida [www.1000fof.org]. The Washington, DC Area Housing Partnership publishes a how-to book on affordable housing, the *Toolkit for Affordable Housing Development* [www.mwcof.org/store/item.asp?PUBLICATION_ID=254]. In Florida, Orange County has produced *The Central Florida Workforce Housing Toolkit* [http://www.orangecountyfl.net/cms/WorkforceHousing/default.htm].*

Inclusionary Zoning (IZ)

With inclusionary zoning, a local government uses its zoning powers to require that developers include a certain amount of affordable housing in new developments throughout the city or county. It is the opposite of exclusionary zoning ordinances that prohibit a mix of housing types (for example, requiring minimum lot or housing sizes or making it difficult or impossible to build apartments or townhouses which in turn drives up the cost of housing and precludes lower income households from living in the community).

Inclusionary zoning programs vary. They can require a developer to build the affordable units within the development, or they can allow the affordable units to be constructed in another location. Another approach is to allow a developer to contribute to an affordable housing fund in lieu of build-

1000 FRIENDS OF FLORIDA IZ INGREDIENTS

Elements common in most IZ ordinances:

- A threshold number of market-rate units that activates the inclusionary requirement
- A requirement that the affordable units are comparable in quality and aesthetics to the market-rate unit
- Incentives to the private sector providing the affordable units and/or to those buying the units
- A provision for a payment in-lieu when the type of development makes it infeasible to include affordable units
- A housing trust fund to serve as the depository for the in-lieu payments and a mechanism to use those dollars to provide affordable housing in the community

ing the required units. Most programs provide non-monetary compensation for compliance (for example, expedited permitting that can reduce construction costs, density bonuses, and zoning variances). Inclusionary zoning can lead to a greater supply of market-supplied affordable housing and mixed-income communities where people of all incomes are able to live near high opportunity areas (locations with jobs, good schools, and adequate support services). It is particularly successful in high-growth communities because of the amount of new housing. Some inclusionary zoning ordinances are voluntary or incentive-driven rather than mandatory.

More information on inclusionary zoning is available from 1000 Friends of Florida [www.1000fof.org], the National Association of Realtors [www.realtor.org], and PolicyLink [www.policylink.org].

THE CITY OF TALLAHASSEE INCLUSIONARY HOUSING ORDINANCE

The city of Tallahassee's 2005 Inclusionary Housing Ordinance applies to new developments of 50 or more housing units in specified locations within the city. It requires that at least 10 percent of the housing units in a development be priced at no higher than \$159,378 and sold to eligible households or that 15 percent of the housing units must be rented at workforce rates and rented to eligible households. Incentives for providing on-site affordable housing within the primary development include a 25 percent density bonus, design flexibility, and transportation concurrency exemption. Additional methods of compliance are available, including payment of an in-lieu fee into the city's inclusionary housing trust fund and providing inclusionary housing at "off-site" locations. *(More information is available from www.talgov.com/planning/af_inchlaf_inchouse.cfm.)*

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING TOOLS

8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Complete (Walkable) Streets ▶ Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) ▶ Corridor Plans ▶ Interconnected Street Network ▶ Road Diets ▶ Traffic Calming ▶ Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)
TOOLS	


Transportation planning issues are a top-of-the-mind concern for many Florida residents and businesses, as well as those in the Emerald Coast. Because of growing traffic congestion within and between communities, Floridians are spending more and more time in traffic and driving greater distances to jobs, housing, and basic services. Adding to the concern is the recognition that transportation investments play a powerful role in shaping the location and character of development in a community and in determining a community's livability and economic vitality. The way communities plan for development (what land uses go where and how they connect) has a powerful influence on transportation and travel mode choices and on equitable access to jobs, housing, and services. As a result, transportation and land use planners are increasingly coming together to incorporate land use and mode-accessibility considerations when planning transportation investments and to create new planning tools that broaden the range of transportation choices, create roads that enhance the surrounding community, and make them more desirable for cars, people, and bikes. *(Information on linking transportation and land use planning and broadening transportation choices is available from a number of organizations, including the American Planning Association [www.planning.org], the Congress for the New Urbanism [www.cnu.org], the Federal Highway Administration [www.fhwa.dot.gov], the Institute of Traffic Engineers [www.ite.org], Smart Growth America [www.smartgrowthamerica.org], the Transportation Surface Policy Project [www.transact.org], and Walkable Communities, Inc. [www.walkable.org]. In Florida, 1000 Friends of Florida [www.1000fof.org] provides a variety of resources on transportation and land use solutions that reduce dependence on the automobile and help create more livable communities. These resources include the 2004 report, Transportation Planning in the Florida Panhandle, that contains information on transportation planning for natural and human habitats, including case studies of successful projects throughout Florida; Building Support for More Effective Transportation Planning, a citizen's guide to supporting more effective transportation planning; a Dictionary of Transportation Acronyms; Merge Lanes Ahead, a series of nine fact sheets, prepared by 1000 Friends, that describes the relationships between transportation, land use, and energy; and Efficient Transportation Decision Making, which provides information on the Florida Department of Transportation's [FDOT] new public input process. Information on FDOT's decision-making process and its transportation projects and events in each region of Florida is available from www.dot.state.fl.us/publicinformationoffice/publicinv/default.htm. The Univer-*

sity of South Florida's Center for Transportation Research [www.cutr.usf.edu], which houses the National Center for Transit Research, is another Florida resource on transportation planning.)

Complete (Walkable) Streets

A complete street policy requires that when investing in road improvements, transportation agencies should, as a matter of routine, design and operate the entire right-of-way to enable safe access for all users. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities must be able to move safely along and across a street. The techniques used to create complete streets are the same as those for walkable neighborhoods and commercial areas and include sidewalks buffered from cars; frequent, easy-to-get-across crosswalks; bus pullouts or special bus lanes; traffic calming features, such as sidewalk bulb outs and on-street parking; and the use of bike lanes, as well as storage areas for bikes and showers for the biker.

To encourage pedestrian use, complete streets have features that make people feel comfortable and safe (for example, street trees that provide shade, benches and other resting places, street art that adds interest, buildings that front the street with windows and doors, street lighting, clear directional signage, and narrow street widths, particularly at intersections where many pedestrian injuries occur). Complete the Streets outlines a variety of complete street benefits, including improved pedestrian, biker, and car safety; a healthier population, because of the increased ability to walk and bike for daily needs; reduced traffic, because of a greater choice of transportation mode; and the ability of children to walk or bike on a daily basis, which gives them more independence and a safe route to school. Other benefits include improved air quality, more cohesive neighborhoods because of increased social interaction, and higher retail sales in commercial areas because of the ability to safely walk down a street in an environment that makes a longer visit more desirable.

 For more information on complete or pedestrian-bicycle-transit-friendly streets, go to the American Planning Association [www.planning.org], Complete the Streets [www.completestreets.org], the Florida Department of Transportation [www.dot.state.fl.us/safety/ped_bike/ped_bike_standards.htm], Smart Growth America [www.smartgrowthamerica.org], the Thunderhead Alliance [www.thunderheadalliance.org], and Walkable Communities, Inc. [www.walkable.org].

NAPLES FIFTH AVENUE SOUTH

Once the city's main street, in the 1970s six-block Fifth South began to lose life with the opening of a new mall. To reverse this trend, in the early 1990s a group of property owners decided to fund the development of a plan for Fifth Avenue South. Adopted in 1994, the plan was designed to reclaim the road as a place to shop, walk, and live. The building height was changed to 42 feet from the sidewalk to the roof in order to improve the building height to street width ratio and new landscaping, including street trees, lighting, and street furniture, were installed. New parking requirements call for three spaces per 1,000 square feet of commercial use, whether a retail, office, or restaurant use (outdoor dining has no required parking) and establish a parking reserve from on-street spaces that are allocated for redevelopment. The plan also calls for buildings that relate to the street and foster pedestrian activity; for example, building renovations must follow the pattern of other buildings and the third story of buildings must be for residential use only. The Fifth Avenue South Action Committee oversees changes on the street. (For more information on Fifth Avenue South, go to http://planning.naplesgov.com/fifth_avenue_story.asp, Duany Plater-Zyberk & Partners [www.dpz.com], or to *A Guidebook to New Urbanism in Florida 2005* [www.cnuflorida.org]).

Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS)

One way of better linking land use to transportation is for transportation agencies and planners to evaluate the impacts of transportation investment on the broader community context (the built, natural, and social environments). In the 1990s, that broader look was called context sensitive design or thinking beyond the pavement; it is now sometimes called context sensitive or context determined solutions. In each of those approaches, the needs of the community and natural environment inform the road investment and not the reverse, where the community is reacting to a road improvement and trying to mitigate its impacts. The recognition of the importance of CSS in road design began in the 1990s as highway designers and builders learned that they must be more sensitive to the impact of highways on the environment and communities. The concept of CSS was launched in 1997 with the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) publication of *Flexibility in Highway Design*. The next year the concept took a big step forward with the national conference, *Thinking Beyond the Pavement: A National Workshop on Integrating Highway Development with Communities and the Environment While Maintaining Safety and Performance*.


The FHWA defines CSS as "a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach that involves all stakeholders to develop a transportation facility that fits its physical setting and preserves the scenic, aesthetic, historic, and environmental resources, while maintaining safety and mobility." CSS looks at a transportation project in the broader community context and involves citizens from the early stages of planning. The goal of CSS is to ensure that the design of a transportation project achieves the community's goals for the neighborhoods (natural or human) bordering the road (the context in which the road will exist), and that the road serves as an asset, not as a degrader, to the land beyond the pavement. CSS enables road planners to customize a road design to its surrounding context; for example, when a high-speed suburban road enters a community, a neighborhood, or some other walkable district, it can be transitioned into a more human-scaled design that causes cars to drive slower and creates a walkable, pedestrian-friendly urban environment. CSS can apply to the planning of a new road, a road widening, or rehabilitation or retrofit of an existing one. One way of ensuring CSS and the link between transportation and goals for land use and community character is to prepare a neighborhood plan (also called a corridor plan) for the area that

NW 17TH STREET IN GAINESVILLE

Gainesville's Northwest 17th Street serves as an important neighborhood connector and provides a defined entry into the College Park neighborhood, and from the neighborhood to the University of Florida campus. In 1999, the city's Community Development and Public Works departments, its Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA), and the neighborhood advisory board initiated the NW 17th Street renovation project to convert a road designed to carry vehicles to one that would be safe and attractive to pedestrians and bicyclists and also be aesthetically attractive. Renovation improvements included the installation of a sidewalk system, bicycle facilities, landscaping, pedestrian crosswalks and corner staging areas, street lighting and signage, and benches. Funding for the renovation came from a variety of sources, including the CRA's tax increment financing program and a traffic impact mitigation development agreement between the University of Florida and the city. The renovation of NW 17th Street was called for in the College Park/University Heights Redevelopment Plan, the goal of which is to establish those areas as a thriving, mixed-use, high-density, safe, and convenient neighborhood. (More information on the NW 17th Street improvements is available from the city of Gainesville CRA [<http://cityofgainesville.org/comdev/redev/>] or by emailing the Public Works Department [pubwrk@cityofgainesville.org].)

borders a road before designing the improvements. In that approach, the plan provides the framework for planning a road improvement that is designed not just to move vehicles but also to meet the objectives of the neighborhood and create a place of lasting value.

Resources on CSS are available from a variety of organizations. Two of them, the Congress for the New Urbanism and the Institute of Traffic Engineers, recently joined together in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to publish *Context Sensitive Solutions in Designing Major Urban Thoroughfares for Walkable Communities*. The publication is an ITE-proposed recommended practice to advance the successful use of CSS in the planning and design of major urban thoroughfares for walkable communities. It provides guidance and demonstrates for practitioners how CSS concepts and principles may be applied in roadway improvement projects that are consistent with their physical settings. The report's chapters are focused on applying the principles of CSS in transportation planning and in the design of roadway improvement projects in places where community objectives support walkable communities—compact development, mixed land uses, and safe access for pedestrians and bicyclists. The FHWA, Context Sensitive Solutions.org, and the Florida-based Walkable Communities also provide information on CSS.

 For more information on CSS, go to *Context Sensitive Solutions.org* [www.contextsensitivesolutions.org], the *Federal Highway Administration* [www.fhwa.dot.gov/csdl/index.htm], the *Institute of Traffic Engineers* [www.ite.org/css], the *Project for Public Places* [www.pps.org/transportation], and *Walkable Communities, Inc.*, [www.walkable.org].

WEKIVA PARKWAY

When the Wekiva Parkway was proposed to connect State Road 429 to Interstate 4 in Seminole County, then-Governor Bush created the Wekiva Basin Area Task Force and the Wekiva River Basin Coordinating Committee to recommend a parkway location that caused the least disruption and provided the greatest protection to the Wekiva Basin ecosystem. The Guiding Principles developed by the task force provided the direction for an environmentally sensitive road design: bridges in significant wildlife corridors, appropriate fencing to direct wildlife to safe crossing points, stormwater treatment facilities to minimize habitat loss and promote restoration of previously impacted sites, safety and access design features to promote continuation of prescribed burning in the basin, and limited local access points to focus development in appropriate areas. The Wekiva River Basin Commission (created by the Governor in 2004) is building on the recommendations of the task force. (For more information on the Wekiva Parkway, go to the *East Central Florida Regional Planning Council* [www.ecfipc.org] or to the *Florida Turnpike Authority* [<http://epass.oceca.com/futureplans/projectsandstudies/westernconnectors.shtml>].)

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY LIVABLE ROADWAYS GUIDELINES

A joint Hillsborough County MPO and Planning Commission project, the Livable Roadways Guidelines promote the cohesive redevelopment of the community's roads which are characterized by strip commercial development that has eroded community character and, in older areas, has created a condition of blight and deterioration. To promote cohesive development, the guidelines provide for context-supportive site and building design. They also recognize the importance of connecting adjacent land uses and balancing the road right-of-way to equitably accommodate uses. The guidelines are an update of two earlier documents: *Livable Roadways: Proposals for Roadway Appearance and Function and Guidelines for Landscaping Hillsborough County Roadways*. (For more information on the *Livable Roadways Guidelines*, go to www.hillsboroughmpo.org/whats happening/currentprojects.)

Corridor Plans

A community's roadway corridors provide the social and economic connection between, and the windows to, neighborhoods and communities. The way road corridors are planned can create places that are a source of pride and offer convenient, pleasant travel or result in a place that over time becomes blighted and congested with traffic, often because of incremental road and land use decisions and investments that were not guided by an overall plan or vision for an area. Preparing a corridor plan prior to the design of road improvements corrects that problem by providing a vision and plan for an entire corridor (for the road, for the neighborhoods along the road, and for the area where the neighborhoods interface with the road, which is the area most visible from the road or sidewalk). The value of a corridor plan is that it provides communities with a tool that integrates and balances transportation mobility planning with local goals for land use and community character. The approach corrects past practices that typically plan a road separately from the surrounding neighborhood in which the road will be located and focus on mobility rather than community livability.


The principal elements of a corridor plan address what the land uses and the character of development should be along the road (the area beyond the pavement) and how the roadway (the pavement and the right-of-way) improvements should be designed to best support the land use and community character goals. A third corridor plan element addresses the non-road improvements in the right-of-way, such as bicycle lanes, sidewalks, landscaping, street lighting, drainage, signage, and utilities. Planning tools used to help achieve those three elements include roadway design guidelines, access management that identifies where the access points should be (and not be) to best serve the land uses along the road, and development guidelines and regulations. One way to implement a corridor plan is the use of a corridor overlay zone to guide the road's development (or redevelopment) and access. An overlay zone can address design features, such as how structures front the road and how far they are setback, how parking is treated, lot sizes, building densities, and landscaping. Because of the range of issues addressed in a comprehensive corridor plan for an area, multiple disciplines are needed (for example, a land use planner, community design expert, environmental planner, and, depending on the project, a sociologist and/or historic preservation or real estate market expert).

