

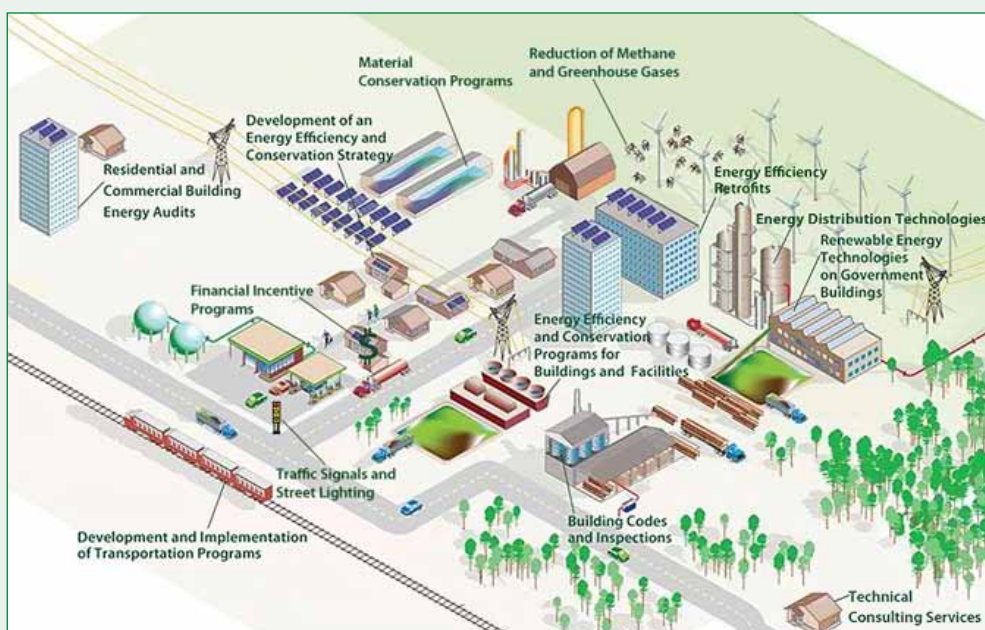


SFRPC Quarterly Highlights - September 2009

Energy Efficiency & Conservation Initiatives

Several opportunities have been made available to local governments throughout South Florida from the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). Over \$35 Million has been allocated in the Region through Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants (EECBG) directly to local governments. Understanding the value of a coordinated Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy for local governments accessing these funds, the South Florida Regional Planning Council is moving forward with regional initiatives that will complement local investments and leverage the federal dollars spent locally. The Council is proposing these initiatives in order to unite local energy efficiency and conservation efforts in the Region, reduce potential overlapping or fragmentation among communities, and assist our individual local governments in becoming more competitive at the federal level.

Following the dispersal of the formula grants, the U.S. Department of Energy will announce a \$400 million competitive grant program. It will be important for each local government within the Region to make full use of currently allocated funds as we attempt to access additional resources from the EECBG program in the future. Council staff has invited all recipient local governments to link their Conservation Strategy to the Council's initiatives that will be moving forward through the EECBG competitive program when that process is initiated. Our hope is that by indicating the formula recipient local governments are supportive of a larger, regional context or initiative, individual conservation strategies will be looked upon more favorably, as will the larger regional effort, by our federal partners.

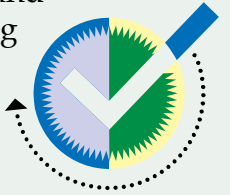


12 eligible activities under the EECBG Program

The conceptual programs that Council staff has developed include a “Green Revolving Loan Fund” for energy retrofits and renovations, a “Long Range Green Workforce Demand Strategy” to remain economically competitive as emerging markets seek opportunities in South Florida, “Energy Efficient Model Land Development Regulations” for transit-oriented corridors to make use of compact, efficient land development strategies, and a “Climate Change Regional Resource Center” to unite the individual efforts of the local governments throughout the region and centralize an outreach and educational program. These initiatives are described in further detail below and Council Staff will continue to develop these ideas and others as funding opportunities become available and we are able to provide value to the local governments in South Florida and help reach the collective goal of a sustainable and livable South Florida.

Green Revolving Loan Fund

As markets in green technologies emerge, a growing number of small businesses and entrepreneurs will benefit from access to a dedicated funding source such as a Revolving Loan Fund. Funding for facility upgrades and technological advancements that increase energy efficiency will be available through this new fund operated within an existing and successful RLF program. The SFRPC has developed several Revolving Loan Fund programs and managed programs that were originated and operated by other economic development agencies. These RLFs vary in funding sources and offer low-interest rate loans to small and medium size businesses that are not entirely served by conventional lenders in Miami-Dade, Broward, and Monroe Counties. These loans are also used by businesses to complete project financing by providing a needed source of gap financing.



