

TASK 7
US 17 LID Policies and Sustainable Development Policies

TRANSMITTED VIA EMAIL TO jie.shao@charlottefl.com

Date: May 14, 2009
To: Jie Shao, Planner III, Charlotte County Growth Management Department
From: Mary Anne G. Bowie, FAICP
Re: US 17 (Duncan Road) Corridor Planning Study
TASK No. 7: US 17 LID Policies and Sustainable Development Policies

Introduction

To advise government leaders, planners develop goals, objectives and policies. These provide the suggested framework to effect change. A variety of policies is often necessary to create communities that will provide a future that works for all. Some policies are short term; some are long term; some require funding; some require regulatory change; some will inspire controversy; some policies suggested may be championed by all; some may never be adopted.

This portion of the US 17 Corridor Planning Study provides input to the Charlotte County 2050 long range comprehensive planning document. Within the Planning profession, the importance of developing sustainable communities is now agreed upon as the most important vision, if we are to create a future that works for all. At this time, many different green building certification programs and many different sustainable site planning certification programs are under development. Bowie Urban Planners trusts that individual properties will be evaluated before any development occurs within such green and sustainable criteria and also within the land development requirements of Charlotte County. The goals, objectives and policies noted below are presented to add to the overall context in creating sustainable solutions and are not individual site specific solutions.

Over time, market conditions will dictate the need for property zoned appropriately to meet the needs of future development. In conjunction with any new development, appropriate infrastructure improvements, including green infrastructure, need to be provided. Thus performance standards are presented for new settlement areas in this set of Goals, Policies and Objectives for the long range comprehensive plan. Without a long range plan there can be no assurances that the needs of the environment, of society and the economy will be met for today while considering the needs of future generations. Together, meeting those needs will set the stage for creating sustainable community.

County Wide and US 17 Corridor Study Area Goal, Objectives and Policies

Task 7 provides suggested goals, opportunities and policies that we believe will transform the eight mile long US 17 Planning Area into a series of sustainable communities. The emerging vision is that any redevelopment and all new development will promote human and environmental health and will be sensitive to environmental, historical, societal, and cultural context as well as to emerging new technologies such as use of alternative energy, solar powered vehicles, green buildings, low impact development and new land uses. The idea is to transform the US 17 Corridor Planning Area into a series of sustainable communities that will create new jobs through business development; stimulate redevelopment and enhancement of existing neighborhoods; provide public access to the waterfront; create and preserve wildlife corridors and enhance the green infrastructure of the US 17 Corridor Planning Area by promoting green buildings and low impact development site solutions. Together, for the US 17 Corridor, this vision is expressed as a single goal stated below. Objectives and policies follow that will help implement the US 17 Overlay Goal. The first objectives and policies contained herein have specific applicability to the US 17 Corridor Planning Study Area; those that have relevance to the entire County are listed as the final sets of objectives and policies.

Objective 1: US 17 CORRIDOR PLANNING AREA

To create parameters for the US 17 Corridor Planning Area that guide future development and that accomplish the following:

- job creation;
- redevelopment and beautification of existing neighborhoods;
- preservation, access to and enhancement of the natural environment;
- application of low impact development practices;
- development of sustainable communities; and provision of adequate infrastructure to meet current and future needs.

FLU Policy 1.1: Inter-connection

The County shall create and adopt land development regulations (LDRs) to identify the circumstances and parameters under which new developments are to be interconnected, such as with interconnecting parking lots and an interconnected network of routes for pedestrians and cyclists providing links to schools, parks, adjacent neighborhoods and developments as well as passive recreational trails along flow-way areas.

FLU Policy 1.2: Provision for Infrastructure and Services

The County shall review the possibility of creating a frontage road or a reverse frontage road system along the corridor, shall create and adopt regulations to promote healthy neighborhoods, and shall explore alternative transportation possibilities such as rail linkages to create railroad passenger service or auto train stations.

FLU Policy 1.3: Public Facilities Requirement

All properties greater than one hundred (100) acres in area are required to work with public service providers to locate public facilities on their property. The expectation of land dedication shall not exceed ten (10) percent of the total land area for the project and shall be creditable toward impact fees, or other forms of county compensation.

FLU Policy 1.4: Multi-use Public Spaces

The County shall require developers to coordinate with all interested government entities and property owners, including Charlotte County school officials, to identify future locations for multi-use public spaces that can combine school uses, recreational and conservation uses.

FLU Policy 1.5: Hurricane Shelters

Schools and other community facilities located along the US 17 corridor, but outside the Coastal High Hazard Area, shall be designed to serve as hurricane shelters to meet the identified evacuation needs as established by Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council.