THE STATE ROAD 7/U.S. 441 COLLABORATIVE

The State Road 7/ U.S. 441 Collaborative is a partnership composed of the 14 local governments that span that 25.6-mile corridor in Broward County. The members of the partnership came together to achieve a common goal: reverse a period of disinvestment that began in the 1980s as new commercial development bypassed the corridor for newer suburbs to the west. The goal of the collaborative, which is facilitated by the South Florida Regional Planning Council, is to promote the economic and aesthetic improvement of the corridor. Initiatives include a market assessment of the redevelopment potential of the corridor and the preparation of a Strategic Master Plan for the entire corridor through a series of public design charrettes. The charrettes, which were conducted by the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council (TCRPC) in partnership with the SFRPC, helped residents of the cities along the corridor plan and articulate their visions for their communities. The State Road 7/U.S. 441 plan is coordinated with a road widening by FDOT and the Bus Rapid Transit pilot project. (For more information on the *State Road 7/U.S. 441 Collaborative*, go to www.sfrpc.com/sr7.htm. For more information on the *TCRPC charrettes*, go to www.tcrpc.org/departments/studiolsr_7_collaborative/sr7_home.htm.)

A corridor plan can be used for a road corridor within a single community or neighborhood, one that connects several communities, a new road facility, or for retrofitting an existing road that has become undesirable because of an unattractive street environment that works against new investments. Factors that make a street undesirable include frequent curb cuts, high speeds because of a lack of traffic calming, visual clutter from signs and overhead utilities, poor street lighting, lack of pedestrian or bicycle amenities, outdated land uses, strip development that fronts the street with parking lots, unattractive building design, and lack of a sense of place.

Developing a corridor plan generally involves a six-step process. The first three include involving citizens from the earliest stages of planning and continuing through implementation, getting to know the existing corridor (the homework stage), and defining a preferred vision for the corridor. The last three steps focus on developing and agreeing on the practices and policies that will lead to the preferred vision, outlining the implementation strategies, and putting together corridor champions in and outside government who will work to ensure that the corridor plan is achieved.

 Much of the information for the description of corridor plans was taken from the *Bluegrass Corridor Management Planning Handbook*, prepared by the Florida firm *Glattig Jackson Kercher Anglin Lopez Rinehart, Inc.*, for *Bluegrass Tomorrow* [www.bluegrasstomorrow.org]. Information on corridor planning is also available from the *American Planning Association* [www.planning.org].

Interconnected Street Network

Suburban planning practices of the past 40 years have created a road network that functions very much like plumbing in a house – smaller subdivision roads and retail and office parking lots are funneled onto the same larger collector road. With only one way for residents of a neighborhood to get to other parts of town or meet even daily needs, the result of the practice has been increased traffic congestion and continuing road widening to accommodate more cars. An alternative is to create a network of interconnected roads that improve mobility by giving more options for reaching a destina-


ARAGON

Aragon is a 21-acre mixed-use urban redevelopment planned as an extension of Pensacola's downtown historic district. To incorporate the best characteristics of the surrounding area, Aragon's plan features historic-style houses built on narrow lots connected by a network of pedestrian-friendly streets and public open spaces and landmarks. The street and block pattern follows downtown Pensacola's existing grid network that seamlessly mixes old with new streets and provides walkable routes to downtown amenities. Because of its location, historic design elements, and interconnected network of parks, streets, and sidewalks, Aragon links previously isolated parcels to the downtown core. Access from three sides allows the historic streets to continue their natural pattern through or alongside Aragon, while the fourth side can be connected with future development. Aragon's narrower street widths, smaller building setbacks, brick-edged sidewalks, street trees, underground utilities, and historic streetlights are designed to create a pedestrian-friendly environment and to slow traffic. Alley access to most lots also contributes to the walking environment and provides an off-street location for trash pickup, utilities, and parking.

*(For more information on Aragon, go to the city of Pensacola Community Redevelopment Agency [www.ci.pensacola.fl.us/live/pages.asp?pageID=1570&deptID=1368] or to www.cnuflorida.org for a copy of *A Guidebook to New Urbanism in Florida 2005*.)*

tion and dispersing, not concentrating, traffic, and by making walking easier because of more direct routes between destinations. Features of an interconnected network of streets include a connected system of east-west and north-south streets, shorter blocks, neighborhood-scaled streets, and more frequent intersections that also help to calm traffic.

The concept of an interconnected network is not new. It is an organizing feature of many older communities in Florida such as downtown Pensacola, DeFuniak Springs, West Palm Beach, and Key West. Because an interconnected network of streets disperses traffic more evenly by providing multiple routes, the streets can move large amounts of traffic without creating congestion and can be designed for lower neighborhood and pedestrian/bicycle-friendly speeds, which results in more mobility options for residents. Other benefits of greater street connectivity include shorter trips, which save time and money; a wider variety of travel routes to a destination; and more cost-effective public services and infrastructure because residents of a community can get to schools, shopping, and other daily needs without overburdening a major arterial road intended for through trips. A connected street network can also save emergency workers time by providing more options to reach the scene of an emergency. An interconnected street network is particularly useful in high growth areas because it reduces traffic on major collector roads by providing residents other ways to take care of daily needs. The practice of creating an interconnected network of streets can be applied to new development or to an existing development that is based on the plumbing practice of road planning. Street interconnectivity can be augmented with an interconnected system of bike and pedestrian walkways.

 More information on creating an interconnected street network is available from the *Congress for the New Urbanism* [www.cnu.org], *Context Sensitive Solutions.org* [www.contextsensitivesolutions.org], the *Institute of Traffic Engineers* [www.ite.org], and *Walkable Communities, Inc.* [www.walkable.org].


Road Diets

The term road diet applies to taming, or what Walkable Communities, Inc., calls skinning up, fat, higher-speed multi-lane roadways that were expanded in response to growing traffic. In a road diet, the number of road lanes is reduced or reallocated. For example, a four-lane road may be changed to

EDGEWATER DRIVE IN ORLANDO

Edgewater Drive is a north-south road that carries approximately 20,000 cars a day and serves as the main street for the College Park neighborhood of Orlando. It also serves some through-traffic. In 1999, neighborhood residents participated in a series of workshops to develop a blueprint (the Neighborhood Horizon Plan) to guide future neighborhood improvements. Plan provisions included reinventing Edgewater Drive into a lively pedestrian-friendly commercial district. The first step in the process was to transfer road control from the FDOT to the city of Orlando. Since the existing four-lane road configuration did not allow room for the wide sidewalks, bicycle lanes, streetscape improvements, and on-street parallel parking recommended in the neighborhood plan to make the road more pedestrian-friendly, the decision was made to eliminate one vehicle lane for a portion of the road by restriping it to three lanes during resurfacing. A before-and-after evaluation by the city demonstrated the benefits of the project: less speeding, reduced crash and injury rates, and increased bicycle and pedestrian activity. *(More information on Edgewater Drive's road diet and the related evaluation report is available from www.cityoforlando.net/planning/Transportation/corridors.htm.)*

two lanes, with the other lane space available for on-street parking, bicycle lanes, or creating sidewalks. Putting a road on a diet also makes it possible to create landscaped boulevards, add street trees, and install wider sidewalks and other features that enhance the walking and driving experience. Because the reduced number of vehicle lanes slows traffic, the road is safer for cars (because of fewer and less severe vehicle-to-vehicle crashes) and for pedestrians (due to having fewer lanes of traffic to cross and slower moving vehicles). Businesses along a road can also benefit from a road diet because people are more apt to walk down the street and the street environment is more attractive, which can result in new business investment and a higher tax base. According to Walkable Communities, Inc., a primary resource on road diets, the ideal patient for a road diet is a four-lane road carrying at least 12,000, and not more than around 20,000, vehicles per day.

 (For more information on road diets or civilizing streets, go to the Congress for the New Urbanism [www.cnu.org], Context Sensitive Solutions.org [www.contextsensitivesolutions.org/content/reading/road-diets-2], and Walkable Communities, Inc. [www.walkable.org]. Another resource is the American Institute of Certified Planners' Smart Growth Street Design, [www.planning.org/apastore/Search/Default.aspx?p=3472&a=1003], which discusses how slower streets improve livability and can be designed to meet traffic engineering requirements and improve safety.)


Traffic Calming

Traffic calming is a street design technique frequently used in Florida communities to slow down and control the flow of traffic in neighborhoods and other special focus areas, such as a downtown or neighborhood commercial area, where the goal is to serve pedestrians and bicyclists as well as cars. Traffic calming does not limit access to an area. The intent is to make an area safe and pleasant for motorists, bicyclists, pedestrians, and residents and improve the environment and livability of streets by slowing or discouraging traffic and reducing vehicular conflicts that make a street unsafe for walkers and bikers. With traffic calming, streets can become a neighborhood and people connector, which strengthens neighborhoods, and less of a barrier, which can divide neighborhoods and neighbors. Traffic calming techniques can be applied to an existing road or a new road. They are designed to fit the needs of a specific area (for example, the amount of traffic a street needs to carry, the bordering land uses, the current width of the road, and the role the road plays in the community – what it connects and how far it goes).

TOWN OF FORT MYERS BEACH ROAD DIET

Located along southwest Florida's Gulf Coast, the town of Fort Myers Beach is an historically walkable community with a mix of long-term residents and fun-loving tourists. In the early 1990s, severe traffic congestion led Lee County officials to widen many streets in order to speed up traffic. The tide turned once officials realized that getting visitors out of their cars was preferable and more practical than moving cars around more quickly. In 1996, the main tourist block at the foot of the pier was converted to a pedestrian haven lined with shops and restaurants with outdoor seating. Along adjoining streets, wide travel lanes have been narrowed so that sidewalks could be widened and shaded by trees. Zoning was changed to place new buildings right up to sidewalks rather than being separated by parking lots. On-site parking requirements were reduced or eliminated to allow pedestrian-serving businesses to reoccupy older buildings and to expand. Available waterfront parcels have been acquired so that pedestrians have even more frequent access to bay waters and the Gulf of Mexico. (Further information about planning and zoning at Fort Myers Beach is available at www.spikowski.com/beach.htm.)

Deciding on which traffic calming techniques to use relies on active citizen involvement. Most traffic calming programs involve three approaches to changing driver behavior: education, enforcement, and engineering. Engineering approaches are grouped into two main categories: those that control volume (for example, by reducing cut-through traffic in residential areas and diverting it to streets intended for more vehicles) and those that cause a driver to slow down by changing the alignment or width of a roadway. One example of a frequently used alignment-changing traffic calming technique is to widen sidewalks on one or both sides of a street or to extend the sidewalk at intersections with curb bump outs (sometimes called bulb-outs) that project into the street. The result is to reduce vehicle speeds by constricting traffic to one or two lanes and cut down on the distance a pedestrian must travel to cross a roadway. Other alignment-changing techniques include narrowing the width of a street in sections; adding street humps or lumps; building roundabouts and traffic circles at an intersection; and creating what is called a chicane, which is a physical obstacle, such as curb extensions that alternate from one side of the road to other to create a winding route for vehicles. An additional technique to send the message that a street is for people, not high speeds, is to build street islands and medians and to install well-marked, signalized crossings to increase pedestrian safety and slow traffic. Street trees and landscaping can also help send the same message.

 More information on traffic calming is available from the Federal Highway Administration [www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/tcalm/index.htm], Institute of Traffic Engineers [www.ite.org], Traffic Calming.org [www.trafficalming.org], and Walkable Communities, Inc., [www.walkable.org].

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)

TOD provides an alternative to growing traffic congestion by locating development close to public transportation (or by creating enough population and commercial activity in an area to make public transportation feasible by having more users). A TOD locates public transportation (a bus or train stop) at the center of a community within easy walking distance of houses, shops, and offices. Components of TOD are those that encourage use of public transportation. A TOD typically includes a walkable design, making it easy to walk or bike to public transportation and to take care of daily errands on the

TRAFFIC CALMING IN WEST PALM BEACH

The city of West Palm Beach was an early pioneer in the use of traffic calming and hiring a traffic calming engineer (a practice now repeated in many Florida communities). The city used traffic calming to revitalize its declining downtown and make its neighborhoods safe for pedestrians. Traffic calming techniques included converting the one-way downtown street system to a two-way system, using curb extensions at intersections, restoring street parking, reducing street widths in certain places, and widening sidewalks. For example, to help revitalize Clematis Street, the heart of the downtown, a one-way, four-lane street was converted to a two-way street with parking on both sides. Sidewalk bulb-outs reduce the street-crossing distance for pedestrians and give a better view of oncoming cars, and benches, landscaping, and street lights add to the pedestrian experience. In many neighborhoods, the city has reduced traffic speed to 20 miles per hour and installed different calming techniques, such as bulb-outs, modern roundabouts, and landscaped islands at intersections, designed to fit the specific need. (For more information about traffic calming in West Palm Beach, go to www.cityofwpb.com/public_works/index.htm.)

way to or from the bus. A TOD also contains a mix of uses (housing, shopping, employment, and civic) that are shaped in the form of a town or neighborhood center where the transit station is located. In most TODs, development is denser in the center around the transportation node and tapers off into lower densities further away from the center. Commercial and retail uses are located next to the transportation node. Another important feature of making a TOD work is a good collector system to make it easy to get to the transportation node (for example, buses or trolleys, or, in larger cities, light rail). Because of the use of transit and other forms of development, TODs also have less parking for personal vehicles (called constrained parking), and TOD-supportive employers and communities offer incentive programs that reward people for not driving.

More information on transit-oriented development is available from the American Planning Association [www.planning.org], the Congress for the New Urbanism [www.cnu.org], Reconnecting America Center for Transit-Oriented Development [www.reconnectingamerica.org/html/TOD/index.htm], Smart Growth America [www.smartgrowthamerica.org], the Transportation Surface Policy Project [www.transact.org], and Transit Oriented Development [www.transitoriented-development.org].