Long-Range Green Workforce Strategy



As new Green Technologies are developed and a new regional workforce emerges, it will be important for the Region to maintain a long-range perspective on the future of all related industries. A goal of the *Strategic Regional Policy Plan for South Florida* is to invest in the youth and workforce of the Region by providing quality education, workforce training, and targeted job creation. To achieve this goal, the SFRPC will convene and work with partner agencies and the regional business community to develop a shared understanding of regional workforce demand and a strategy supportive of green job creation in our region.

Taking a proactive approach to skill development that enables green job attraction will allow South Florida to remain competitive and maintain a diverse economic foundation. Subsequently, the SFRPC

will monitor and report on research and development, job creation, and new business investment resulting from related “green” economy programs and review the effectiveness of federal and state funds used to promote those programs.

Energy Efficient Land Development Regulations

Moving beyond land use decisions, local governments can take a significant step forward in the effort to ensure efficient and sustainable development in their jurisdictions and the Region by revising their zoning codes and regulations. Enhanced standards for future development provide opportunities to conserve energy through building efficiency, smart growth, redevelopment, and the creation of multi-modal infrastructure. There are also opportunities to specify the use of energy efficient materials and lighting and implement low-impact development standards. The SFRPC will develop model land development regulations for communities along major corridors within existing transit networks throughout the region. Based on the successful partnership framework, the SFRPC will work with the State Road 7/U.S. 441 Collaborative on a pilot program that will have the potential to be recreated throughout the region.

Climate Change Regional Resource Center

The South Florida Region has benefited from the leadership of several local governments and elected, private, and nonprofit leaders in the areas of climate change, energy efficiency and overall sustainability. At this point in time, local government activity has been mostly focused at the individual municipal or county level. In order to support the efforts of the Region’s local governments and move the Region forward as a whole, a concerted effort is needed to improve intergovernmental coordination and information sharing efforts. In an effort to focus these initiatives and move forward in an effective and collective manner, the SFRPC will serve as a regional clearinghouse and provide an easily accessible, up-to-date, collective knowledge base. The Regional Resource Center will employ technology driven, GIS and internet-based systems to identify best practices and present successful strategies by monitoring and reporting local initiatives on a regional scale. Moving forward, each municipality will be able to compare conservation strategies and adjust policies or energy efficiency programs to become more effective at reaching their individual and collective goals.

A Technology-Based Outreach Strategy will be developed and implemented as part of a public outreach and technical assistance campaign. Through the centralized resource center, advanced information technologies, internet-based networking opportunities, and information systems will be used to provide information and technical assistance to the region’s residents and public, private, and nonprofit partners on a wide range of subjects related to climate change, energy efficiency and conservation.

In addition to providing a quality centralized information resource and increasing awareness, the SFRPC will utilize staff expertise to provide *Comprehensive Policy Guidance for Local Governments*. A need for technical assistance is emerging throughout South Florida as an increasing number of municipalities look to develop policies on sustainability and energy efficiency. The SFRPC will provide technical assistance and guidance through its Local Government Comprehensive Plan Program and Planners Technical Committees. The goal of this initiative will be to develop a framework of potential Goals, Objectives and Policies that reference a regional commitment to energy efficient land use decision-making, multi-modal transportation networks, and conservation strategies. Efficient coordination among agencies and between local, state, and regional government will enhance overall effectiveness, reduce overlap, and eliminate barriers to climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts such as energy conservation. Reaching agreement on regional goals, measurement systems, and tools, will make it possible for the region's stakeholders to develop a regional strategy and benchmarks, and then quantify South Florida's progress toward consensus goals. For example, determining regional energy conservation averages and developing a consistent system that can be used by local governments to quantify their progress in the area of energy conservation will make it possible to quantify the region's overall progress in implementing an energy conservation strategy.

Happenings in the Local Government Comprehensive Plan (LGCP) Review Program



Every summer, the Florida Department of Community Affairs (DCA) holds an annual Growth Management Implementation Workshop on current growth management and planning issues. This year the workshop was held June 25 and 26 in Orlando. It covered a variety of topics ranging from the basic 'How-To' process Comprehensive Plan amendments to municipal challenges of large scale annexation. The workshop was attended by a record number of 500 public and private sector planning, and related professionals, including a representative from the South Florida Regional Planning Council (SFRPC) staff.

