



AGENDA

Joint SFRPC/TCRPC Meeting 2008 Council Priorities



January 18, 2008

1. **Welcome**
2. **Introduction and Agenda Review**
3. **Florida Regional Councils Association Growth Management Policy Paper: Connecting Planning to Visioning - Michael Busha, TCRPC**
4. **Regional Visioning for the Treasure Coast and South Florida Regions - Mr. Peter Calthorpe**
5. **Creating a Legacy for the Region**
6. **Adjournment**

TREASURE COAST REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

MEMORANDUM

To: Council Members AGENDA ITEM 2

From: Staff

Date: Joint South Florida Regional Planning Council/Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council Meeting - January 18, 2008

Subject: Agenda Review -- A Discussion of Regional Visioning

Introduction

Today's agenda is built around having a discussion of regional visioning for the long term vitality and competitiveness of the seven counties that make up southeastern Florida. This is a complex region--made up of hundreds of unique communities, distinct cultures, and one-of-a-kind natural treasures. While each of these people and places possess unique qualities, they also share an intertwined economic and environmental destiny. We all rely on the same aquifers for water, breathe the same air, share many of the same natural resources which help to define our quality of life, travel daily through multiple cities, towns, and counties and share common pools of funding for roads, sewers and the essentials of modern life.

Background

Regional visioning is typically focused on two things: 1) determining a desired future condition that is realistically based upon a recognition of current conditions in the area and knowledge of broader trends affecting the area; and 2) laying out a plan of action for working towards this vision. As such visioning is a normative process; a desirable, but plausible future is charted and all those involved, regardless of jurisdictional boundaries, work towards and arrive at the desired future.

Analysis

While some form of "engaging the future" has been around for centuries, in recent decades local, regional, and state governments have turned to visioning and scenario planning in greater and greater numbers. Several notable regional visioning efforts in Florida are already underway that are successfully bringing together all levels of local government, the private sector, not for profit organizations and citizens to create a new road map for economic and environmental sustainability. The Florida Department of Community Affairs (DCA) is proposing new growth management legislation this session to task regional planning councils to undertake regional

DRAFT

Subject to modifications

visioning for updating their Strategic Regional Policy Plans (SRPP). The Century Commission for a Sustainable Florida has released a draft report recommending how and why regional visioning should be funded statewide as a way to chart a more sustainable course for Florida (Attachment A). The Association of Counties Committee on Growth, Environmental Planning and Agriculture has issued final policy statements this year supporting legislation requiring a 20-year vision for the future growth of Florida and establishing standards for regional planning councils to conduct regional visioning and update their SRPPs (Attachment B). In cooperation and consistent with all of these organizations and efforts, the Florida Regional Councils Association (FRCA) adopted its Framework for Planning Reform which advocates regional visioning statewide to form the basis of new SRPPs and a new State Plan (Attachment C). FRCA is continuing to work with DCA and others on introducing legislation this year to codify regional visioning as an important planning tool.

Conclusion

Regional visioning can be a very useful tool in charting a more sustainable course for the future. It leads to new collaborations between public and private organizations and citizens at all levels and a policy framework that spans multiple jurisdictions. Regional visioning can be a foundation upon which persistent institutional and jurisdictional barriers can be demolished and cooperative policies, programs, and investments can become the norm rather than the exception. Several regional visioning efforts are ongoing in the state. Key organizations including FRCA are working together to support regional visioning statewide. Both South Florida and Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council staffs would like the opportunity to work together on bringing forward a regional visioning effort that would encompass all seven counties.

Recommendation

The Treasure Coast and South Florida Regional Planning Councils should authorize their staffs to develop a draft work program for jointly carrying out and funding a regional visioning effort for Southeast Florida. The draft work program should be considered at the next joint Council meeting.

Attachments

A Coordinated, Statewide Regional Visioning Initiative for Florida [DRAFT]

Report Prepared for the
Century Commission for a Sustainable Florida

Rick Baker, Chair
Steve Seibert, Executive Director
Mary Oakley, Director of Research

December 14, 2007



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OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT

I have been tasked by the Century Commission with investigating and reporting on state and regional visioning efforts and determine whether a similar program should be undertaken in Florida. If so, I am to recommend how a program of *coordinated, statewide regional visioning* should be implemented in Florida, including a strategic plan for implementing a visioning planning process in the state.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

This report represents the final deliverable under a contract with the Century Commission. The first briefing introduced the project and laid out a workplan for the remainder of the project. The second briefing reviewed and presented evidence on regional visioning efforts in the United States. It also summarized the value of a regional visioning process and outlined why regional visioning would be particularly successful given the current Florida context.