WEST PARK VILLAGE

Tampa's West Park Village was designed in the late 1990s as a 225-acre New Urbanist (described in the Land Use Planning and Development section of this toolbox) addition to a large existing and successful conventionally planned Tampa community called Westchase. A catalyst for the design was the possibility of being served in the future by a rail transit line. Transit-oriented design features include an area for a potential rail station and village green; resident-oriented commercial services in a Main Street setting; walkable neighborhoods that radiate out from the main town center and are connected by pedestrian-friendly streets with parking and wide sidewalks on both sides; and a mix of housing types, including approximately 1,500 multifamily units and 500 other units split between town homes, villas, single family homes, and condominiums. It is served by the recent addition of express bus service that extends from downtown Tampa and the Westshore employment district near the Tampa International Airport. *(For more information on West Park Village, go to [A Guidebook to New Urbanism in Florida 2005](#) [www.cnuflorida.org] or email rayc@plancom.org.)*

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TOOLS

9

TOOLS

- ▶ Business Assistance Program
- ▶ Cluster Industry Development Strategy
- ▶ Economic Impact Studies
- ▶ Incentives for Economic Development
- ▶ Marketing for Economic Development
- ▶ Workforce Training Programs

Communities use a combination of economic development tools to build a sustainable economy and to be competitive in a changing world economy. Those tools are designed to help existing businesses grow, attract new businesses, and maintain or create a diverse economy that it is resilient when changes occur in the national and international economy. In the Emerald Coast, a number of local, regional, and state organizations are working to achieve those goals. At the local level, the region is served by five economic development organizations (shown on the next page). At the regional level, the Emerald Coast is served by Florida's Great Northwest, Inc., created by the region's economic development organizations and business leaders to provide a central focal point to promote the region and to provide a one-stop point of information about the region's assets. The creation of Florida's Great Northwest, Inc., (discussed in more detail below under marketing) recognized that to compete in the world economy, Northwest Florida communities must work together as a region, not as individual communities. Taking a regional approach to economic development is consistent with other progressive regions in Florida that are also recognizing that it takes a region to supply the ingredients a successful business needs – the workforce, the housing, the training and education, the transportation network, and the technology, for example. In today's economy, businesses make a decision to locate in, or expand in, a region because of the combined assets that are available, not because of the assets of a single community. *(Emerald Coast regional economic development information is available from Florida's Great Northwest, Inc., [www.floridasgreatnorthwest.com]; the University of West Florida Haas Center for Business Research and Economic Development [www.haas.uwf.edu], which collects, analyzes, and distributes*

EMERALD COAST LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS

- Okaloosa County Economic Development Council (www.florida-edc.org)
- Pensacola Department of Economic Development (www.businesspensacola.com)
- Pensacola Bay Area Chamber of Commerce (www.pensacolabayarea.com)
- Team Santa Rosa Economic Development Council (www.teamsantarosa.com)
- Walton County Economic Development Council (www.waltonbusiness.com)

information about Northwest Florida; and the West Florida Regional Planning Council [www.wfrpc.dst.fl.us/eda/default.htm], which serves as the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration's Economic Development District (EDD) for the Northwest Florida region. Florida's EDDs, which in most regions are a part of the state's regional planning councils, provide technical assistance to local governments in the form of economic analyses, staff support, leadership training and development, research, federal grant and loan preparation, strategic plans development, and other related activities. The state's principal source of economic development information is Enterprise Florida [www.eflorida.com]. Economic development information is also available from the International Economic Development Council [www.iedconline.org], the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development [www.hud.gov/economicdevelopment/index.cfm], and the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration [www.eda.gov]. Rural economic development information is available from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Development Program [www.rurdev.usda.gov] and the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) program [<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/FE426>].)

Business Assistance Program

Business assistance programs are a core function of a successful economic development program. The programs are designed to assist new companies that are considering a location in a community and to improve the competitiveness of existing businesses. Typical services to businesses include assistance with finding a site or building, accessing capital and financial incentive programs, securing workforce training and educational services, maintaining data on community assets, facilitating the permitting process, hosting networking events, and serving as an advocate for business with local government and the broader community. Specific business assistance programs include Existing Business Programs, Entrepreneurial Assistance Programs, and Small Business Assistance Programs.

Existing Business Program

An existing business program is focused on retaining existing businesses in a community and helping them to expand. Such programs recognize that some 80 percent of a community's new jobs are created by existing businesses. Testimonials of satisfied existing businesses can also provide the basis of a marketing program to attract new businesses. An existing business program can also include a direct contact program, which involves personal visits with targeted industries, and surveys to determine what a business needs to stay in business or expand. Interviews and surveys are used to identify businesses that need assistance in overcoming hurdles that interfere with day-to-day operations or that may prevent

JACKSONVILLE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE TOOLS FOR EXISTING BUSINESSES

The Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce's existing business department helps existing businesses solve problems and identify new ways to grow. The team assists businesses with employee recruitment; workforce development; government procurement contracting; international trade; business incentive programs; transportation, water, sewer, and electrical issues; and site selection when it is time to expand or relocate. The program also includes sponsoring a CEO Roundtable, spotlighting existing businesses, and serving as an advocate for existing businesses to reduce time in long procedures such as permitting and to provide a quick-fix or remedy for common problems. (More information is available from www.myjaxchamber.com.)

expansion or cause a move to a new location. A survey can also be used to understand the factors that make an area conducive to business expansion and new investment. Additional services to existing businesses can include assistance with accessing incentives and financing programs, finding a new site or building for an expansion, recruiting and training employees, and securing technical services. (For more information on existing business programs, go to *Enterprise Florida* [www.eflorida.com].)

Entrepreneurial Assistance Programs

Entrepreneurial assistance programs are a specialized area of a business assistance program. The programs help an individual take an idea for a business or an invention into successful production. A number of organizations in Florida provide entrepreneurial assistance. One organization is the Disney Small Business Administration (SBA)/National Entrepreneur Center (NEC) in Orlando, which is dedicated to providing the resources and support needed by entrepreneurs to be successful. The center hosts a Business Information Center and offers training, counseling, and financial assistance. The NEC provider in the Emerald Coast is the University of West Florida's Small Business Development Center (UWF SBDC). The Center is a sponsor of the Pensacola Venture Forum that provides entrepreneurs with the opportunity to demonstrate their growth potential to an audience interested in investment opportunities. The Pensacola Bay Area Chamber of Commerce, which also sponsors the Pensacola Venture Forum, offers a number of programs for entrepreneurs. They include a High Growth Business Club (for entrepreneurs to share their success stories through a monthly speaker's series as well as through roundtable mentoring discussions), a Creative Class/Talent Initiative, and a Regional Incubator Network. An Angel Venture Fund is planned. (For more information on entrepreneurial assistance programs, go to the *Disney SBA/National*

THE ENTREPRENEURIAL INSTITUTE AT METROBROWARD

Based in Fort Lauderdale, the Entrepreneurial Institute at MetroBroward was created in 1989 by the MetroBroward Economic Development Cooperative in collaboration with Broward Community College and the South Florida Regional Planning Council. Its mission is to serve as a one-stop resource for real world hands-on advice, coaching, technical assistance, and education for starting, growing, funding, and maintaining a competitive small business. In addition to the Entrepreneurial Institute, MetroBroward provides small business loans, virtual office tenancy (e.g., a receptionist and access to conference rooms), incubation assistance to technology startup businesses, a small business development services help desk, and entrepreneurial education and certification. (More information on the Entrepreneurial Institute is available from www.metrobroward.org.)

THE UNIVERSITY OF WEST FLORIDA SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER

The UWF SBDC, which serves Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, and Walton counties, helps prospective and existing small businesses. Assistance programs include free management consulting for business owners within the four-county service area and 80 training sessions per year. The UWF SBDC is a member of the Florida Small Business Development Center Network, a non-profit network of college and university-based centers providing entrepreneurs with high quality one-on-one consulting, management training, and information needs. The program, which has full service offices in Pensacola and Fort Walton Beach, is funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration. (More information is available from www.sfdc.edu.)

Entrepreneur Center [www.floridanec.org] and Enterprise Florida [www.eflorida.com], which hosts an on-line database of resources for entrepreneurs looking to succeed in Florida's innovation economy and a list of venture funds in Florida. Information on the Pensacola entrepreneur assistance programs is available from the Pensacola Bay Area Chamber [www.pensacolabayarea.com].)

Small Business Assistance Programs

Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) are a principal provider of assistance to small businesses. The U.S. Small Business Administration established the SBDC program in 1976. The Florida Small Business Development Center Network (FSBDCN) was one of the eight pilot SBDCs established by the SBA. FSBDCN assists in the development and education of the state's entrepreneurs and small business community by linking the state's education system with community outreach. The Academy for Entrepreneurial and Economic Development is one of the services of the FSBDCN. The academy provides business education and training to enhance the skills of small businesses. Enterprise Florida also offers assistance to small businesses through its on-line listing of small business resources. It also published a *Florida Small Business Start-Up Guide* that provides basic guidelines on local, state, and federal requirements for starting a business in Florida, and hosts an online frequently-asked-questions site on how to start a business in Florida. *(More information on small business development is available from Enterprise Florida [www.eflorida.com/smallbusiness/assistance.asp?level1=3] and the FSBDCN [www.fsbdc.com].)*

Cluster Industry Development Strategy

A Cluster Industry Development Strategy is a principal focal point of many economic development programs because it builds on the strengths of a region's economy and creates a framework for targeting economic development activities for the most impact. The basis for a cluster approach to economic development is understanding the concentrations of related companies in a geographic area (an industry cluster) that do business with each other and have common needs (for example, for the same type of workforce, research, education, technology, or transportation services). The companies in a cluster can be competitors or they may be interdependent through purchases of services or supplies. A cluster can include educational institutions, nonprofits, and governments that support an industry cluster through their services.

OKALOOSA & WALTON COUNTY TARGET MARKET ANALYSIS, PHASE ONE

The focus of the Okaloosa & Walton County Target Market Analysis was to understand the significant challenges and opportunities for economy diversification. Building on the competitive advantages offered by the two counties, including existing industry clusters, the study recommended a set of core and emerging target industries. Core industries (those that present immediate opportunities for growth but can withstand economic shifts) include electronics, medical devices, integrated building services, and logistics and distribution. Emerging industries (those that require higher skill levels, pay higher wages, and show growth potential) are business and professional services and information technology. Phase Two of the study is to prepare an economic diversification plan. *(More information on the study is available from the Okaloosa County Economic Development Council [www.florida-edc.org] and the Walton County Economic Development Council [www.waltonbusiness.com].)*

Concentrating companies within an industry cluster can increase their productivity and competitiveness by providing access to a larger pool of suppliers; a skilled workforce; networking opportunities to share information and address common problems; and specialized support services, such as workforce recruitment, support infrastructure, and research and training programs. Activities within a cluster development strategy can include joint marketing to expand the cluster, collaborative buying, joint research, and e-newsletters and directories to increase communications. For example, the iCoast (www.icoast.com), an alliance of technology companies, universities, and other organizations operating in Southeast Florida, hosts networking opportunities, publishes an e-newsletter, and sponsors on-line training to reinforce the region's growing importance as a hub for technology businesses. Enterprise Florida targets six industry clusters: life sciences (including biotechnology, medical device manufacturing, pharmaceuticals, and health care), information technology, aviation and aerospace, homeland security and defense, financial and professional services, and manufacturing.

Information on cluster industries is available from Enterprise Florida [www.eflorida.com/keysectors/default.asp?level1=22&tn=6bn], the Harvard Business School's Institute for Strategy and Competitiveness [www.isc.hbs.edu/econ-clusters.htm], and the University of West Florida Haas Center for Business Research and Economic Development [www.haas.uwf.edu].


Economic Impact Studies

Economic impact studies are used to predict how a policy or investment decision directly or indirectly affects the economy. Typical measures of economic impact include income, employment, and expenditures. Direct impacts include the number of jobs created, the wages paid by the jobs, and the impacts of the jobs on personal consumption spending. Indirect impacts look at the long-term effects created by a plan or investment decision – how the impacts multiply over time (the multiplier effect). Three of the most commonly used methods to calculate indirect impacts are the Regional Economic Models, Inc. (REMI), the U.S. Department of Commerce Regional Input-Output Modeling System (RIMS II), and the Minnesota IMPLAN model. Those models can be used to predict economic impacts, such as the number of jobs created or lost; increases or decreases in personal income, which influence household-to-business spending; and increases in business productivity and business-to-business spending. Economic impact studies are used for a variety of projects. In addition to the expansion or location of a new business, examples include construction of a new facility, such as a convention

THE SOUTH FLORIDA ECONOMIC FORECASTING PARTNERSHIP

In 2003, the South Florida Regional Planning Council, the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council, the South Florida Water Management District, and Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach, Martin, and St. Lucie counties came together to create the South Florida Economic Forecasting Partnership. The purpose of the partnership is to enhance the ability to conduct demographic and economic analysis and forecasting in the seven-county Southeast Florida region served by the two Regional Planning Councils. The Partnership is using an eight-region version of REMI. The eight regions covered by the model are the five partner counties, plus Monroe and Indian River counties, and the state of Florida. *(More information on the Partnership and REMI is available from www.sfrpc.com/remi.htm.)*


center or sports stadium; a large development of regional impact; or a military base expansion or closing.

 *More information on economic impact studies is available from Enterprise Florida [www.eflorida.org] and the University of West Florida Haas Center for Business Research and Economic Development [www.haas.uwf.edu].*

Incentives for Economic Development

Economic incentives are offered by most economic development programs to make it easier for companies to expand or to locate in a community or region. The incentives can be both financial and non-financial. Examples of economic incentives used by Florida communities include a small business revolving loan program; reduction in impact fees, ad valorem and other tax exemptions or reductions; cash incentives for creating certain types of jobs in target industries; and use of industrial revenue bonds. Economic incentives can also be used to carry out other public objectives. For example, they can be used for locating a business in an economically distressed area or near public transit or affordable housing to help address a jobs-housing imbalance (where jobs are far removed from locations that offer employees affordable housing, which causes long commutes, exacerbating traffic problems).

In the Emerald Coast, economic incentives and support services are offered by each of the economic development organizations. Their incentives include those offered by Enterprise Florida, which are designed to nurture the long-term profitability of Florida businesses. Enterprise Florida's incentives fall into four categories: targeted industries, workforce training, road infrastructure, and special opportunities. Special opportunity incentives are available for urban core areas and rural areas (for example, a Rural Community Development Revolving Loan Fund and Rural Infrastructure Fund to meet the special needs that businesses encounter in rural counties). Special incentives are also available for designated Enterprise Zones and for locating a business in a brownfield site (underutilized industrial or commercial sites due to actual or perceived environmental contamination). Florida's Great Northwest provides an on-line calculator to help a business make a basic determination of the approximate monetary incentive level that it might be eligible to receive.

 *More information on Enterprise Florida incentives is available from www.eflorida.com/financialadvantages. Additional information about Emerald Coast economic incentives is available on the websites of the region's economic development organizations, listed above, and Florida's Great Northwest, Inc. [www.floridasgreatnorthwest.com].*


PENSACOLA BAY AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Pensacola Bay Area Chamber of Commerce's economic development program offers information on business location tools, including incentives for new and existing businesses. In addition to the incentives provided by Enterprise Florida, Pensacola offers an ad valorem tax exemption for real and personal property for new and expanding businesses meeting certain requirements. Pensacola also has a Foreign Trade Zone and three Enterprise Zones, which offer financial incentives including job tax credits for employing residents; sales tax refunds on business equipment; sales tax refunds on building materials; an Enterprise Zone property tax credit; and sales tax exemptions on electrical energy.

(More information on the Pensacola Bay Area Chamber of Commerce economic development incentives is available from www.pensacolabayarea.com.)

Marketing for Economic Development

Economic development organizations use a variety of marketing techniques to attract businesses to their community and to retain and expand businesses. Marketing programs can also help enhance a community's image and spread the word about its assets to a broader audience. An important part of a marketing program is honing what the message should be, which requires understanding what appeals to the needs of the target business audience. Techniques in marketing programs generally include a combination of sending direct mails and emails, participating in trade fairs, conducting marketing trips to other regions, hosting a website, producing a marketing brochure that highlights community assets, and conducting special studies on specific regional assets (for example, a labor force analysis). Because regions, not individual communities, now compete for new economic investments, many economic development marketing programs are conducted by a regional organization or collaboration of organizations. For example, in the Tampa region, seven counties that once competed for economic growth came together to create the Tampa Bay Partnership (www.tampabay.org) to be more competitive and have more economic clout.

 *More information on marketing for economic development is available from Enterprise Florida [www.eflorida.com] and the International Economic Development Council [www.iedconline.org].*

Workforce Training Programs

Workforce training programs are designed to improve the skills of a community's labor force.