One reason the workshop was heavily attended was due to the passage of Senate Bill 360, *The Community Renewal Act*. SB 360 contains a number of provisions, but a couple of changes, in particular, have fueled a plethora of questions: the elimination of state transportation concurrency requirements and the Development of Regional Impact review process for local governments designated as a Dense Urban Land Area (DULA). A list of qualifying DULAs can be found on the DCA website: <http://www.dca.state.fl.us/fdcp/dcp/Legislation/2009/CountiesMunicipalities.cfm>

DCA, with its authority to interpret statutes over which it governs, presented a less intimidating interpretation of the bill regarding transportation concurrency. Although some questions remain unanswered, the Department stressed that SB 360 does not take away the home rule power of a local government, and the legal standing of a local adopted Comprehensive Plan is not compromised by the bill. A locality can choose to retain, modify, or abolish the state transportation concurrency policies within its Comprehensive Plan. However, within two years of being designated a DULA, a locality must adopt land use and transportation strategies to support and fund mobility, including alternative modes of transportation, even if the locality chooses to retain adopted state concurrency policies. Only time can tell how the provisions of the bill will play out across the state and in the region.

For additional information on 2009 Growth Management Legislation, see: <http://www.dca.state.fl.us/fdcp/dcp/Legislation/2009/index.cfm>.

The workshop also included an informative session on the 'Do's and Don'ts' of plan amendment processing for local governments that find themselves in receipt of an

incomplete package letter by DCA all too often. The key to smooth processing begins with the amendment submittal letter. Examples of the most common errors in submittal letters are when a local government does not include:

- The name of the review agencies the package is being transmitted to;
- A summary of what is being transmitted; and
- A statement identifying: whether the amendment is exempt from the twice per year amendment limit; the newspaper in which to publish a Notice of Intent; if the amendment is to be reviewed under the Alternative State Review Pilot Program.

The best practice for submitting text amendments is to present the amendment in strikethrough and underline format. When submitting a Future Land Use Map (FLUM) amendment, be sure the map(s) clearly identifies the proposed amendment boundaries, nearby streets, and adjacent existing and future land uses. Include the number of acres to be amended, the availability and expected demand for all services, and a statement of compatibility in the analysis. Adequate data and analysis demonstrating a need of the FLUM amendment is required.

The Workshop's speaker presentations can be accessed from the DCA website: <http://www.dca.state.fl.us/fdcp/dcp/gmw/2009/index.cfm>.

In other Comprehensive Planning news, the next round (third) of the Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) process has begun. The EAR process begins with a local government evaluating how successful it has addressed major local issues through the implementation of its Comprehensive Plan, and allows a locality to revise its plan, if needed, to better address its major issues.

The SFRPC and DCA co-hosted an EAR Workshop on July 15, 2009 at the Council offices, with ninety planning professionals in attendance. Miami-Dade County's EAR will be the first one due in the region, by November 2010. The County kicked off its EAR process by holding five (5) Town Hall meetings during the last week of August. To learn more about the County's EAR process, visit their interactive website at: <http://www.miamidade.gov/planzone/ear2010.asp>.

For more information about the LGCP Review program, please visit <http://www.sfrpc.com/lgcpr.htm> or contact Rachel Kalin at rkalin@sfrpc.com.



Coordinating Council of Broward Common Eligibility Tool



Council staff, working with the Steering Committee of The Coordinating Council of Broward (CCB), has been developing alternatives for the selection and implementation of a common eligibility tool in Broward County. The primary purpose of the tool would be to facilitate the creation of single points of entry, so that residents of Broward County in need of social services could be evaluated for eligibility for all services offered in the County. An additional benefit will be to improve access to the federal, state and local benefits for which residents are eligible but have not yet qualified. The CCB has also been working with similar groups in Miami-Dade County and Palm Beach County that are pursuing the same goals. For further information, please contact Richard Ogburn (rogburn@sfrpc.com).

South Florida Regional Planning Council Revolving Loan Fund Marketing Update

The South Florida Regional Planning Council Revolving Loan Programs (SFRPC-RLF, SFRPC-RLF II, RLF III and RESCUE-RLF) are designed to meet the needs of businesses in our Region that are not entirely served by conventional lenders. Funds are available to all small and medium-size businesses within Miami-Dade, Broward and Monroe Counties as well as designated communities within Miami-Dade County. The Revolving Loan Program also provides technical assistance to new and existing borrowers that will assist them with the growth of their businesses.



Council staff facilitated the South Florida Regional Planning Council Loan Administration Board (LAB) Retreat on June 29, 2009. The members of the LAB discussed the future path of the SFRPC-RLF, future products, and methods to recapitalize the loan fund.

During the months of July and August 2009 Council RLF staff participated with the NFL Community Outreach Committee, which is assisting the small businesses in our region on how to do business with the NFL. Staff continues to also work with Metro Broward Capital Corporation and Accion, USA in providing the Capital Connections workshops to small businesses in Broward County. Council staff also participated in U.S. Department of Energy's Webinar on Establishing a Revolving Loan Fund with Recovery Act Funding.

The next Loan Administration Board meeting is scheduled for September 28, 2009.

For more information regarding the RLF visit our website at www.sfrpc.com/rlf.htm or, please contact Cheryl Cook or Joyce Hall at (954) 985-4416 or email at rlf@sfrpc.com.



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