This last briefing provides a strategic plan (or “road map”) that the Century Commission should follow if it chooses to back a state-coordinated regional visioning agenda. The report discusses:

1. *What visioning is and why it is valuable;*
2. *Why regional visioning makes sense for Florida;*
3. *Principles that should guide a regional visioning effort in Florida; and*
4. *A detailed strategic plan for pursuing regional visioning in Florida.*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Tim Chapin is an Associate Professor of Urban and Regional Planning at Florida State University. Chapin’s research interests are in the areas of growth management, comprehensive planning, and downtown redevelopment. He is the lead editor on a book entitled *Growth Management in Florida: Planning for Paradise* (Ashgate Press, 2007) which offers the first detailed assessment of the state’s landmark 1985 growth management legislation. He has published articles on these topics in the *Journal of the American Planning Association*, *Urban Affairs Review*, *Environment and Planning B*, *Coastal Management*, and the *Journal of Urban Affairs*.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

It has been well-documented that the state of Florida currently sits at a crossroads. One path takes the state down a path of continued urban sprawl, the development of environmentally sensitive lands and productive agricultural properties, increasing problems related to overcrowded roads and schools, and growing fiscal difficulties due to unsustainable patterns of development. Down this path lays a Florida that is less and less likely to be a national and international economic powerhouse, and a state known internationally for its mix of beautiful, natural places, fascinating urban centers, and unique tourist destinations. This path represents a continuation of current inefficient and expensive development patterns, wasteful expenditures on infrastructure and services, and the deterioration of the state's treasured natural environment.

Along another path lays a very different and much more desirable Florida. This Florida is one that continues to grow and innovate its economy, while simultaneously preserving its precious natural places and promoting the revitalization of its urban centers, small towns, and main streets. This is a Florida in which more people walk, bike, or take transit to work, where special urban and suburban settings are the norm and not the exception, and where the public sector is able to provide infrastructure and services in an efficient and economical manner. To embark upon this path requires a substantial shift in direction for the state, a commitment by all to not only envision a better future, but to act to work towards that future.

Over the last several decades the state has taken significant steps towards this more desirable future. In the 1970s and 1980s the Legislature passed several landmark environmental and planning pieces of legislation to shape and guide development in the state. Professionals in the public, private, and non-profit sectors have for decades implemented this legislation with skill, dedication and vigor. Florida has committed resources to conservation and affordable housing programs at levels the envy of almost every other state in the nation. A long-line of visionary governors have also continued to support the state's role in managing growth and working towards a vibrant, healthy, and sustainable Florida.

This report describes how a regional visioning initiative offers an excellent tool for more squarely placing the state of Florida on the path towards long-term environmental and economic

sustainability. At its core, regional visioning is a process for articulating a desirable, but plausible future and then identifying and implementing actions for working towards this desired future state. While Florida established a comprehensive planning process that was intended to serve as the vision for the state's communities, in reality comprehensive plans have over time evolved into administrative, technical documents. Comprehensive planning in Florida was also intended to break down barriers between communities, but in reality many existing plans only serve to reinforce parochial attitudes and practices. Lastly, a State Comprehensive Plan passed in the mid-1980s was intended to serve as the state's visionary document, one that could guide planning efforts at the regional and local levels, but it largely failed in this role and has provided almost no guidance to development in the state.

This report presents a strategic plan for a *coordinated, statewide regional visioning initiative*. This initiative is designed to address the fundamental shortcomings in the state's planning system. Regional visioning offers an opportunity to bring values back into Florida's planning process, re-establishing planning as a normative activity. Visioning also promotes inter-jurisdictional dialogue and cooperation, as well as stronger connections between currently disparate state and local efforts to manage growth, provide needed infrastructure, and protect environmental and agricultural lands. As detailed in this report, a visioning initiative would bring many benefits to an already robust planning environment. It is also important to recognize that visioning is already underway in many areas of the state, taking different forms and with different emphases. In short, there no better time for regional visioning in Florida.

Before moving on, it is essential that this strategic plan and the recommendations contained in this report be understood within the context of Florida's planning and growth management system. This report is **not**:

- *Intended as "just another state planning mandate"*: Florida is rife with planning mandates and requirements and this strategic plan does call for greater planning activity at the local and regional levels. However, unlike other mandates which are typically technical in nature, this initiative returns reflects an attempt to return planning to its normative roots. At its core, regional visioning is designed to yield answers to the following questions. What do citizens want their region to look like in the coming decades? What core values lay at the foundation

of this future? And, most importantly, what actions can and will be taken to work towards this future?