Participants can include dislocated or unemployed workers, those just entering the labor market, and currently employed workers who wish to improve their skills or develop new ones. Workforce training programs work closely with businesses in their region to ensure that the region's workforce has the skills needed for businesses to thrive and expand. In Florida, the state resource for workforce training is Workforce Florida, created in 2000 with the passage of the Workforce Innovation Act. Workforce

FLORIDA'S GREAT NORTHWEST, INC.

Florida's Great Northwest, Inc., was created by a group of businesses and leaders from academic institutions and economic development organizations in the 16-county Northwest region of Florida. Those individuals came together because they recognized the collective strength of working together to promote the region. Through Florida's Great Northwest, a business can find information about sites and learn about the region, including its business climate, quality of life, health care, educational assets, labor force, state and local incentive programs, proximity to markets, and industry clusters that include aviation/aerospace, health technology, information technology, and silicon technology. *(More information on Florida's Great Northwest is available from www.floridasgreatnorthwest.com.)*

THE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD OF THE TREASURE COAST (WDBTC)

The WDBTC is building an integrated workforce development system for job seekers and employers. Its Jobseekers program offers a variety of services, including access to phones, fax, copiers, and computers; tips on finding and interviewing for a job; and a resume writing service. Employer services focus on giving employers the tools needed to stay competitive, find the right employee, and make it easier to manage and motivate their workforce. An innovative program of the board is an Employer Learning Library, a no-cost mobile facility that takes business assistance and employee training programs and equipment to employers. *(More information on the Treasure Coast workforce initiatives is available from www.tcjobs.org.)*

Florida programs and services are carried out by the Agency for Workforce Innovation, which is responsible for implementing state policy in the areas of workforce development, welfare transition, unemployment compensation, labor market information, early learning, and school readiness, and 24 business-led Regional Workforce Boards. The Emerald Coast is served by two Regional Workforce Boards: the Workforce Development Board of Okaloosa and Walton counties and Workforce Escarosa, which serves Escambia and Santa Rosa counties. Those boards work to ensure that all citizens in the Emerald Coast, whether they are searching for a first job, trying to get back in the job market, or seeking a better job, have access to developing competitive job skills. The regional boards also provide One-Stop Career Centers that help employers find employees, and they work with employers to provide the training needed to ensure that employees have the skills needed for them to remain competitive and profitable.

For more information on workforce training programs, go to the Agency for Workforce Innovation [www.floridajobs.org], the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration [www.doleta.gov/usworkforce], the Workforce Development Board of Okaloosa and Walton Counties [<http://jobsplusonestop.com>], Workforce Escarosa, Inc. [www.escarosa.org], and Workforce Florida [www.workforceflorida.com].

EDUCATION AND HEALTH TOOLS

10


TOOLS

- ▶ Active Living by Design
- ▶ Aging in Place
- ▶ Health Impact Assessments
- ▶ Safe Routes to Schools
- ▶ School Facility Siting Standards

The 1990s have seen a growing number of local, state, and federal programs focused on the ways that development patterns and land use practices impact the health of a community's residents, the ability of older people (soon to be the country's majority population) to remain independent and active, and student learning. One of the driving forces behind the move toward more walkable, mixed-use communities and reducing dependence on cars has been concerns about health, starting with the young (through programs such as Safe Routes to Schools and locating schools in close proximity to existing neighborhoods) and the independence of the country's senior population. A recently released study (*Measuring the Health Effects of SPRAWL: A National Analysis of Physical Activity, Obesity and Chronic Disease*) by the Surface Transportation Policy Project (STPP) and Smart Growth America documents that people who live in countries marked by sprawl-style development tend to weigh more and be more likely to be obese and have high blood pressure. Another recent study (*Aging Americans: Stranded Without Options*) by the STPP documents that because of sprawling development patterns and communities built only for the car, many older Americans have no options other than driving. This means that when older Americans can no longer drive, they are housebound, a condition, according to the report, that applies to more than half of older Americans (a number that will dramatically increase because of the aging of Baby Boomers). (Information on these reports is available from Smart Growth America: www.smartgrowthamerica.org/report/HealthSprawl8.03.pdf and www.smartgrowthamerica.org/aging4.04.html. Information on education and health tools is also available from the American Planning Association [www.planning.org], the Institute for Local Government [www.lgc.org], the National Association of Realtors Smart Growth Program [www.realtor.org/sg3.nsf], the National Trust for Historic Preservation [www.nationaltrust.org], and the Smart Growth Network [www.smartgrowth.org].)

Active Living by Design

Active living-designed communities are places where public officials and the private sector (residents and developers) have made a commitment to creating a healthier population by designing places that make daily physical activity the easy choice. The goal of Active Living by Design Programs is to enable residents of a community to integrate physical activity into their daily routine, accumulating at least 30 minutes of activity each day through walking, biking, playing in a park, walking to school, taking the stairs instead of an elevator, and using recreational facilities. Achieving that goal requires changing the design of most communities, which has created barriers to walking, bicycling, and other forms of physical activity. Those barriers include high-speed roads without sidewalks and safe places for bicycles, and jobs and stores located far from homes, requiring a car to reach even the most routine destination. Active Living by Design practices focus on retrofitting those existing places to make them active living-friendly and requiring active living planning principles as a part of new development. Active living planning principles share much in common with the principles of the New Urbanism. They emphasize creating residential areas mixed with shopping so that residents can walk to a grocery or other daily shopping needs, to jobs, to schools, and to well-maintained, safe neighborhood parks.

 Information on Active Living by Design programs is available from Active Living by Design [www.activelivingbydesign.org], a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation administered by the University of North Carolina School of Public Health.

Aging in Place


Aging in Place programs focus on strategies that enable senior citizens to remain independent and in their own home or in a non-health care environment for as long as their health allows. The goal is to overcome the many barriers that prevent older persons from remaining independent, active, and contributing members of their community, with opportunities to live in intergenerational neighborhoods that offer easy access to cultural, educational, medical, and recreational services. The benefit of Aging in Place programs is to retain the elderly within the community and to reduce the number of those who have to move to institutional living.

Examples of Aging in Place strategies address the location and design of development and community infrastructure, as well as the support services needed by an older population. Development and

ACTIVE ORLANDO

The city of Orlando designated its commercial downtown and the surrounding neighborhoods as an Active Living District. The goal is to create an environment that encourages safe physical activity to help overcome Orlando's ranking as one of the most unsafe places for pedestrians and bicyclists. A first step was to involve residents and professionals in a walkability and bikeability assessment of the area, and to create a multi-partner board to advise the city on active living principles and develop a promotional program on the importance of daily active living. The city also requires design elements to be supportive of active living when approving new commercial development in the district. Other plans include improved signage prompting physical activity, bikeway maps, walking/cycling incentive programs, pedestrian and bike safety education, expanding walking clubs, and a campaign that focuses on taking stairs over elevators. (For additional information, contact Dean Grandin at dean.grandin@cityoforlando.net.)

design strategies include zoning that allows multi-family, garage apartments, and "in-law suites" in all residential areas; mixed-income housing located close to downtowns, universities, and cultural institutions; and well-lighted and maintained sidewalks and walking paths with plenty of shade and benches for resting, especially at bus stops. Other design strategies include well-marked and lighted parking lots, larger lettering on street signs to enable easier navigation, and well-marked pedestrian crosswalks and stoplights timed to allow an elderly person to cross the street. Support strategies include in-home services, such as assistance with home repairs; home assessment services that allow the elderly to remain in their own homes; and accessible transit for those who no longer have a car.

 More information on Aging in Place is available from Partners for Livable Communities [www.partners.org] and the American Association of Retired People, which publishes a community Aging in Place audit guide [www.aarp.org/research/housing-mobility/indliving/beyond_50_communities.html]. Additional resource information is available from Florida's Communities for a Lifetime Program [www.communitiesforalifetime.org].

Health Impact Assessments

A Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is used to predict the impact of development projects and land use policies on community and human health. The results of an HIA are used to inform decision-makers and to help them make decisions that maximize the positive health benefits, and minimize the negative impacts, of a proposed policy or practice. The methods used in an HIA are similar to the environmental and social impact assessments required by many federally-funded projects. They include community input and employ qualitative and quantitative analysis techniques. An assessment consists of a scoping phase, identification and assessment of impacts, and a set of recommendations. An HIA also includes a process for ongoing evaluation and monitoring. Employing planning practices that create healthier citizens brings multiple community benefits (for example, lower health insurance costs for employers and employees and a more productive workforce because of fewer missed work days). A number of organizations serve as an HIA resource. At the national and international levels, these organizations include the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO), the American Planning Association (APA), and the World Health Organization (WHO). In Florida, two resource organizations are the Florida Department of Health (FDOH) and Healthy Development, Inc.

AMELIA PARK

One hundred and six-acre Amelia Park in the center of Fernandina Beach on Amelia Island was designed as an intergenerational community that enables residents to begin and end their lives in the same neighborhood. The Amelia Park Master Plan emphasizes creating relationships among residents and enabling residents to age in place. Each neighborhood offers a continuum of housing types and care. Housing options include single-family homes, cottages, row houses, garage apartments, and apartments above neighborhood shops. All residences are within walking distance of shopping, schools, parks, churches, and recreational facilities. To foster the ability to stay in the community, Amelia Park offers skilled nursing care and an infrastructure to facilitate independent living. (Additional information on Amelia Park is available from www.hometownneighborhood.com, and from *A Guidebook to New Urbanism in Florida 2005*, published by the Florida Chapter of the Congress for the New Urbanism [www.cnu.florida.org].)

NACCHO has been in a multi-year partnership with the National Center for Environmental Health (NCEH) of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention to provide community-based environmental health assessments and technical assistance to local health departments and their constituents. To further an understanding of how the HIA process works, NACCHO awarded NCEH-funded grants to eight local health departments to serve as Protocol for Assessing Community Excellence in Environmental Health (PACE EH) demonstration sites. NACCHO has also recently entered into a partnership with APA (Healthy Communities through Collaboration) to re-build the bridge between land use planning and public health practices. The goal is to promote an interdisciplinary approach to creating and maintaining healthy communities by improving local planning department and public health agency performance through improved collaboration. Activities are focused on giving planning and health organizations a better understanding of their respective authorities and functions and demonstrating how they can work together to bring information about health needs to the land use planning process and information about land use impacts to health providers. In February 2006, APA and NACCHO sponsored an HIA workshop for local health professionals and land use planners. With assistance from the Tri-County Health Department in Colorado, a checklist for Public Health in Land Use Planning and Community Design was created. They have also developed two fact sheets for elected officials: one defining terms commonly used in the health and land use fields and the other, entitled *Working with Elected Officials to Promote Healthy Land Use Planning and Community Design*. At the international level, the WHO offers a comprehensive overview of HIAs on

EXAMPLES OF NACCHO RESOURCES

- Protocol for Assessing Community Excellence in Environmental Health (PACE EH), a methodology to guide local communities in identifying and addressing environmental health priorities
- PACE EH Demonstration Site Project, an expandable compendium of local communities documenting their experiences using the methodology
- Peer Assistance Network for potential and current PACE EH users
- Model Practice Database, an online, searchable collection of practices across public health areas

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT PACE EH PROGRAM

Indian River County used the PACE EH process to conduct environmental assessments and initiate a public campaign to stimulate interest in needed public improvements, particularly in the lower-income Wabasso community. The PACE EH assessment teams identified a number of environmental problems, including sub-standard housing, poor public lighting, and lack of good access to safe public water. As a result, the PACE EH coordinators and volunteers were instrumental in connecting Wabasso to the public water system, raising funds to develop a new Wabasso community center, and building new sidewalks. They were also key players in organizing Project Hope, which will build homes for disadvantaged residents whose housing is demolished for safety reasons. (For more information on the Indian River County PACE EH process, go to www.naccho.org/topics/environmental/documents/IndianRiverPACE_002.pdf, or www.doh.state.fl.us/environment/programs/PACE-EH/PACE-EH.htm.)

their website, which includes HIA case studies and examples, HIA procedures, an HIA toolkit, and links to literature on HIAs.

In Florida, FDOH's Division of Environmental Health has been aggressive in promoting a holistic assessment of environmental quality impacts on human health, which in 2005 earned it an award from the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials for its PACE EH Initiative. FDOH has taken a leadership role in encouraging environmental health professionals to use the PACE EH assessment process, with the result that 28 Florida counties have participated. FDOH's emphasis on understanding environmental impacts on public health is driven by Florida's growth, which places strains on a community's built and natural environment and intensifies the need for land use planners and public health officials to establish a relationship. To help implement the PACE EH process in Florida, FDOH offered a number of small demonstration grants. One of the grantees was the Indian River County Health Department, which in 2005 won NACCHO's Jim Parker Memorial Award. Another HIA player in Florida is Tallahassee-based Healthy Development, Inc. (HDI), which specializes in the relationship between development and human health. Using GIS, HDI can project the healthcare costs and savings and social and economic impacts of changes in the built environment.

At the national level, more information on HIAs is available from the National Association of County and City Health Officials [www.naccho.org/topics/environmental/CEHA.cfm], the World Health Organization [www.who.int/topics/health_impact_assessment/en/], and the American Planning Association [www.planning.org/research/healthycommunities.htm]. In Florida, HIA information is available from the Florida Department of Health [www.doh.state.fl.us/environment/index.html] and Healthy Development, Inc. [www.healthydevelopment.us].

Safe Routes to Schools

Safe Routes to Schools programs are designed to improve the health of children and to encourage a healthy, active lifestyle at an early age by making walking and biking to schools safer and easier. The programs typically involve multiple partners, including parents, community members, school staff, traffic engineers, city planners, law enforcement officers, and community leaders. Examples of Safe Routes to Schools activities include walkability and bikeability audits of school travel routes, improvements to sidewalks near schools, use of traffic calming to slow traffic and make streets safer for pedestrians, building crosswalks, adding crossing guards, educating students and drivers about safe travel to school, and promoting greater enforcement of traffic laws. Other Safe Routes to Schools activi-

FLORIDA SAFE WAYS TO SCHOOL

The Florida Department of Transportation's Pedestrian and Bicycle Program administers the state's Safe Ways to School initiative. The goal of the program is to involve school traffic safety committees, with input from parents, administrators, crossing guards, and students, in improving conditions that affect children walking and bicycling safely to and from school. *A Safe Ways to School Toolkit* helps schools assess and improve hazardous conditions around schools and the surrounding neighborhoods. The toolkit includes a student survey, a school site design assessment, a neighborhood site assessment, parent and student attitudinal surveys, a video, and a how-to manual. (Additional information is available from www.dot.state.fl.us/Safety/ped_bike/ped_bike.htm.)

FISCAL ANALYSIS AND FINANCING TOOLS

ties can include offering walking school buses (when one or two parents or volunteers escort a group of children on the walk to school) and establishing school construction policies that emphasize renovation and improvement of existing schools and locate new schools in places that reduce walking hazards and avoid major traffic threats. A federal Safe Routes to Schools program, administered by the Federal Highway Administration Office of Safety, distributes funding to states for infrastructure and non-infrastructure activities.

Information on Safe Routes to Schools programs can be obtained from FHWA [<http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/saferoutes/index.htm>] or from the National Center for Safe Routes to Schools [www.saferoutesinfo.org].

SCHOOLS FOR SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITIES: AN ELEMENT OF SMART GROWTH

Recently the National Trust for Historic Preservation partnered with the Council of Educational Facility Planners International (CEFPI), the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to develop *Schools for Successful Communities: An Element of Smart Growth*. The goal of the new guidelines is to help local citizens, city officials, school board members, school district personnel, and land use planners make informed decisions about school renovation and construction. (For additional information on those guidelines, contact the National Trust for Historic Preservation [www.nthp.org/issues/schools] or CEFPI [www.cefpi.org].)

