

As background information of this proposed policy, I have taken into consideration the following issues to inform this conceptual approach to a new smart growth planning policy under the framework of climate change. As you know, this subject is complex so I will be brief.

The recent passage of HB 7135, referred to here as the “energy bill”, contains many items too lengthy to enumerate here that will change the way local developments are reviewed by state and local governments by adding several energy, GHG emissions, and climate change considerations.

2. The recent passage of CS/HB 697, referred to here as the “building code bill”, specifically states, “The future land use plan shall be based upon...the discouragement of urban sprawl; energy-efficient land use patterns accounting for existing and future electric power generation and transmission systems; greenhouse gas reduction strategies;....” (line 177). This bill also includes direction to local governments to reduce VMT through land use and transportation planning.

3. The new Florida Forever legislation (SB 542) includes direction at buying future state land to mitigate GHG emissions.

4. The new energy bill includes a schedule of increasing energy efficiency standards for new construction every three years, requiring a 50% increase over 2007 standards in 2019. This attached proposed smart growth planning policy attempts to place the review of new development in a similar context, and on a similar schedule, of increased energy efficiency and reduction of GHG emissions.

5. There are several building and development certification programs that include energy-related factors in their analysis; ie; LEED, several programs including LEED-ND (new development) now in pilot stage; Green Globes; Florida Green Building Coalition, including their Green Cities program.

6. New certification programs for cities and counties; ie; ICLEI; Florida Green Building Coalition Green Cities mandate inventories, goals and timetables, and verification of GHG emissions reductions. These local governmental certification programs will drive new guidelines and criteria for new development and re-development within their jurisdictions.

7. New directions in cap-and-trade programs, purchasing Renewable Energy Credits (RECS), carbon sequestering technologies, purchasing carbon off-sets, etc. will place new emphasis, and a new economic value, on the intrinsic value of forest, silviculture, and agricultural land uses as carbon sinks.

These factors, and others I have probably omitted, call for a new revised definition of smart growth planning within Florida’s new context of climate change strategies to reduce GHG emissions. The following language comes from the memorandum of agreement (MOA) in support of smart growth recently signed by the Secretaries for DCA, DEP, Dept. of Health, and FDOT:

“... smart growth is an integrative solution that promotes healthy, vibrant communities and engages residents in an active, healthy lifestyle. Smart growth offers opportunities for a wider range of housing choices and helps ensure a better jobs-to-housing ratio. Smart growth improves the quality of drinking water and enables communities to pursue the protection of open space and prime farmland. Smart growth creates a variety of transportation options through better coordination of transportation and land use planning and reduces vehicle miles traveled. Smart growth provides environmental, economic, social and health benefits and improves the overall quality of life.” (emphases mine)

Given these recent changes and amendments, the formulation of a new smart growth planning policy, within the context of climate change goals and reduction of GHG emissions seems in order. I invite discussion, comments, and additions to this proposed policy and look forward to our tele-meeting tomorrow.