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**Subject to modifications**

TREASURE COAST REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

MEMORANDUM

To: Council Members

AGENDA ITEM 9

From: Staff

Date: July 20, 2007 Council Meeting

Subject: Council's Energy Planning Guide - Update

Introduction

In December 1999, Council adopted an energy planning guide, *Energy Planning in the Twenty-First Century, A Guide for Florida Communities* (attached). The document includes major sections dealing with coordinated energy planning, energy efficiency and conservation, greater use of solar and other clean alternative energy resources, sustainable communities and patterns of development, energy efficient buildings, and energy efficient transportation systems. The guide is intended to enhance awareness of energy issues and lead to a cleaner environment, more sustainable forms and patterns of development, and a higher quality of life.

The energy planning guide was last updated in January 2003. Since that time, a number of significant energy-related events have taken place, including the release of *Florida's Energy Plan* by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection in January 2006, and two major statewide conferences in 2007 focusing on global climate change. The strategies to address climate change include increased reliance on clean and renewable energy, energy efficiency and conservation, efficient transportation and land use, and the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Considering recent events, this appears to be a good time to revisit Council's energy planning efforts. The purpose of this report is to review Council's energy planning guide and discuss strategies for updating this document.

Background

In October 1997, Council directed staff to assemble an energy task force to assist in developing an energy element for the *Strategic Regional Policy Plan* (SRPP). The task force developed a draft energy element, which was presented to Council in December 1998. At the direction of the Council, staff also pursued efforts to amend Chapter 186.507, Florida Statutes, to provide specific authorization to the regional planning councils to adopt an energy element as part of their SRPP. Staff was successful in having such a bill introduced and passed by the Florida Senate. However, when the bill went to

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the House Committee on Community Affairs, lobbyists opposed the bill and the legislation was unsuccessful.

Because of the difficulty in obtaining authorization from the Florida Legislature, Council decided that the most effective way to deal with energy issues was to adopt an advisory report to serve as an energy planning guide. Therefore, the draft energy element proposed for the SRPP was revised and transformed into *Energy Planning in the Twenty-First Century, A Guide for Florida Communities*.

### Considerations in Updating the Energy Planning Guide

The first consideration in updating the energy planning guide is to determine if Council prefers to establish an energy planning committee to be involved in the process. In the past, a number of board members have had a special interest in energy planning and enjoyed working closely with staff on energy planning issues. Although several tasks in updating the energy planning guide are relatively straight forward, such as revising the Florida energy statistics, rewriting the background sections, and updating the description of energy information sources, other tasks are more demanding, such as reconsidering the goals, strategies and policies. Board member participation on a committee would be a helpful approach to updating this section of the guide.

The second main consideration is to determine if Council would again like to pursue efforts to amend Chapter 186.507, Florida Statutes, to provide specific authorization to the regional planning councils to adopt an energy element as part of their SRPP. The Florida Regional Councils Association could lend support and may want to sponsor the necessary legislation. This may be a good time to reinstate this effort because it is likely to be very supportive of Florida's new strategies to address global climate change which are to be unveiled by Governor Charlie Crist at the Florida Summit on Global Climate Change on July 12-13, 2007.

Staff will present an overview of the strengths and weaknesses of Council's energy planning guide at the Council meeting, and will discuss other modifications that could be made to the document.

### Recommendations

Council should:

- 1) direct staff to update the energy planning guide;
- 2) authorize the Chair to appoint an energy planning committee from among the members of the board; and
- 3) pursue an amendment to the Florida Statutes in cooperation with the Florida Regional Councils Association that would authorize regional planning councils to adopt an energy element as part of the Strategic Regional Policy Plan.

Attachment