FLU Policy 1.6: Redevelopment Areas

The County recognizes two neighborhoods along the corridor that would benefit from the creation of a redevelopment plan. By 2012, the County shall work with the Solana and Cleveland Neighborhoods to establish Redevelopment Advisory Boards to help advise the County on redevelopment strategies, ideas and enhancements to promote redevelopment.

FLU Policy 1.7: Redevelopment Areas Funding Opportunities

In order to fund redevelopment opportunities, the County shall consider the creation of Community Redevelopment Areas (CRAs), or utilize other applicable programs, for Solana and Cleveland in order to finance public improvements that enhance property values and quality of life, such as the extension of water and sewer mains.

FLU Policy 1.8: Preservation and Enhancement of Redevelopment Areas

To increase the sense of identity, the historical fabric and the sense of place of Solana and Cleveland, the County shall encourage redevelopment in the Solana and Cleveland Neighborhoods to be in general compliance with the Conceptual Redevelopment Plans.

FLU Policy 1.9: Redevelopment Area Streetscape Improvement

To lend support to the existing businesses in Solana and Cleveland, the County shall work with private and public entities to provide US 17 streetscape improvements, including landscaping, decorative lighting, and way-finding signs, consistent with the streetscape improvements within the City of Punta Gorda.

FLU Policy 1.10: Encouraged Uses

To revitalize and increase the US 17 commercial and business areas, including Solana and Cleveland, and to reduce trip generation, the County shall encourage mixed use developments, conversion of mobile homes to conventionally built homes, live/work spaces, bed and breakfasts, accessory working units, and multi-family developments along the US 17 Corridor.

FLU Policy 1.11: Landscaping and Buffer Requirement

The County shall work with developers and property owners to provide street tree planting and landscape buffers along the US 17 highway corridor in order to enhance the safe and pleasant experience of pedestrians and improve the visual experience of travelers. This shall include the provision of enhanced landscape elements at community entryway points, clustered tree requirements to encourage view corridors into commercial areas, and streetscape improvements.

FLU Policy 1.12: Established Flow-ways

The County shall incentive the protection of historic flow-ways. One method that the County may utilize to encourage the preservation of flow-ways is by use of transfer of density unit (TDU) credits. Passive recreational uses shall be incorporated into upland areas adjacent to restored flow-ways. Development

along a flow-way must provide for public use by providing pedestrian paths and connections to adjacent properties. Public uses shall not include any activities that are detrimental to drainage, flood control, water conservation, erosion control or fish and wildlife habitat conservation and preservation. Proposed crossings of flow-ways shall include appropriately sized culverts or bridges to maintain surface water flows and wildlife underpasses where appropriate.

FLU Policy 1.13: Greenways Plan

The County shall implement a greenways plan for the US 17 Corridor area that will connect flow-ways and wildlife corridors.

FLU Policy 1.14: Water Access

The County shall work toward the creation of additional public and private water access points along Peace River, Shell Creek and Prairie Creek for kayaks, canoes and motorboats.

FLU Policy 1.15: Eco-tourism Center

The County shall consider expanding permitted uses to encourage an eastern eco-tourism center for Charlotte County by allowing bed and breakfast establishments, small cafes, nature centers and other eco-tourism facilities, such as kayak and bicycle rental and repair shops that are sensitive to the environment, yet provide access to visitors and residents.

FLU Policy 1.16: Ecovillage

The County shall allow ecovillages that are in accordance with the intent of the Global Ecovillage Network to integrate a supportive social environment with a low-impact way of life.

FLU Policy 1.17: Settlement Area Intent and Criteria

The intent is to allow for development in the Settlement Area identified on the Smart Charlotte 2050 Framework Map. The development potential of this area is not limited by existing plats and can provide an alternate land use form that is fiscally positive and environmental sustainable. It is intended that the entire Settlement Area be planned in a comprehensive manner so that all options are identified prior to approval of any development. Development of the Settlement Area may begin upon satisfaction of the following steps and the adoption of Land Development Regulations.

Meet the following thresholds

- 1) One or more economic development activities, creating a minimum of 100 new jobs with an average wage that is at least 15% above Charlotte County average wage, will locate to the Settlement Area;
or
- 2) Residential plats within 1 mile radius of the site exceed 65% built-out; and
- 3) Utility capacity exists and lines can be extended to meet the needs of new development.

Supply the following information

The developer shall submit a Settlement Area Pattern Book and Development Guide showing the holistic vision and specific standards under which this development is anticipated to proceed.

Obtain Approval of the Board

The developer shall submit data to the County showing that the proposal meets the criteria indicated above. This information, along with the Settlement Area Pattern Book and Development Guide shall be submitted to the Board of County Commissioners for approval.