- *A veiled attempt to expand the power of the state:* While many of the recommendations in this plan call for an important state role in regional visioning efforts, a close reading of this strategic plan reveals this initiative to be a locally-driven process, one designed to empower local and regional governments. This strategic plan calls for state roles as funder and visionary, but the creation and implementation of the visions is largely left to the regions. If pursued as designed, this strategic plan also commits the state to support these visions through regulatory and financial means.
- *Intended, nor designed to stop growth in the state:* Simply stated, visioning is a process for envisioning a future in which desirable, sustainable economic growth is to be promoted and pursued. This strategic plan is designed to chart a future for the state that allows individuals, families, and firms to be economically successful. Given the growing evidence that economic growth is closely tied to the quality of life of an area, regional visioning actually offers an opportunity to enhance the state's competitiveness in the coming decades.

Overall, a coordinated statewide regional visioning initiative offers a great opportunity for Florida to more purposefully and more effectively “engage the future”. As detailed in this plan, regional visioning can provide a road map to economic and environmental sustainability, as well as an implementation agenda that brings together all levels of government, the private sector, non-profit organizations, and citizens in the pursuit of a desired future state. To be clear, regional visioning cannot and will not solve the state's problems. Nor will pursuing the visioning approach outlined in this strategic plan be quick, cheap, or easy. However, all evidence suggests that “big ideas” and “action” need to be married to bring about the change needed to catalyze the actions required to bring about a more sustainable Florida. This report was prepared in that spirit.

2.0 VISIONING RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation #1: Support a Coordinated, Statewide Regional Visioning Agenda

The Governor and Legislature should endorse and support a coordinated, statewide Regional Visioning Agenda by directing state agencies, regional planning entities, and local governments to undertake regional visioning as detailed in this strategic plan. Following from this:

- The Legislature should require the development of regional visions in all areas of the state, using a Conservation-Land Use-Transportation framework. (see Recommendation #2)
- The Governor should convene a group of state leaders and agency personnel to develop and establish “quality growth principles” to guide these regional visioning efforts. (see Recommendation #3)
- The Legislature should provide resources sufficient to support these efforts in every region of the state. (see Recommendation #4)
- The Legislature should require that local and regional plans be consistent with the regional visions created during the visioning process. (see Recommendation #5)
- The Legislature should require all state and regional agencies to act in accordance with regional visions. (see Recommendation #6)

Recommendation #2: Support the Development of Regional Visions for All Areas of the State

The Legislature should require visioning efforts in all regions of the state focused upon the core issues of Conservation, Land Use, and Transportation (CLUT). While many other issues are important to the long-term prospects of the state Florida (e.g. education, housing, water supply), a CLUT visioning framework focuses upon the fundamental issues of land development, environmental and agricultural protection, and transportation infrastructure provision. At its core, Florida’s long-term sustainability is predicated upon better urban development patterns, smarter infrastructure investments, and economical conservation initiatives.

Also, while there may be some interest in undertaking a “pilot” regional visioning effort in an area like the Heartland or western Panhandle, it is strongly recommended that the state either pursue a regional visioning agenda *in toto* or that it not pursue a statewide regional visioning program at all. The value of a coordinated program is that all regions concurrently undertake a state-guided visioning process and that these visions are developed and implemented in the same way.

Recommendation #3: Develop “Quality Growth Principles” for the State of Florida

The Governor should appoint a Quality Growth Task Force comprised of statewide leaders and higher-level staff from key state agencies to develop a core set of “quality growth principles”. At minimum, this committee requires representation from environmental, community building, and agricultural stakeholder groups. In addition, the following state agencies should also be represented in this Task Force: Agriculture and Community Services, Community Affairs, Environmental Protection, Fish and Wildlife, and Transportation. To move the regional visioning agenda forward this work needs to be completed relatively quickly, ideally no later than December 31, 2008.

Recommendation #4: Establish Regional Visioning as a Funded Initiative

The Legislature should appropriate resources sufficient to support a Regional Visioning initiative. All evidence indicates that a program of coordinated statewide regional visioning cannot be successful and should not be undertaken unless a sufficient, multi-year resource commitment is provided by the state. In reviewing the experience of other states and regions, successful visioning efforts are typically funded at levels up to \$1 million per year. However, because Florida has a well-established planning base and Regional Planning Councils are active in many areas of the state, such an initiative could be successfully pursued for \$750,000 per year for each region in the state. This suggests that, at minimum, this effort would require roughly \$8.5 million each year from the state for the next 3-5 years.