School Facility Siting Standards

Some communities change school location policies that create obstacles to allowing schools located within walking and biking distance of many of the students the schools serve. One option is to reduce the size required for school sites, which typically require large minimum acreage standards, resulting in schools located in greenfields away from the neighborhoods the school is serving and without safe walking and biking access. (The Center for Educational Facilities Planners International [CEFPI], which sets school site standards, has recently eliminated its minimum school siting standards that since the 1970s have required large minimum school site sizes for new schools. For example, under the old standards, a high school of 2,000 would need at least 50 acres. By contrast, older neighborhood schools occupy two to eight acres.) Other school location policy changes include revising requirements for renovation of existing schools, which typically favor new construction over rehabilitation, building new schools in an existing community or neighborhood within walking and biking distance of many students, and retrofitting other facilities for use as schools. Reinforcing the use of existing schools, Florida requires that design professionals with preservation expertise conduct feasibility studies on the renovation of historic schools before the schools can be demolished.

Information on school siting requirements is available from Smart Growth America [www.smartgrowthamerica.org], the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency [www.epa.gov/livability/school_travel.htm], and the National Association of Realtors [www.realtor.org/SG3.nsf/Pages/winter2005?OpenDocument].

11

TOOLS

- ▶ Capital Improvement Program (CIP)
- ▶ Community Development Districts (CDD)
- ▶ Fiscal Impact Analysis
- ▶ Special Districts

In a high-growth state such as Florida, local officials, citizens, and planners are using tools that enable them to do a better job of matching infrastructure with the pace of growth, often achieved through capital improvement programs, and understanding the projected impacts of a proposed development or land use change on the taxes and budgets of the impacted governmental units, using fiscal impact analysis. Through such an analysis, a local government can calculate the difference between the costs of providing services and the revenues generated by a development or land use change, thereby better managing its communities. They are also using tools to finance development through non-governmental entities called special districts. (For Florida information on fiscal analysis and financing tools is available from the Florida Department of Community Affairs [www.dca.state.fl.us], the Florida Association of Counties [www.fl-counties.com], and the Florida League of Cities [www.flcities.com].)

Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

A CIP is a financial planning tool that enables a local government to plan for large, high priority capital projects, such as parks, street and drainage improvements, utilities, and public facilities, over a period of time (typically a mid-range planning period of five to six years). The CIP matches the cost of capital improvements to anticipated revenues and provides the policy framework for the allocation of funding for capital projects. A CIP should be consistent with a community's comprehensive plan. One way to link a CIP to community goals outlined in a comprehensive plan is to establish a focused public investment plan, which is a CIP that concentrates public infrastructure investments in targeted areas as a way to encourage new investment and more intense development. In some communities, a local government CIP coordinating team is created to oversee the CIP and track projects to ensure that projects are on-time and on-budget and meet quality standards. Such a team can also work closely with city departments to ensure that programs are aligned with the CIP, reduce duplication, and increase efficiency. A CIP is particularly useful in a high-growth community that needs to increase and update its infrastructure.

In Florida, the state's growth management legislation requires communities to produce a financially feasible Capital Improvement Element (CIE) as part of their comprehensive plan. The purpose of the CIE is to ensure that planned infrastructure improvements are scheduled to be available at the time that the impacts of growth occur. Sometimes called a "pay-as-you-grow" system, the CIE requires that a local government demonstrate its ability to provide adequate infrastructure, including correcting existing deficiencies, as well as providing new facilities needed due to growth. The CIE is used to set minimum levels of service (LOS) standards for various public services, such as transportation, parks and recreation services and facilities, and solid waste management. In 2005 the Florida Department of Community Affairs (DCA) selected eight pilot communities to demonstrate how the CIE can be used to promote sound growth management practices: the cities of Fort Myers, Gainesville, Hollywood, Jacksonville, Lakeland, and Orlando, and Indian River and Leon counties.


 More information on Capital Improvement Programs is available from the Florida Association of Counties [www.fl-counties.com] and the Florida League of Cities [www.flcities.com]. For more information on CIEs, go to www.dca.state.fl.us/GrowthManagement2005/CIEpilot.pdf.

CITY OF ORLANDO CIP

The city of Orlando's uses its CIP as a vehicle to link capital expenditures with adopted public policy. The CIP, which is adopted by the City Council with the adoption of the annual operating and capital budgets, includes all projects in the city's state-required Capital Improvement Element (CIE) as well as other capital projects to be funded by the city. The CIP represents the city's five-year commitment to ensuring that public facilities and services are provided concurrent with the impacts of new development. The city uses its CIP as a measuring stick that shows how much it will cost the city to preserve the quality of life provided by adopting the CIE-required level of service. If a change in the CIP alters the city's ability to achieve the goals and policies of its growth management plan, an amendment to the city's comprehensive plan is required. *(More information on Orlando's CIP is available from www.cityoforlando.net/planning/cityplanning/MPB/2006%20MPB%20Agendas%20Staff%20Report%20%20Minutes/August%202006/GMP2006-00040.pdf.)*

Community Development Districts (CDD)

Community development districts (CDDs) are independent special-purpose units of government established by the state or a local government at the request of a developer or landowner to finance basic services within a development. More than one CDD may be established to serve a new community. Chapter 190 of the Florida Statutes authorizes a CDD to provide an alternative method of planning, acquiring, operating, and maintaining community-wide improvements in new communities and to provide a more timely and efficient way to deliver basic community services without overburdening other governments and their taxpayers. Common infrastructure improvements provided by CDDs include drainage, potable water, sewerage, roads, utilities, and parks. By using a CDD, a developer can obtain access to low-cost financing by issuing tax-exempt bonds that have lower interest rates. (The bonds are paid off by residents and property owners over time [generally 10-30 years], reducing the overall cost to the developer.) CDDs also have the power to collect fees and levy lienable assessments or ad valorem taxes against properties within the project for repayment of debt and for on-going operations. Common property owned by a CDD is tax exempt. The creation of a CDD requires the approval of government. (A CDD of 1,000 acres or less is established by the city or county in which it is located. Florida's governor and state cabinet approve districts of more than 1,000 acres.) Because a CDD must operate as a unit of local government, its board meetings must be noticed in a local newspaper and conducted in public, and records must be available for public review.

 More information on CDDs is available from the West Florida Regional Planning Council [www.wfrpc.dst.fl.us] and the Florida Department of Community Affairs [www.dca.state.fl.us].


Fiscal Impact Analysis

A fiscal impact analysis helps local governments understand the financial feasibility of a single development or of alternative development scenarios under different growth management policies. The analysis estimates the difference between the costs of providing services to a development and the

THE CAPITAL REGION COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

The Capital Region Community Development District (the District) is an independent special taxing district created in 2000 to assist with the development of SouthWood, an estimated 3,300-acre mixed-use traditional neighborhood development on the eastern edge of Tallahassee. The development is built around a 123-acre park and lake with a town center featuring shops and restaurants within walking distance or a short drive for residents. A significant portion of the site (approximately 1,000 acres, not including the golf course) is in conservation and open space uses. As a local unit of special-purpose government, the District provides an alternative means for planning, financing, constructing, operating and maintaining various public improvements and community facilities. Examples of public infrastructure and facilities for SouthWood include off-site roadways, stormwater management facilities, open space and amenities, entrance features, landscape improvements, roadway signage, street lighting, and subdivision infrastructure improvements. The District is governed by a five-member Board of Supervisors, and its operations are administered by the District Manager, GMS (Governmental Management Services). *(More information on the SouthWood community is available at www.joe.com. Information on GMS is available at www.govmgtsvc.com.)*

revenues that will be collected as a result of the development. Realistic fiscal impact information can help a community do a better job of anticipating and planning for future costs due to growth. The analysis can also help arm a community when it negotiates with developers. In Florida, the Department of Community Affairs turned to the Fiscal Impact Analysis Model (FIAM) to estimate the financial implications (the costs and revenues) of a development plan or alternative land use scenarios. The FIAM is the product of the 2001 Florida Growth Management Study Commission that recommended the state develop a model which would enable more informed decisions by providing an understanding of the true costs of land use or development plans. The Orlando firm, Fishkind and Associates, developed the FIAM for DCA in 2005. The model was tested in seven pilot communities (the cities of Hollywood, Orlando, Panama City and Palm Beach, and Sarasota, Sumter, and Palm Beach counties). The FIAM can measure the financial feasibility of various types of plans, including comprehensive plans and amendments, changes to future land use maps, sector plans, special area plans, and large annexations by projecting net cash flow to the public sector resulting from the residential and non-residential development outlined in a plan. It can also estimate the impacts of land use decisions and development plans on local school districts. Through the analysis, a local government can determine its ability to fund the capital improvements that will support the growth of the community and compare the fiscal implications of various land use options. By showing the true cost of land use alternatives, FIAM results can lead to a decision to change development patterns and policies in order to make the provision of public services and facilities more cost effective. The FIAM can also be used to improve capital cost projections and implement more appropriate impact fee schedules.

 For the Emerald Coast, more information on full cost accounting and the FIAM is available from the West Florida Regional Planning Council [www.wfrpc.dst.fl.us]. Additional information is available from the Florida Department of Community Affairs [www.dca.state.fl.us/fdcp/dcp/FIAM/index.cfm], DCA's web-based FIAM Forum [www.myfiam.com], and Fishkind and Associates [www.fishkind.com]. Information on fiscal impact analysis is available from the National Resource Defense Council [www.nrdc.org], which publishes *Developments and Dollars: An Introduction to Fiscal Impact Analysis in Land Use Planning*, a guide to tools that examine the likely impacts of development proposals on local taxes and municipal budgets.

CITY OF HOLLYWOOD FIAM

Located in South Florida, the city of Hollywood is a built-out redeveloping coastal city of 145,000 and was one of seven original FIAM pilot communities. The city adopted the FIAM as a planning tool in 2003. It uses its FIAM, along with other planning tools, to analyze land use plan amendments, rezonings, Developments of Regional Impact (DRIs), annexations, de-annexations, and other development-related applications. FIAM results are incorporated into staff presentations to the City Commission. The FIAM is also used to analyze incentive packages within Hollywood's two Community Redevelopment Areas and evaluate the costs and benefits of development and redevelopment projects. Because of the FIAM, the city has been able to bring about changes in proposed projects to make them more fiscally 'friendly' than originally proposed. The FIAM is not used on affordable housing projects. *(More information on the city of Hollywood's FIAM program is available from Jaye Epstein, jepstein@hollywoodfl.org.)*

Special Districts

A special district is essentially a financing mechanism that has been used in Florida to provide and maintain public infrastructure and services. Interest in the alternative financing mechanism of special districts has increased with Florida's growth as a way to expand the fiscal capacities of communities in need of additional revenue sources. Today there are 1,400-plus special districts. (The Emerald Coast counties have 82 of the districts: Escambia, 15; Okaloosa, 29; and Santa Rosa and Walton, 19 each.) Traditionally used for government purposes, such as fire and flood control, roads, hospitals, and other infrastructure associated with new development, today special districts are expanding their role by providing conservation and resource management services in response to growth management and environmental concerns.

Special districts are usually established as a limited- or single-purpose governmental unit administratively separate from county, municipal, or state government to finance and maintain services or infrastructure traditionally provided by a local government when the local government is unable or unwilling to provide the service or capital improvement. They operate very much like a city or county: they provide public services, have a governing board with policy-making powers, and operate in a designated geographic area. The main difference between a special district and a local government is the purpose: a local government is charged with providing general governmental services, whereas special districts provide a specialized governmental service, which is why they are sometimes called a special-purpose form of government. They do this by allowing services to be targeted to a specific group of consumers who pay for the services received, thereby shifting infrastructure costs from all taxpayers within a jurisdiction of a general-purpose local government to the residents or property owners who will specifically benefit from the improvements, which removes the cost from the local government. The Florida statute establishing special districts (Chapter 189) enables two types of districts: an independent special district, which is created by legislative authorization and is independent of a general purpose government, and dependent special districts, which are created by a county or municipality. Dependent districts can be temporary or long term. Common dependent special districts are Municipal Special Taxing Units and Municipal Special Benefit Units. Multi-county and multi-jurisdictional special districts can be created when an issue transcends the boundaries of an individual unit of government. The Walton/Okaloosa/Santa Rosa Regional Utility Authority is an Emerald Coast example of a multi-county special district.

ACME IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

The Acme Improvement District (AID) is a dependent district of the Village of Wellington. The district was established in 1953 as an independent special district to drain and reclaim land within its boundaries in order to make the land usable for people and agriculture. Over time, the district's role expanded, with the result that it provided a majority of the community services and facilities within its boundaries (for example, water and sewer, stormwater drainage, roadways, street lighting, and parks and recreation facilities). After the Village of Wellington was established in 1995, the village took over many of the services provided by the AID, as well as some of the services provided by Palm Beach County, and the AID became a dependent district of the village. Today it is a special taxing district of Wellington, levying non-ad valorem assessments to provide stormwater management within the district boundaries. As a dependent district, the AID is governed by the Wellington Village Council, and its operations are administered by the village of Wellington's manager and staff within the Public Works department. *(For more information on the Acme Improvement District, go to www.ci.wellington.fl.us/vdept_finance.htm.)*

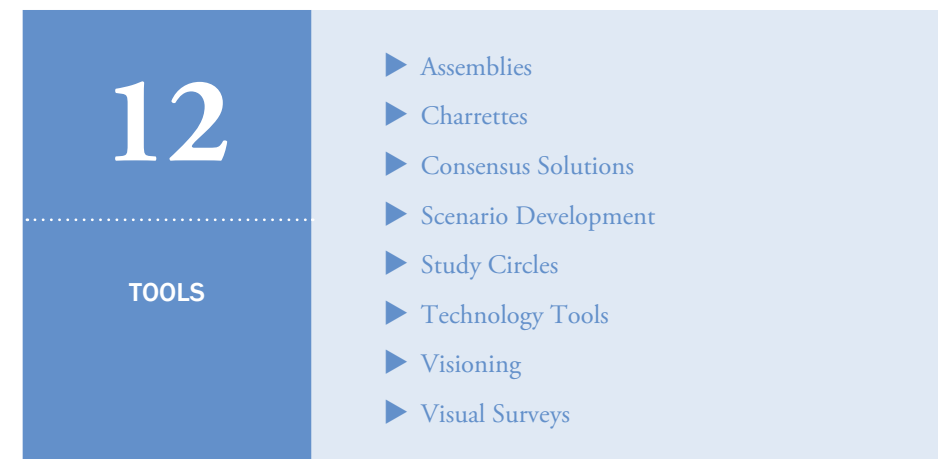
DCA's Special District Information Program provides information on establishing a special district. The program has three roles: promoting government efficiency, which includes maintaining an official list of special districts; promoting accountability, which includes helping special districts come into compliance with state requirements; and administering Chapter 189, which includes providing telephone technical assistance, providing training, and producing a *Special District Handbook*. Each special district must register with and provide updates to the Special District Information Program. The Florida Association of Special Districts serves as the Department of Community Affairs' primary education and training arm to satisfy the educational requirements of Chapter 189. The Association, in conjunction with Barry University and DCA, created the Certified District Manager Program in 2004. This program not only recognizes the professional and educational accomplishments of district managers of special districts but also promotes professionalism among the members of the profession.