FLU Policy 1.18: Settlement Area Parameters

In order to phase development with adequate infrastructure, the Settlement Area shall be limited to a maximum of 6,000 residential units, 500,000 square feet of commercial/office uses, and 1,000,000 square feet of industrial uses through 2030, and a maximum of 3,500 acres.

FLU Policy 1.19: Settlement Area Industrial and Commercial Development Standards

The County shall require that all sites shall be designed in accordance with sustainable best management practices and that all non-residential buildings shall be constructed in compliance with United States Green Building Council (USGBC) Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Certification or Florida Green Building Coalition Commercial Building Designation; all new industries locating in the area shall be ISO 14001 compliant or otherwise be in accordance with Natural Step or other similar green business operating practices.

FLU Policy 1.20: Settlement Area Transportation System

The transportation system within the Settlement Area shall be designed as an interconnected network aimed at promoting connectivity between communities and streets and walk-ability between uses. Individual projects must be designed as part of an overall transportation network within the Overlay area, not as separated, stand alone developments.

- 1) All new development shall provide the appropriate connections of road segments, and preserve and protect existing and future rights-of-way to provide for an efficient multi-modal transportation system. The transportation system shall be designed so that multiple streets, bicycle paths and sidewalks continue between adjacent neighborhoods and developments to facilitate convenient movement and disperse traffic throughout the local network. Dead-end streets are prohibited, except when necessary at the edge of development to provide stub outs for future connections to adjacent, undeveloped properties, or when environmental features necessitate the construction of a dead-end street.
- 2) Communities shall construct an interconnected network of public streets in a predictable block pattern that encourages walking, reduces the number and length of automobile trips and provides multiple circulation routes. Block sizes will be established with the intent of providing for walkable distances between intersecting streets.
- 3) Interconnections between complementary uses shall be required, including access and circulation among parking lots and to pedestrian paths. Shared driveways, frontage streets, and parking with cross access easements shall be required to reduce conflicts with the main flow of traffic.
- 4) Specify the design of street types that are functional, visually appealing, and promote walking and cycling. Street cross-sections will be acceptable road types for both public construction projects and

for privately built roads and will be consistent with the principles of context sensitive design and walk-ability. Reduced right of way widths and travel lanes will be encouraged to the extent that they meet AASHTO standards.

- 5) To ensure that adequate funding sources are available for the provision of infrastructure, and that each property owner is fairly compensated for their contribution to the infrastructure system, improvements may be funded through a variety of mechanisms that include, but are not limited to, Community Development Districts (CDDs), Municipal Services Taxing Units (MSTUs), Municipal Service Benefit Units (MSBUs), grants, and impact fees/impact fee credits.

FLU Policy 1.21: Village Center

Individual development proposals for the Settlement Area for all properties greater than 480 acres shall contain a village center. All village center areas shall be mixed use or multi-use in nature, either through mixing residential and commercial uses within the same building or providing for strong pedestrian connectivity between uses. Village Center areas shall be well integrated with surrounding development areas and shall provide for pedestrian character through the following techniques:

- 1) Vehicular, pedestrian and/or bicycle connections to adjacent residential, commercial, civic or industrial development will be provided.
- 2) Buffering of different abutting uses shall be required only where compatibility concerns exist. Buffering from adjacent developments, when deemed absolutely necessary, will not preclude future interconnectivity.
- 3) On-street parking with landscaping and design features, such as corner and mid-street bump outs, which afford traffic calming and produce a comfortable and safe pedestrian environment will be promoted.
- 4) Screening for parking lots along streets, sidewalks, and open spaces. Parking lots and structured parking garages without ground floor commercial uses shall be shielded from the view of the sidewalk preferably located behind or to the sides of buildings to enhance the pedestrian environment of the street.
- 5) Shared parking arrangements shall be encouraged to promote a “park once” environment to encourage walking between multiple destinations. Deviations from the County’s parking requirements will be considered to minimize parking areas, based on projected pedestrian activity, joint use of parking lots, and parking spaces for uses with different peak hours.

FLU Policy 1.22: Residential Development

Residential development in the Settlement Area shall provide for compact land use forms as follows:

- 1) Development must be clustered to provide for a minimum of 50% on site open space. 30% of the development area must be reserved for common open space, excluding lake area and common yard area. The intent of common open space areas is for preservation and restoration of indigenous upland and wetland vegetation as well as the creation of passive recreational opportunities. Common open space areas must be clearly designated through the development review process.
- 2) The County shall explore granting impact fee or TDU credits toward the cost of restoration and

perpetual maintenance of common open space as indigenous vegetation. In order to be considered for impact fee or TDU credits, indigenous area shall be a minimum of 500 feet in average width and maintained in perpetuity.