Recommendation #5: Require that Regional Visions Guide Local and Regional Plans

The Legislature should require that local and regional plans be consistent with the regional visions created during the visioning process. At minimum these should include local comprehensive plans, local capital improvement programs, MPO transportation improvement plans, regional water supply plans, and any local and regional conservation initiatives. As with the state’s current growth management system, non-compliant plans would bring sanctions in the form of short-term development moratoria, loss of state infrastructure revenues, and increased state oversight of local development activity.

Recommendation #6: Identify Opportunities to Incentivize Implementation

The Century Commission should work with state agencies, the governor's office, and state budgetary staff to identify opportunities to incentivize the implementation of regional visions. In addition to specific planning requirements for the implementation of the regional visions, the state can use its budget allocations to support this initiative. For example, Florida Forever funding could be allocated only to those lands located with conservation areas identified in a region's "Greenprint". Similarly, state funding for school construction could be allocated only to existing or new schools located within urban or suburban centers.

Recommendation #7: Commitment of State Agency Support for Regional Visions

The Legislature should require all state and regional agencies to act in accordance with regional visions. This is particularly important in two areas: 1) the investment of state funds in new infrastructure or existing infrastructure systems and 2) actions to protect and conserve environmentally sensitive lands or agricultural lands. In addition, no state agency should be exempted from the requirement that they abide by these regional visions.



Growth, Environmental Planning & Agriculture Committee Final Policy Statements

GROWTH MANAGEMENT SECTION

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GENERAL PLANNING ISSUES

Growth Management: **OPPOSE** legislation that erodes county authority to regulate development pursuant to the Growth Management Act of 1985.

State Growth Management Vision: To adequately prepare for the future growth and sustainability of our state, **SUPPORT** legislation requiring the State of Florida to develop a 20-year vision for the future of Florida, with implementing policies and strategies, that ensures our infrastructure needs can be met, our natural resources protected, and quality of life enhanced.

County Land Use Power: **SUPPORT** maintaining the power of a county charter provision to control land use and regulatory issues on a county-wide basis. **OPPOSE** efforts to diminish the authority of county charter provisions, county ordinances and other county regulations to control land use and growth management regulatory issues on a county-wide basis. **OPPOSE** revisions that lessen county oversight and participation in the annexation process, including weakening the power of charter provisions to control voluntary annexation methods.

Concurrency: Recognizing that growth and development place significant demands on county infrastructure facilities, **SUPPORT** the following:

- The state's infrastructure concurrency requirements on local governments as an essential tool for managing growth;
- A county's right to implement concurrency provisions that are more restrictive than state law;
- Appropriate changes to Ch. 163 allowing counties, as a local option, to provide transportation concurrency exemption for local school facilities;

- **Special consideration by the DCA in its review of small county comprehensive plans, plan amendments, and Evaluation and Appraisal Reports.**

REGIONAL PLANNING ISSUES

Regional Agency Coordination: **OPPOSE** any regional boundary realignment without the consent of the affected member local governments. **SUPPORT** enhanced communication and coordination among the Regional Planning Councils (RPCs), the water management districts and the district offices of the FDOT.

Regional Planning Councils: **SUPPORT** changes to Ch. 163 to 1) allow RPCs to set a date which a proposed or adopted land use amendment must be submitted in order to be placed on a specific council agenda and 2) allow a one-time deferral (to the next RPC meeting) of a proposed or adopted land use amendment found inconsistent to address the inconsistency. **SUPPORT** strengthening the RPCs by 1) including RPCs in the definition of "Local Government" in growth management statutes and 2) removing provisions in Florida law that prohibit a finding of non-compliance related to a local government's comprehensive plan based solely on an inconsistency finding with the applicable Strategic Regional Policy Plans developed by the RPC.

SUPPORT legislative efforts that would establish standards for providing a regional visioning process to the Strategic Regional Policy Plans.

OTHER GROWTH MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Affordable Housing: **SUPPORT** retaining the full amount of dedicated documentary tax revenues towards state and local affordable housing programs. **OPPOSE** legislative efforts that restrict or otherwise limit county home rule authority to use linkage fees for affordable housing.

Building Codes: **SUPPORT** appropriate changes to s. 553.791, F.S., that ensure the health, safety, and welfare of the public are protected when building owners and school districts elect to use a private provider to perform plans review and/or building inspection services.

Mobile Home Parks: **OPPOSE** legislation that mandates counties make payments to mobile home owners that are displaced as a result of a property owner requesting and receiving approval to rezone his/her property to a different use.

FRCA'S FRAMEWORK

FOR

FLORIDA'S PLANNING REFORM:

CONNECTING PLANNING TO VISIONING

July 24, 2007

- I. Conduct regional visioning exercises in each region that will form the basis of new Strategic Regional Policy Plans (SRPPs) and the new state plan.
 1. Establish minimum standards for Regional Visioning process.