THE INDIAN TRAIL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

The Indian Trail Improvement District is an independent special district created by the Florida Legislature in 1957 to reclaim land within its boundaries for water control and water supply and to protect the land from the effects of water by using the construction and maintenance of canals, ditches, levees, dikes, pumping plants, and other works and improvements. Located in Palm Beach County, the district's legislative boundaries encompass a 110+ square mile area, which includes activated areas of over 17,000 single-family lots. Governed by a five-member Board of Supervisors, the district plans for and provides water control and drainage, road grading and improvements, recreation facilities maintenance and operations, and water and wastewater utility service. Growing from five full-time employees in the early 1990s, the district now has 65 full-time employees and serves over 40,000 residents. It carries out its work through a combination of in-house employees and local contractors. *(For more information on the Indian Trail Improvement District, go to www.indiantrail.com.)*

 More information on special districts is available from the Florida Association of Special Districts [www.fasd.com] and the Florida Department of Community Affairs [www.floridaspecialdistricts.org].

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND EDUCATION TOOLS



Communities throughout Florida are using a wide variety of tools to encourage public involvement in public planning processes. The days of the decide-and-defend mode of planning (where a plan is developed without public input and presented as a completed product) have been replaced with publicly-owned planning processes (where a plan is based on meaningful public input from the earliest stages of planning throughout implementation). To achieve meaningful public input, the tools being used are designed to involve all (not just some) of those who are most affected by a public decision and to help the public evaluate the consequences of multiple alternatives (including a trend or do nothing alternative) before selecting a preferred alternative. To ensure that all voices are heard and that all choices are considered, today's successful public participation processes provide for inclusive stakeholder involvement, meaning that those who do not favor the idea or project under discussion are invited to the table along with those who are in favor. Successful public participation processes not only include diverse views and interests but are also designed to build consensus among those views and interests, thereby creating more enduring and widely supported public policies and plans. Successful public participation processes are also using today's technology to make public processes accessible to a wider range of people and taking steps to ensure that participants have access to the information needed to make informed decisions. One way of helping public officials and citizens make more informed decisions and understand the long-term consequence of those decisions is the use of visual tools that build a deeper understanding of planning issues and solutions. *(Information on public participation processes is available from a variety of organizations, including the American Planning Association [www.planning.org], the Association for Conflict Resolution [www.acrnet.org], the International Association for Public Participation [www.iap2.org], the International Association for Facilitators [www.iaf-world.org], the International City Managers Association [www.icma.org], the Local Government Commission [www.lgc.org/people/public.html], the Project for Public Spaces [www.pps.org], and the Urban Land Institute [www.uli.org]. In Florida, 1000 Friends of Florida [www.1000fof.org] publishes a citizen's guide to Florida's growth management processes.)*

Assemblies

The American Assembly is a national, non-partisan public affairs forum affiliated with Columbia University. It works to stimulate informed discussion on, and increase cross-sector communication on, important public policy topics, and to inform public and private leaders and the general public on the background of and range of policy options for a given issue. The American Assembly achieves these objectives by commissioning and issuing research and publications and sponsoring meetings that bring together a broad spectrum of interests who represent different views. The American Assembly meeting process has been adapted for local use. In Florida, the John Scott Dailey Florida Institute of Government (IOG) at Florida Atlantic University (FAU), part of a statewide consortium of university affiliates, uses a modified version of Columbia University's American Assembly process to bring together a cross-section of the key players in a community to discuss major issues of concern to public officials, establish a shared vision for the future, and develop policy recommendations for moving toward that goals of the vision. The format exposes participants to a variety of viewpoints while fostering face-to-face communication and compromise. Since 1982, the IOG, in conjunction with FAU's Center for Urban and Environmental Solutions, has coordinated or assisted with the coordination of over 40 assemblies; the most recent was a follow-up assembly for the city of Boynton Beach held in October 2006.

For additional information about the IOG's consensus-building assemblies, go to www.fau.edu/fiog; to find out about the American Assembly, go to www.americanassembly.org/about.dir/taa_process.php.

Charrettes

In community and regional planning, a charrette is used to bring together a group of

THE BOYNTON BEACH ASSEMBLY: COMMITTING TO OUR FUTURE

In 2006, FAU's Institute of Government coordinated the Boynton Beach Assembly: Committing to Our Future, a follow-up to the 1996 Boynton Vision 20/20 assembly. The assembly is a part of the city's public and civic leaders' ongoing efforts to enhance the city's quality of life and to involve residents in planning for the future. Assembly participants, representing a wide variety of interests, established a shared vision for the future of Boynton Beach and policy recommendations for moving the city in the desired direction. The topics addressed included community relations and governance, economic development and neighborhood revitalization, infrastructure, and education and community services. Follow-up procedures and implementation were also discussed. *(More information is available from www.fau.edu/fiog. The assembly Policy Statement is available at www.fau.edu/fiog/documents/BOYNTON%20POLICY%20STOct%2030.pdf.)*

THE TREASURE COAST REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL (TCRPC) CHARRETES

Since 1989, the Urban Design Studio of the TCRPC has been providing town planning and urban design assistance upon request to local governments in the Treasure Coast region and, more recently, in other areas of the state. The charrettes have been used to develop design guidelines, comprehensive plan amendments, traffic calming measures, and land development codes. They also have been used to develop a wide variety of plans (for example, for downtowns and town centers, redevelopment areas, single- and multiple-jurisdiction road corridors, water fronts, marinas, neighborhoods, greyfields, and regions). The TCRPC provides charrette training and publishes a brochure that describes the charrette process. *(For more information on the TCRPC's charrettes, go to www.tcrpc.org/departments/studio.html.)*

designers, planners, public officials, and citizens to develop a design or planning solution to a problem (or to take advantage of an opportunity). The term, which applies to an intense period of design activity, draws from the design profession. It goes back to the 19th century in Paris when architecture and art students worked intensely to finish their final work product in time to put it on a cart (a charrette) that came around to collect their final drawings.


Charrettes can be used for many different types of planning projects. They can be used to develop a regional plan, rewrite development regulations and update comprehensive plans, design a new community or specific development, develop a downtown or neighborhood plan, prepare redevelopment plans, and design affordable housing. A charrette can also be used to design an individual building. Just as a charrette can apply to many different types of planning and design projects, it can be used by many different types of organizations and disciplines. In Florida, where they have become a norm in local planning, charrettes are used by planning and design firms, local governments and public agencies, Community Redevelopment Agencies, private landowners and developers, citizen- and neighborhood-based organizations, and non-governmental organizations.

Inclusion and collaboration are a hallmark of the charrette process. They are open to all interested parties, and the planning process is designed to create a working environment that helps participants find common ground. Two other hallmarks of the charrette process are the use of visual images, which helps participants understand issues and find solutions, and the involvement of multiple disciplines (for example, an urban designer, an ecologist, an economist, and a transportation engineer) to provide a holistic view of the issues and solutions. The result is a shared vision for the project that is the subject of the charrette and an implementation plan for how to achieve that vision. A charrette will typically occur over a period of several days, ranging from a one-day to a week-long or longer workshop. The workshop can be a one-time event or involve multiple meetings over a period of time. Whatever the length of time, a successful charrette involves significant pre-event homework getting to know the community and the issues and lot of post-event attention to implementation.

EAST STUART REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

The East Stuart community is a 100-acre neighborhood adjacent to downtown Stuart and part of the city's Community Redevelopment Area. The neighborhood master redevelopment plan was created during a 2004 seven-day public charrette, the first under the TCRPC's Urban Design Assistance Grant Program to aid in the redevelopment and revitalization of the region's distressed communities. The objective of the charrette was to create a master framework plan to facilitate development and investment in private land and public infrastructure, preserve the community's heritage, and enhance its livability and sense of unity. Participants included property and business owners, city staff, elections officials, and over 100 residents. The intent of the plan was to enhance the neighborhood's small town attributes and good physical structure by rectifying problems related to the damaging effects of speeding traffic, drug and social problems, neglected buildings, and lack of a neighborhood retail main street center. *(For more information on the East Stuart charrette and Redevelopment Plan, go to www.tcrpc.org/departments/studio/east_stuart_charrette/e_stuart_home.htm.)*

Charrettes provide multiple benefits. They involve and help educate the community and public officials and agencies whose support is needed for a project or new planning approach. They promote communication and trust among participants and build an advocacy group that will support and promote the vision that results from the charrette, which makes adopting charrette-based plans easier for public officials and provides a built-in constituency group to monitor implementation. And the plan that results from a charrette is often a better and more feasible plan because of the diverse input and involvement, meaning all the relevant issues have been thought of and addressed. Charrettes also create a way to market a plan because they are highly visual and participatory.

 For more information on charrettes, go to *the Congress for the New Urbanism* [www.cnu.org] and *the National Charrette Institute* [www.charretteinstitute.org].

Consensus Solutions

Florida communities are increasingly turning to facilitated consensus-based planning processes to de-conflict the public policy decision-making process. Through processes designed to find consensus solutions, governments and civic organizations can help bring together previously conflicting parts of the community and avoid stalling a planning process through the polarization of those with different views. Consensus solutions can help bridge the gap between different perspectives within and across organizations using the different skills and knowledge of participants. Consensus solutions recognize that not all decisions will satisfy everyone and that complete unanimity is not the goal. The goal is to find a solution that members of the group can accept because all views have been heard and considered in a decision-making process that is considered fair by all participants.


Finding a consensus solution involves the use of a trained facilitator to help a group of stakeholders with diverse perspectives and personalities move past their positions, seek common ground, and agree on solutions. Important features of a consensus solution-based planning process include providing participants with a safe environment where they can build trust by having time to develop a

CENTRAL BROWARD EAST-WEST TRANSIT ANALYSIS

As Broward County nears full-build, and traditional road-based solutions to congestion are less and less viable, county officials have initiated a number of transit analyses along critical corridors in order to consider alternatives for improving mobility. One of these projects was the Central Broward East-West Transit Analysis, a project of District 4 of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT). When the Broward County Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) selection of preferred light rail alignment (NW 136th Street) was met with neighborhood concerns, the MPO turned to the Institute for Community Collaboration to design and facilitate the Western Terminus Working Group (WTWG). The charge of the WTWG, composed of representatives of the affected neighborhoods and business interests, was to involve interested parties in identifying alternative routes to NW 136th Street. Project and FDOT staff provided data and analysis about the factors involved in designating a route. After several months of meetings, the WTWG reached consensus on two routing options for further detailed evaluation. Following a public workshop where the consensus options were presented for comment and evaluation, the Broward MPO accepted the WTWG's alignment as the locally preferred alternative. (*More information on the WTWG and the East-West Transit Analysis is available from www.centralbrowardtransit.com.*)

positive relationship and create open lines of communication with other participants, and giving participants access to objective, sound information early in the process. A successful consensus building process also creates an atmosphere where participants' views can be heard, respected, and fully considered by the full group. Another important feature is the use of a skilled, neutral facilitator who is viewed as having no stake in the outcome and who can encourage participants to listen for and find common ground as stakeholders work together to assess the trade-offs of various decision alternatives and examine options.

In Florida, the Florida Conflict Resolution Consortium (FCRC) is one of the primary sources on consensus solutions. The FCRC's mission is to bring people together to facilitate consensus solutions to Florida's public problems. It provides neutral technical assistance and training to a wide range of professionals, agency staff, and citizens engaged in solving public problems throughout Florida. It also designs processes for intergovernmental collaboration, community and public problem-solving, and land use and environmental dispute resolution, and serves as a broker connecting stakeholders with dispute resolution professionals. The FCRC is based at Florida State University and has a regional office at the University of Central Florida in Orlando. Another Florida organization that provides assistance with building consensus solutions is the Institute for Community Collaboration (ICC), a nonprofit organization based at the South Florida Regional Planning Council. The ICC's mission is to help citizens, organizations, and communities reach consensus on their goals and strategies through collaboration. It provides neutral process design, facilitation, and mediation services to groups throughout Florida. The ICC also partners with other organizations to develop creative solutions to challenging issues.


 For more information on consensus solutions, go to *the Florida Conflict Resolution Consortium* [<http://consensus.fsu.edu>] and *the Institute for Community Collaboration* [www.sfrpc.com/institute.htm]. Information is also available from *the National Policy Consensus Initiative* [www.policyconsensus.org].

PALM BEACH COUNTY AIRPORT I-95 EXCHANGE

When several affected neighborhoods objected to the Florida Department of Transportation granting a variance to the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) for the stormwater management system for a Palm Beach County International Airport interchange from I-95, the Florida Conflict Resolution Consortium was asked to facilitate a consensus solution. (The interchange consisted of the construction of an interconnecting road system between I-95 and the airport. Several of the affected neighborhoods had petitioned for a hearing with the Division of Administrative Hearings to challenge the variance.) The FCRC, along with mediator Pat Bidol-Padva, used a combination of four settlement mediation sessions and one workshop that provided an opportunity for the neighborhood association and the agencies to jointly create an acceptable alternative that fulfilled the agencies' permitting requirements, FDOT's need to start construction, and the neighborhood's desire to eliminate an existing pond and replace it with a more acceptable stormwater management alternative. (*For more information on the Palm Beach County Airport I-95 Exchange project, go the FCRC's website [http://consensus.fsu.edu/staffarticles/Transportation_DR.pdf].*)

Scenario Development

Tools to help public officials and citizens understand alternative futures are increasingly used in community and regional planning and visioning processes. These tools can be used to understand alternative scenarios at the block or neighborhood scale to the city, region, or state scale. Most of these tools help participants in a planning process to understand the long-term aesthetic, economic, social, and environmental consequences of decisions under different assumptions or scenarios. In high-growth states like Florida, scenario tools are being used to understand alternative methods for accommodating population growth and new forms of development and redevelopment while at the same time maintaining valued community attributes. Scenario tools are also being used to help participants in a planning process understand how issues, such as transportation, land use, the environment, and public health, are interrelated and to understand, and balance, competing demands. Scenario tools can be used in the classroom and in public planning processes, and they can use simple build-it-yourself tools, board-type games, or the more sophisticated scenario analysis that GIS mapping brings.

 For more information on scenario development, go to the American Planning Association [www.planning.org]; the Congress for the New Urbanism [www.cnu.org]; the Local Government Institute [www.lgi.org]; PLACEMATTERS [www.placematters.org], discussed in *Technology Tools* below; and the Smart Communities Network [www.smartcommunities.ncat.org].

Box City

Box City provides a simple, low-tech technique to identify what participants value in their community and what they would like to see changed. The process uses basic art supplies (cardboard boxes, construction paper, and markers) to create a small replica of a city block or street corridor. Box City has been used by all ages, from young children to adults. It is a project of the Center for Understanding the Built Environment, which brings together educators with community partners to affect change that will lead to a quality built and natural environment. (For more information on Box City, go to www.cubekc.org.)

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Mapping

GIS is used to display and analyze spatial data that are tied to databases, combining maps with computer graphics and databases. That connection is what gives GIS its power: maps can be drawn from the database and place or spatial-tied data can be referenced from the maps. When a database is updated, the associated map can be updated as well. GIS databases include a wide variety of geographic, social, political, environmental, and demographic information. The information gained from GIS mapping can be a valuable tool for public officials and citizens as they make decisions related to their community. GIS, for example, can be used to make decisions about siting new facilities, creating hiking trails, protecting wetlands, directing emergency response vehicles, designating historic neighborhoods, or redrawing legislative districts. Another use of GIS is helping citizens and decision-makers understand alternative future scenarios under different conditions (for example, under different land use patterns or different sets of economic, environmental, or climate conditions). (For more information on the use of GIS in Florida, go to the Florida Chapter of the Urban and Regional Information Systems Association [www.flurisa.org], the Florida ERSI User Group [<http://feugonline.org/joomla>], the University of West Florida Department of Environmental Studies [www.uwf.edu/gis], and, in the Emerald Coast, the West

Florida Regional Planning Council [www.wfrpc.dst.fl.us]. Other sources of GIS information are GeoCommunity [www.geocomm.com], the Geography Network [www.geographynetwork.com/data/index.html], and the U.S. Geological Survey [www.usgs.gov/state/state.asp?State=FL].)