FLU Policy 1.23: Timing of Residential Development

In order to ensure that a mix of uses is achieved and to promote a level of internal capture of trips of non-residential uses, before any residential development occurs in the Settlement Area, the minimum amount of non-residential development shall be established as follows:

- Commercial/office uses: 20,000 square feet
- Industrial uses: 30,000 square feet

FLU Policy 1.24: Creation of Settlement Area LDRs

Prior to approval of any development in the Settlement Area, Charlotte County shall draft LDRs for New Settlement Area that define the character and design consistent with the approved pattern book and development guide, these policies and the following concepts:

- 1) A balanced mixture of uses will be provided to reduce overall trip lengths, to support pedestrian, bicycle and transit opportunities and create pedestrian friendly streetscapes.
- 2) Requirements for the provision of civic spaces, such as green spaces, community centers or central plaza features.
- 3) Provisions for outdoor livability, including interconnected pedestrian and bike facilities, walkways, public plazas, ample seating, and walkable block length.

Following are objectives and policies that are recommended for inclusion in the county wide comprehensive plan that will help guide growth in the entire county, including the US 17 corridor study area.

FLU OBJECTIVE XX: TO PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE SITE DEVELOPMENT

FLU Policy XXX Low Impact Development (LID) Effort

The County, in partnership with other government, non-profit and private entities, shall seek grant funding and establish a Low Impact Development (LID) demonstration project research and training facility to clarify best local area practices and to educate the public and the development community about sustainable site development best management practices.

FLU Policy XXX LID Research

Prior to development of a full scale LID research and training facility, the County shall establish an LID library and LID advocacy group that will arrange training from South West Florida Water Management District and others and that will be responsible for moving forward the LID facility.

FLU Policy XXX Stormwater Management

In partnership with SWFWMD, the County shall encourage developers or property owners to provide a variety of several stormwater management and low impact development practices, so that each practice will provide incremental benefits and combined all practices will:

- 1) preserve existing site assets;
- 2) minimize and control runoff generation at the source;
- 3) promote infiltration;
- 4) promote stormwater reuse; and
- 5) minimize site disturbance

FLU Policy XXX LID Criteria

To reduce stormwater runoff and to treat non-point source pollution naturally on site, the County shall incorporate low impact development (LID) design criteria, best management practices and storm water credits into the LDRs by 2011, in coordination with State initiatives.

- Pre-design best management practices include, but are not limited to: tree, topographical, soil, and wildlife surveys; provision and preservation of native landscaping and natural water flows, designing narrower roads; preserving natural depressions; and conserving existing vegetation and resulting biological habitats.
- Post design best management practices include, but are not limited to: bioretention areas/ rain gardens and biofilters; bioswales or grassed (vegetated) swales; dry wells; filter buffer strips; green infrastructure; green roofs or vegetated roofs; greenways; infiltration trenches; inlet pollution removal devices; native landscaping; permeable or porous pavement; permeable pavers; rain barrels and cisterns; soil amendments, also known as soil augmentation; stormwater planters; tree planting and preservation of trees; tree box filters; vegetated buffers; and wetlands restoration.

FLU OBJECTIVE XXX: TO REDUCE THE CARBON FOOTPRINT

FLU Policy XXX Bicycle/Pedestrian System

The County shall guide public-private the provision of a bicycle/pedestrian system connecting all land uses along arterial and collector roads within recreational, commercial and multi-family residential areas.

FLU Policy XXX Accommodations for a transportation system

The County shall cooperate with existing and future land owners in the locating of solar sheds, bus stops, shelters, and other passenger and system accommodations for a transportation system to service current and future needs.

FLU Policy XXX Energy-efficient Lighting, Appliances, and Equipments

The County shall require the use of energy-efficient lighting for streets, parking areas, recreation areas and other interior and exterior public areas. Further, for all development, the County shall encourage

energy efficient appliances and equipment, energy-efficient features in window design, use of operable windows and ceiling fans and other technology to conserve energy.

FLU Policy XXX Energy Conservation

The County shall discourage deed restrictions or covenants that would prevent or unnecessarily hamper energy conservation efforts (e.g. building orientation, clotheslines, and solar water heating systems.)

FLU Policy XXX Reducing Local Air Temperature

The County shall encourage reduced coverage by asphalt, concrete, rock and similar substances in streets, parking lots and other areas to reduce local air temperatures and reflecting light and heat.

FLU Policy XXX Native Shade Trees

The County shall encourage the planting of native shade trees to provide reasonable shade for all recreation areas, streets and parking areas. Trees shall be placed so as to provide needed shade in warmer months while not overly reducing the benefits of sunlight in cooler months.