- II. Develop the next generation of SRPPs and make revisions to F.S. 186.
 1. Establish a regional advisory team (DCA, RPC, MPOs, FDOT, and FDEP, WMD district offices, economic development agencies including Chambers of Commerce, and affordable housing stakeholders.
 - a.) Develop a statewide common platform in each of the subject elements to allow the regional plans to “roll-up” into a state plan. (Suggested essential elements are water, transportation, environmental conservation, and urban form. Secondary suggested elements are economic development, affordable workforce housing.)
 - b.) Determine optional state and regional subject areas (i.e. energy, agriculture, climate change).
 - c.) SRPP to incorporate a regional visioning element that includes, but is not limited to future regional development pattern maps, containing the preferred future growth patterns, anticipated distribution of population, and impacts of alternative growth scenarios on regional economies, transportation systems, housing, and water consumption.
 - d.) Develop a biennial State of the Region Report that can be consolidated into a state of the state planning report. The report would include:
 - 1.) Performance standards and benchmarks that can be monitored to determine if the vision is being achieved.

- 2.) Results of the indicators program should form the basis for amending state and regional plans.
- 3.) Century Commission should provide guidance and insight on the monitoring and measuring process.

III. Adopt a new state plan, which should include:

1. Identification of vital state growth and planning interests.
 - a.) Protect Florida's essential lands (habitat, water, wetlands, agricultural contiguity).
 - b.) Invest in Balanced transportation.
 - c.) Plan for climate change.
 - d.) Link building in rural areas to conservation.
 - e.) Don't waste land- adopt minimum gross residential densities in urban areas (i.e. cities should act like cities).
 - f.) Design with nature- even in urban areas.
 - g.) Encourage compact, mixed use development. Higher densities around light rail lines and transit stops. Higher density corridors for urban transit.
 - h.) Rebuild to create great places. Walking distance from variety of uses and amenities.
 - i.) Preserve Florida's history and historic structures.
 - j.) Sustainability in energy, water, wildlife corridors (i.e. design with energy consumption in mind- preserve solar access, etc.)
2. Florida 50-year state vision from a compilation of regional visions.
3. Proactive goals and coordinated development policies to influence future growth and settlement patterns.
4. Alignment of state budget process and funding incentives to carry out state, regional and local plans.
5. Flexibility for all state and regional stakeholders to participate in a long term game plan for preservation of Florida's most sensitive environments while allowing for appropriate new development and redevelopment.

- IV.** Revamp and modernize 163 F.S. and rule 9J-5 to provide local governments with the flexibility to implement local visions and plans.
1. Establish new requirements for local government comprehensive plans and programs designed to facilitate their preparation and adoption.
 - a.) Local plan adoption would include the following:
 - 1.) Community-wide visions pursuant to Section 163.3177(11) F.S.;
 - 2.) Strategies and policies to achieve the vision;
 - 3) Indicators to measure progress toward achieving the vision;
 - 4) Preferred planning principles that fall within a range of options established for accomplishing key state goals and protecting state interests as identified in the State Comprehensive Plan; and
 - 5) Ensure full public participation in the creation of the community-wide visions.
 - b.) The Department of Community Affairs in coordination with the regional planning councils shall establish a comprehensive grant program to facilitate local plan revisions by providing educational and community visioning tools, technical assistance, fiscal impact assessment, planning support services, and financial assistance.
- V.** Streamline the plan review process at state, regional and local levels.
- VI.** Provide authority to the Governor to impose financial and state funding sanctions for non compliance with vital state interests in state plan.
- VII.** Make the RPC's the lead agency for sector planning efforts, and make the necessary revisions to facilitate and promote increased utilization of advanced planning tools. Remove the restriction on sector plans.
- VIII.** Revise Rural Land Stewardship to ensure coordinated environmental resource protection and regional planning.
- IX.** Develop and advance a statewide GIS Decision Support System (GIS-DSS) to depict the state vision and plan as a composite of the regional visions and plans.

The DSS would allow policymakers to graphically see the implications of policy changes. Additionally the DSS could include a 3D visualization to illustrate various scenarios of successful forms and patterns of development for the entire region or portion of a region.

- X.** Pursuant to planning reforms, streamline DRI review process where DRIs are in conformance with regional visions and state interests. Develop a team planning process to deal with multi-jurisdictional impacts.
- XI.** Facilitate changes to how the State defines transportation concurrency in urban areas to increase mobility and transportation choices and to encourage more compact and transit-ready urban forms.
- XII.** Revisit the exemptions to and frequency of local comprehensive plan amendments.