CommunityViz

CommunityViz is a GIS-based software that enables citizens to visualize, analyze, and talk about important land use decisions. Its interactive features provide users a way to create realistic 3D visual models of their world as it is and as it could be and to analyze choices about development, growth, and change over a period of time. CommunityViz was developed by the Orton Family Foundation to help people with different viewpoints and backgrounds engage in collaborative, informed, and equitable decision-making about their common future. (More information about CommunityViz is available from www.communityviz.com and from the Orton Family Foundation, www.orton.org.)

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INDEX is an integrated suite of interactive GIS planning support tools that can assess community conditions, design and visualize alternative planning scenarios, analyze and score their performance, and compare and rank alternatives. INDEX can also be used to monitor and evaluate the implementation of an adopted plan. INDEX can be purchased from Criterion in standard or custom versions. (Criterion is an urban and regional planning firm specializing in sustainable community development, which developed INDEX as a part of its work to create planning support systems for communities through software tools for land use, transportation, and environmental analysis.). One form of INDEX is Plan-Builder, an interactive tool for neighborhood-to-region scenario building with a comprehensive set of evaluation indicators emphasizing urban design and multi-modal travel. Another is Paint the Region, a tool for regional growth planning and visioning that allows users to sketch and evaluate land use and transportation scenarios.

1000 FRIENDS OF FLORIDA 2060 REPORT

1000 Friends of Florida's report, *Florida 2060: A Population Distribution Scenario for the State of Florida*, contains a series of compelling GIS-based images that depict what the state's land use might look like in 2020, 2040, and 2060, assuming current development patterns continue. Study conclusions highlight the impacts of the way Florida is growing on the state's natural resources: by 2060 approximately seven million acres of additional land will be converted from rural to urban uses, including 2.7 million acres of existing agricultural lands and 2.7 million acres of native habitat. More than two million acres within one mile of existing conservation lands will be converted to an urban use, which, the report underscores, will complicate the management of conservation lands and isolate some in a sea of urbanization. The images for the report were developed by the University of Florida's Geo-Facilities Planning and Information Research Center (GeoPlan). The GeoPlan Center has been involved in a wide variety of local, regional, and statewide planning projects in Florida. Next steps include developing a 50-year scenario that provides an alternative to the current trend scenario and following up on the recommended state leadership and citizen actions developed at the same time as the trend analysis by the Georgia Institute of Technology's Center for Quality Growth and Regional Development. (More information about the *Florida 2060* report is available from 1000 Friends of Florida [www.1000fof.org]. Information on the University of Florida's GeoPlan Center is available from www.geoplan.ufl.edu.)

INDEX Paint the Region is being used by the Committee for a Sustainable Emerald Coast to create and evaluate alternative growth scenarios for its four-county region. The future land use maps of the four Emerald Coast counties (Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, and Walton) have been composited in GIS form to create a regional growth canvas. Population and job growth are painted on this canvas by clicking on areas to assign new housing and employment. The resulting scenarios will then be scored by land use, transportation, and environmental indicators in order to compare the outcomes of different growth policies. In this way the tool helps stakeholders visualize future growth and judge its effects on the region's sustainability. INDEX has also been used in number of other communities and regions in Florida: the cities of Jacksonville, Palm Coast, and Tampa; Broward, Duvall, Indian River, Santa Rosa, and Seminole counties; and in three Regional Planning Council regions (West Florida, Northeast, and South Florida). *(For more information on INDEX, go to www.crit.com/index/index.html.)*

Land use Conflict Identification Strategy (LUCIS)

The LUCIS is a goal-driven GIS model that produces a spatial representation of probable patterns of future land use (conservation lands, urban lands, and agricultural lands) and areas of probable future conflict between those land uses. The LUCIS model results can be used to identify what lands are highly appropriate for future development, what lands should be reserved for conservation, and what lands should be set aside for agricultural production, information that is useful in developing alternative future land use scenarios for a community or region. The LUCIS model was developed over a period of ten years in a University of Florida graduate design studio for students from the departments of landscape architecture and urban and regional planning. It evolved as faculty and students searched for ways to use traditional land use suitability analysis as a basis for projecting future land use alternatives. When using the LUCIS model, participants take the role of different stakeholder groups and serve as advocates for their respective classification. Each group rates all lands in a defined study area for their relative suitability to support their land use classification (e.g., urban development, conservation, or agriculture). The results of the groups' discussions are compared to identify areas of potential conflict. The LUCIS model was used in the myregion.org regional visioning process (described later in this toolbox section), which used the model to build four of the five test scenarios for allocating future population. *(For information on the LUCIS, go to the University of Florida's GeoPlan Center [www.geoplan.edu].)*

CITY OF TAMPA INDEX PLANBUILDER

Tampa is using INDEX PlanBuilder to conduct an evaluation of its transportation concurrency exception areas citywide and to support corridor redevelopment planning in selected neighborhoods. The tool is being applied at the parcel level with a focus on urban design that promotes walking, biking, and transit use. Users are able to draw new parcels and blocks, create streets, bike paths, and transit routes, and assign land uses. These scenarios are then evaluated with up to 70 indicators measuring the built and natural environments. The city of Tampa was one of six Sustainable Community Projects selected by the Florida Department of Community Affairs to investigate the use of innovative strategies in the creation of more livable communities. *(More information on the city of Tampa's use of INDEX PlanBuilder is available from the city's Community Planning and Management Department [www.tampagov.net/dept_community_planning/documents.asp].)*

Reality Check

Reality Check is a one-day participatory regional visioning technique used by the Urban Land Institute (ULI). The workshops are designed to help participants envision where future growth in jobs and residents should be located and how that growth should occur. Participants use Lego® blocks to help guide their discussions. The Legos are placed on a regional map, and each Lego represents a certain number of new jobs and new residents. The findings from the day are summarized in a report and used as the foundation for future growth planning discussions and decisions. ULI offers a Reality Check guide for its District Councils. The guide provides an analysis of the importance of regional visioning and contains a step-by-step description of how to plan and carry out a Reality Check exercise. *(For more information on Reality Check, go to ULI [www.uli.org/realitycheckguide] and the National Center for Smart Growth Research and Education [www.smart-growth.umd.edu], which, along with the Urban Land Institute and the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, is a sponsor of Imagine Maryland [www.realitycheckmaryland.org], a Reality Check project.)*

Smart Growth Index

The Smart Growth Index is a planning tool offered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's smart growth program. The index is a GIS sketch model that can be used to simulate alternative land use and transportation scenarios and evaluate outcomes of the alternatives using environmental and community performance indicators. It has been used in a variety of planning processes, including regional growth management plans; land use, transportation, and neighborhood plans; development and environmental impact reports; and special projects, such as an analysis of brownfield redevelopment or an annexation. *(For more information on the Smart Growth Index, go to www.epa.gov/smart-growth/topics/sg_index.htm.)*


Study Circles

The Study Circles Resource Center (SCRC) is a national organization that helps local communities develop their own ability to organize large-scale and diverse participation in dialogue structured to support and strengthen measurable community change. SCRC works with neighborhoods, cities and towns, regions, and states, paying particular attention to the racial and ethnic dimensions of the problems they address. The organization has a proven track record of learning from communities to create

REALITY CHECK TAMPA BAY


The Urban Land Institute Tampa Bay District Council has partnered with the Tampa Bay Partnership Regional Research and Education Foundation, the Southwest Florida Water Management District, the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council, and the Tampa Bay Estuary Program to carry out Reality Check Tampa Bay. Representatives of the organizations make up an Executive Committee that is responsible for guiding Reality Check Tampa Bay's implementation. Although Reality Check is a one-day exercise designed to discuss, analyze, and develop alternative growth scenarios for the rapidly growing Tampa Bay region through 2050, it is part of a long-term regional visioning process that began over two years ago with the creation of Vision21, an effort led by the Tampa Bay Partnership. Vision21 compiled research on current and past visioning efforts from the seven-county region and most recently commissioned a values study with the Century Commission for a Sustainable Florida. The Vision21 Steering Committee will use the findings of Reality Check, along with other community input and professional scenario development, to create an initial long-term vision for the region. *(More information on Reality Check Tampa Bay is available from <http://tampabay.uli.org>.)*

innovative tools and processes. SCRC provides advice and training, using what we learn to benefit other communities. SCRC was created in 1989 by The Paul J. Aicher Foundation, a national, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization. Since 1989, SCRC has worked with more than 400 communities across the United States on many different public issues.

 For more information on study circles, go to www.studycircles.org.

Technology Tools

A wide variety of technology tools is being used to help citizens become more informed about public policy issues and choices and more engaged in public planning processes. Many technology tools enable citizens to visualize alternative scenarios and, therefore, to better understand and reach consensus on their community's full potential and the trade-offs of alternative policies and planning practices. Because technology allows much broader access to planning information and decision-making processes, web-based and electronic tools are being used to enable a far greater number of citizens (and students) to be involved in planning for their communities, listen and learn from those with different views, and reach consensus on important community issues. A sampling of those tools is provided below. A primary source of information on the wide variety of technology-based planning and decision-making tools is the Orton Family Foundation. The foundation provides comprehensive information on technology planning tools, provides direct assistance to help communities assess their needs, and advises communities on the appropriate tools to use and how to use them. It also works with teams of planning innovators to conduct research on and test new technologies and tools. Another source of information is PLACEMATTERS (an independent affiliate of the Orton Family Foundation), which provides access to a wide range of technology resources and convenes technology practitioners and users to share and demonstrate information on the use of existing tools and the development of new tools. PLACEMATTERS, with the financial support of the Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities, hosts a website that enables communities (their professional planners, public agencies, and concerned citizens) to identify tools and processes for better community design and decision making.

 For more information on the use of technology tools, go to the Orton Family Foundation [www.orton.org] and to PLACEMATTERS [www.placematters.org] and its website with tools for community design and

THE JACKSONVILLE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

The Jacksonville Human Rights Commission is using Study Circles to make a difference in race relations. Their Study Circles consist of a diverse group of 10 to 15 city residents sitting in a circle and meeting for two hours at a regular time for a period of five weeks. Two trained facilitators lead an in-depth discussion on race relations, and Study Circle participants share stories of their lives – a way to see how people from different backgrounds see the world. Action Forums provide an opportunity for participants to meet members from other Study Circles and work on recommendations about how to improve race relations within the community. Forum results include the creation of committees for Community and Police Relations, Media Relations, Corporate and Leadership Initiatives, and School-based and Faith-based Initiatives; a multicultural reading group and cookbook; a media orientation program; and the Jacksonville Leadership Forum, a diverse group of Jacksonville business leaders who meet regularly to ensure all of Jacksonville's businesses are included in the city's economic development. (More information on Jacksonville's Study Circles is available from www.coj.net/departments/human+rights+commission/default.htm.)

decision-making [www.smartgrowthtools.org]. A descriptive list of technology tools can be viewed at www.placematters.org/index.php?option=com_wrapper&Itemid=58. The Smart Growth Gateway [http://smartgrowthgateway.org/planning_computer.shtml] also has a listing of computer tools and software for interpreting land use data and evaluating planning alternatives.

AmericaSpeaks

AmericaSpeaks is a national non-profit organization that engages citizens in public policy decisions. It designs and facilitates deliberative methods such as the 21st Century Town Meeting™, which can bring hundreds or thousands of participants together with decision-makers. Facilitated small roundtable discussion groups submit ideas to the whole group using wireless groupware computers. Participants hear the strongest themes generated from table discussions and then each person can vote on specific proposals using a polling keypad. Before the meeting ends, results from the meeting are compiled into a report, which is distributed to participants, the media, and decision-makers. Through its consulting services, AmericaSpeaks also offers citizen engagement training, conducts needs assessments, and facilitates meetings. (For more information on AmericaSpeaks, go to www.americaspeaks.org.)

Community Planning Centers (CPC)

CPCs are customized websites designed by Partners for Public Spaces (PPS) to involve local people more directly and effectively in a public space project. (PPS is a nonprofit organization founded in 1975 to focus on creating and sustaining public spaces that build communities.) Each CPC website is designed to fit the goals of the project and is linked to the resources on PPS's website. In addition to including information on the project and its sponsors, the websites provide a variety of interactive ways for people to give input and to get involved (for example, take a survey either via email or on the website itself, gather opinions and ideas from website visitors on a comment page, participate in discussion forums, view and add to the results of community workshops, or use the site to donate money or find volunteer opportunities). The intent is to give a voice to people in a community and to allow them to share information and ideas about the development or revitalization of a place. (For more information on PPS and its Community Planning Centers, go to www.pps.org.)

Limehouse Software

Limehouse Software provides web-based publishing and citizen participation solutions by allowing users to automate the production of complex reports, plans, and documents. Through the Limehouse software, users can publish to a PDF, Web or CD-ROM format and instantly run online consultation,

GULF COAST AMERICASPEAKS

After the hurricanes of 2004, AmericaSpeaks partnered with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to develop and facilitate four public meetings in Charlotte, DeSoto, and Hardee counties. The meetings were designed to develop an understanding of the priorities of those most impacted by the hurricanes. A combination of gallery walks, facilitated table dialogues, and keypad polling gathered participant feedback and recommendations about revitalizing the economy, building housing, and developing downtowns and highway corridors. FEMA used these citizen priorities to strengthen its work in each county and work with its federal and state government partners, who participated in the planning process, to find dedicated funding sources for the prioritized recovery activities. (More information on the Gulf Coast town meetings is available from the AmericaSpeaks case study at www.americaspeaks.org/projects/index.htm.)

questionnaires, and public forums, which helps with meeting citizen participation requirements. *(More information on Limehouse Software is available from www.limehousesoftware.com.)*

Meetingworks

Meetingworks is used by governments and businesses as a real-time electronic local or remote forum for connecting teams. The technology allows participants in a room or in locations across the world to collaborate as a group. Users can use Meetingworks to brainstorm ideas; offer input and comment on different topics; organize a discussion; view electronic flip charts; and categorize, evaluate (or reevaluate), and prioritize ideas, as part of building a consensus. In addition to its electronic meeting software package, Meetingworks offers consulting and facilitating services to streamline collaboration. Public sector examples of Meetingworks include gathering public or target group input to help formulate action plans, prioritizing projects, and reaching consensus on goals and strategies as a part of the strategic planning process. *(For more information on Meetingworks, go to www.meetingworks.com.)*

Neighborhood America

The mission of Neighborhood America is to set technology standards for interactive content management. Its website describes Neighborhood America as a web-based platform that enables users to build communities with their audience. The platform can be used to collect and manage all forms of interaction and data and build social networks that support an organization's goals, reputation, and brand. Governments use the Neighborhood America platform to capture and manage public comments in a form that is credible, reportable, and representational, enabling them to make informed decisions based on citizen input. *(For more information on Neighborhood America, go to www.neighborhoodamerica.com.)*

SFWMD WEB CONFERENCING

As part of its work to restore the Everglades, the SFWMD is using the IBM-Neighborhood America Public Comment platform to enable an interactive dialogue between citizens and government agencies. Because of the ability to interact through the web, interested parties can offer observations and suggestions before plans are finalized. The SFWMD web bulletin boards enable people with a web browser to offer comments from anywhere at any time. The Public Comment technology also allows the project management team to easily collect and manage the feedback. The SFWMD's goal is to foster communication globally and locally and bring geographically dispersed people together to solve problems, pursue common interests, and provide review and comments. *(More information on the SFWMD's use of web conferencing is available from www.neighborhoodamerica.com/docs/SuccessStoryEverglades.pdf and www.sfwmd.gov/site/index.php?id=734.)*

COOPER CITY HIGH SCHOOL URBAN PLAN

In April 2005, a class of seniors at Cooper City High School completed a final quarter Urban Plan class taught by an economics and legal teacher. The class was sponsored by the ULI Southeast Florida/Caribbean District Council, with support from Bank of America. The Urban Plan program has continued to be used by Cooper City High School and is being expanded to other high schools in Miami-Dade and Broward counties. Urban Plan is also used in Orlando under the sponsorship of the Orange County ULI District Council. *(More information on the Cooper City Urban Plan program is available from the Southeast Florida/Caribbean District Council of the Urban Land Institute at www.seflorida.uli.org/initiatives.htm. Information on the Orlando Urban Plan program is available from <http://orangecounty.uli.org/IAM/Template.cfm?Section=Home5>.)*

Urban Plan

Urban Plan is a web-supported program used in high school classrooms to teach students about the roles, issues, trade-offs, and economics involved in urban development and to encourage them to think critically about land use issues. The program, which provides hands-on experiences with developing realistic land use solutions, was developed by the Urban Land Institute with the Fischer Center for Real Estate and Urban Economics at the University of California at Berkeley and a team of high school economics and government teachers. *(For more information about Urban Plan, go to the Urban Land Institute [www.urbanplan.org].)*

Visioning

A visioning process is a tool that brings public officials, residents, and businesses together to discuss major issues facing their community and collectively decide what that community's future should look like and the action steps needed to achieve that future. Visioning exercises usually include a representative cross-section of the key stakeholders in the area and allow participants to brainstorm and discuss options without the constraints of many kinds of planning processes. Visioning processes have been successful in exposing participants to a variety of viewpoints while fostering face-to-face communication and compromise and enabling communities to reach consensus on their desired future.


In Florida, visioning processes have been used in a variety of geographic areas (a small or large town, rural community, neighborhood, new community, and region) and to address one or more issues. Florida visioning processes are sponsored by a number of organizations, including governments, developers, and civic groups, and have been used to develop visions for a variety of projects, including downtown improvements, neighborhood redevelopment, new communities, road corridors, trails and greenways, waterfronts, and ports. The design of a visioning project should be tailored to the need of the individual community and the type of visioning project and desired outcomes. Important features of a visioning project include getting to know the community and issues first (the homework stage), being inclusive of all views, helping participants to first agree on the facts (the existing condi-

MYREGION.ORG HOW SHALL WE GROW?

Created in 1999, myregion.org is an organization of citizens and leaders from the public, private, and civic sectors working together to prepare the central Florida region to compete more effectively while enhancing the quality of life of its citizenry. In 2006, myregion.org, along with five regional and state partners, initiated a 15-month regional visioning process called How Shall We Grow? The result will be a 50-year vision that includes a set of principles to guide future growth, indicators to measure progress toward implementation of those principles, a related preferred development scenario, and a regional policy framework needed to achieve the vision. The preferred scenario will be the result of a series of community sessions and on-line surveying that enable citizens to compare alternative future scenarios to a trend scenario. Each scenario assumes the same population growth but differs in how the growth is accommodated. The visioning process will conclude with an August 2007 Community Summit that will seek agreement on a set of consensus-based actions. Project funding came from regional partners and the Florida Departments of Community Affairs and Transportation, which plan to use the visioning project as a model for other areas of the state. *(More information on the How Shall We Grow project is available from www.myregion.org.)*

tions and where the community is headed if current trends continue), and involving a lot of communication both into and out of the process. A successful visioning process also uses visual tools that quickly communicate an issue or solution and help participants understand and choose among different scenarios for the future, and enables participants to take a long-term view, thus helping communities avoid the unintended consequences of incremental decisions. A test of a successful visioning process is that it builds a constituency group that understands the issues and the vision and that will become vision-champions when it is time for implementation.

The Florida Department of Community Affairs (DCA) provides assistance with visioning processes. This assistance reflects the increased emphasis in Florida on visioning and the optional provisions of Section 163 of the Florida Statutes that provides incentives for visioning. DCA is working with a number of pilot communities to assist them in implementing the optional provisions of Section 163.3177(13) and (14), F.S., thus providing local governments with the regulatory relief contemplated by the statute. The assistance includes technical support in conducting community visioning meetings and making computer-based planning tools available to assist with the visioning effort. Based on these demonstration projects, the department will develop guides to assist communities and their citizens in understanding and applying best practices in community visioning. DCA also has visioning how-to's on its website, including frequently asked questions, a list of visioning initiatives, visioning handouts and presentations, and links to other websites.

 For more information on visioning, go to the Florida Department of Community Affairs [www.dca.state.fl.us/fdcp/dcp/visioning/index.cfm], the Urban Land Institute [www.uli.org], and the American Planning Association [www.planning.org].


Visual Surveys

Visual surveys are used by communities to help decision-makers and citizens understand and address community design, land use, and transportation issues. Using a workshop format, the surveys take participants through a series of images of design characteristics selected to help them evaluate the exist-

IMAGINE JACKSON

Imagine Jackson was a countywide visioning project in Jackson County in Florida's Panhandle. The goal was to encourage citizens from all areas of the county to come together to understand current conditions, if current trends continued, to declare what kind of county they wanted for the future, and to contribute ideas for how their desired future could be achieved. The visioning process was designed to give citizens an opportunity to contribute their ideas regardless of where they lived, what they did, or whether they could take part in the visioning events. In addition to community-based workshops and forums, visualization techniques, such as participant photographs of community likes and dislikes and a community character map, were used to help residents indicate what they liked about their community. Other tools included a widely distributed survey and an interactive website to give residents another way to contribute ideas. The result was that 1,000-plus county residents contributed ideas to the vision, which sets out a 20-year blueprint for future actions to enhance the lives of people in all areas of the county. Imagine Jackson received a Promising Practices Award from the Council for a Sustainable Florida. (For more information on Imagine Jackson, go to www.imagineejackson.org.)

ing environment and envision their community's future. The visual preference survey technique was developed by architect Anton Nelessen. The Local Government Commission (LGC) has built on the Nelessen model with its Community Image Survey (CIS). The survey, which is tailored to the needs of the community, typically consists of multiple slides that depict design features such as streets, parks, public spaces and buildings, houses, and office and retail buildings. Another technique to help participants identify likes and dislikes is a photo exercise. Each participant is given a disposable camera to take photographs of likes and dislikes. All the photos are combined in an annotated montage that depicts what residents like and do not like about their community.

 For more information on visual preference surveys and the LGC's Community Image Survey, go to www.lgc.org/services/index.html or to www.smartcommunities.ncat.org/toolkit/TCDDM/Nelessen.htm.

SOUTH FLORIDA VISUAL SURVEY USES

Both the South Florida Regional Planning Council (SFRPC) and the TCRPC use visual surveys as a part of their planning work. The SFRPC is a licensed CIS user. It has used CIS in a variety of planning processes, including illustrating how dense, more compact development can work and introducing how good design can be used to integrate affordable housing into existing areas. The TCRPC uses visual surveys as a tool in its charrettes and workshops. Examples include helping Martin County select architectural styles and define open space and assisting participants in the nine charrettes for the SFRPC-TCRPC Broward County State Road 7 corridor master planning process select street furniture. (More information on these uses is available from the SFRPC at www.sfrpc.org and from the TCRPC at www.tcrpc.org/departments/studio.html.)

BENCHMARKING TOOLS



To remain competitive in a rapidly changing environment, more and more communities and regions are using tools to evaluate progress in a selected set of issues over a period of time and to determine where they stand relative to similar areas. Such tools include community scorecards and audits and community indicators. They can be used to measure where a community is today (the current conditions) and where it is going (the change over time) for either a comprehensive set of issues or a specific issue such as the environment, health care, or economic wealth. Those tools can also be used to assess how a community or region stacks up against similar areas and identify areas for improvement. The idea of regularly evaluating progress against measurable benchmarks or peer organizations is not a new concept. Benchmarking is a process used by successful businesses to identify performance improvement areas by evaluating aspects of their processes in relation to best practices and by comparing operating performance against that of their peers. *(Information on benchmarking tools is available from a variety of organizations, including the Community Indicators Network [www.communityindicators.net], the Sustainable Communities Network [www.sustainable.org], and in Florida, the Center for Urban and Environmental Solutions at Florida Atlantic University [www.cuesfau.org].)*

Community Indicators


Community indicators enable a community to understand where it has been and where it is going and identify areas for improvement to achieve a different outcome. Indicator projects use measurable data to shed light on trends (both positive and negative) for a current issue or, more typically, for a combination of issues that affects a community's quality of life and economic well-being. The issues tracked in a community indicators project vary by region, based on the driving issues and the important community values. They can measure, for example, economic, environmental, social, educational, and health trends. By tracking trends and progress on important community issues and goals, community indicators provide a focal point for a community dialogue about long-term planning needs and provide the basis for more informed policy decisions. Another value of indicator projects is to show how one issue relates to another (for example, less walkable communities and higher traffic or more air pollution), which, in turn, can result in a more comprehensive understanding of the issues and can create partnerships between diverse organizations that come together to address a linked cluster of issues. In some communities, community indicator projects are tied to the local decision-making process.

A number of communities and regions in Florida sponsor an indicator initiative. In addition to the CUES' South Florida Regional Indicators Project, there are indicator projects sponsored by the Jacksonville Community Council (one of the earliest indicator projects in 1985), myregion.org in Orlando, Tampa-Hillsborough County, Pinellas County, Sarasota County, the Tampa Bay Partnership, and the Pensacola Bay Area Chamber of Commerce. To further the work of Florida's regions in measuring their progress, CUES convenes the Florida Indicators Network (FIN) to share ideas and build cross-region relationships. The FIN, now in its third year, is working to establish a common set of indicators to measure progress throughout the state. Also at the state level, Enterprise Florida (the state's economic development organization) publishes a set of statewide economic indicators. At the national level, a number of organizations provide information on establishing an indicators project. Among them are the Community Indicator Consortium, which serves as a resource on indicators by facilitating the exchange of information among those interested in or engaged in the field of community indicators, and the Alliance for Regional Stewardship (ARS), which provides technical support for community indicator initiatives through its Regional Indicators Affinity Group. ARS also publishes a monograph, *Regional Indicators: Telling Stories, Measuring Trends, Inspiring Action*.

SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL INDICATORS PROJECT

The South Florida Regional Indicators Project is sponsored by the Center for Urban and Environmental Solutions (CUES) at Florida Atlantic University. Since its first indicators report in 2001, CUES has published three additional reports that track environmental, economic, and social trends in South Florida, a seven-county region extending from Monroe County to the south to Indian River County to the north. The Indicators project is a part of CUES' regional initiative program designed to build a strong capacity to meet regional needs and build a greater awareness of the need to act regionally to solve the complex problems facing the region. The most recent report, *Charting the Course: Where Is South Florida Heading?*, was released in early 2006. As with the prior reports, that publication provides performance trends for key indicators in each of the three region-binding forces of place, economy, and people. It also compares South Florida with other Florida regions. Expert comments provide insights into future needs and potential choices. *(More information is available from www.soflo.org.)*

Four other resource organizations are the International Sustainability Indicators Network, which publishes the Compendium of Sustainable Development Indicator Initiatives; Partners for Livable Communities; the Sustainable Communities Network, which hosts a web-based listing of indicator projects; and the Redefining Progress Community (RPC) Indicators Project. RPC provides links to existing and emerging indicator projects and facilitates the development of community indicators initiatives nationwide. RPC provides technical support, publishes a *Community Indicators Handbook*, and hosts an e-mail-based discussion group and a database directory of 200 community indicators projects around the United States. The Jacksonville Community Council also provides resource information on indicators through its *Jacksonville Indicators Manual*.

 *More information on community indicators is available from the Alliance for Regional Stewardship [www.regionalstewardship.org], the Center for Urban and Environmental Solutions at FAU [www.cuesfau.org or www.softo.org], Enterprise Florida [www.eflorida.com], the Community Indicators Consortium [www.communityindicators.net], the International Sustainability Indicators Network [www.sustainabilityindicators.org], the Jacksonville Community Council [www.jcci.org], Redefining Progress [www.redefiningprogress.org], Partners for Livable Communities [www.livable.com], and the Sustainable Communities Network [www.sustainable.org/creating/indicators.html].*


Community Scorecards and Audits

A community scorecard or audit is a qualitative monitoring tool used by citizens and public officials to evaluate how well existing policies, projects, and plans meet a set of defined principles or to monitor progress in selected topic areas. One use is to evaluate a local government's service in selected areas (for example, fire protection, public safety, land use planning practices, or provision of open space and parks). A scorecard can also be utilized to evaluate community livability, using factors such as neighborhood walkability, the quality of civic spaces, protection of natural systems, and the usability of transit, or to examine the potential benefits and drawbacks of development proposals. The livability factors evaluated are generally drawn from features that residents have said that they value in their community. A scorecard project, which should be designed for easy citizen use, can be sponsored by a variety of organizations, including a local or state government, regional agency, or a nonprofit civic organization. A number of entities provide information on community scorecards that evaluate how a community grows. They include the Growth Management Leadership Alliance, Smart Growth America, the Smart Growth Network, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, which publishes

SCOPE COMMUNITY REPORT CARDS

Sarasota, Florida's SCOPE (Sarasota County Openly Plans for Excellence) engages the community in planning for excellence. One of its projects is an annual Community Report Card that is used to increase an understanding of the county. The annual report contains over 100 community indicators that cross many facets of community life and cover a broad range of topics. SCOPE involves citizens in selecting the type of indicators that are reported. The 2006 report covers eight topic areas (civic participation, culture and recreation, economy, health and medical care, learning, natural environment, social environment, and transportation and mobility). It also analyzes trends from 2000 and the status of the county compared to the state. *(More information is available from www.scopexcel.org.)*

the Smart Growth INDEX (SGI). SGI can be used to increase community understanding of the effects of development alternatives on the local and regional quality of life, provide input for new development alternatives, and demonstrate the environmental benefits of pursuing smart growth strategies.

 *More information on community scorecards is available from the American Planning Association [www.planning.org], the Growth Management Leadership Alliance [www.gmla.org], Smart Growth America [www.smartgrowthamerica.org], the Smart Growth Network [www.smartgrowth.org], and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency [www.epa.gov].*

BROWARD BENCHMARKS

The Broward Benchmarks is a project of the Coordinating Council of Broward (CCB), which works to initiate and support more collaborative systems that more efficiently and effectively serve community needs. The benchmarks were established to assess Broward County's progress in addressing the most urgent of these needs. The nearly 300 indicators are organized into seven sections: families and communities, safety, learning, health, economy, environment, and government. Data are collected every two years through public opinion surveys and through updating secondary data developed by stakeholder groups that have volunteered to be responsible for tracking certain indicators. The South Florida Regional Planning Council prepares the benchmark document and updates indicators for which no stakeholder group has taken responsibility. *(For more information on The Broward Benchmarks, go to www.theccb.org.)*

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