Planning in Communities Without Planning Staff
2006 National Planning Conference

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Planning Basics:
Maxi, Mini, & Money

- Comprehensive Plan
- Area Plans
- Land Use Regulation
  - Zoning
  - Subdivision Regulations
- Capital Improvement Plans
- Functional Plans
  - Transportation
  - Parks
  - Utilities / Infrastructure

Plan Overview

- A statement of community policy or intent as to the future growth and development of the community
- Plan for the physical development of the community, and is concerned with land use, transportation, public facilities, infrastructure, natural and environmental features, housing, and socioeconomic aspects of the community

Plan Overview

- Planning is about balancing
- It attempts to balance quality of life and livability, economic health and prosperity, private property needs, and public fiscal responsibility

- It is long range – 20 years
- It is community wide
- It is based on a factual understanding of the forces and trends shaping the community, but it also reflects community desires
Plan Overview

- Subject to state law requirements, it can and should be tailored to your needs – it can be as extensive or as simple as you need it to be

Legal Framework

- Each State has different laws related to comprehensive plans
- Some do not require comprehensive plans
- Some require plans as a condition of zoning
- Some require that plans be updated
- Some require mandatory consistency
- Some require that they be implemented
- What does your state require?

A Planning Process

- Organizing to Plan
- Inventories
- Citizen Participation
- Forecasts
- Land Capacity
- Vision and Policy
- Plan Development
- Implementation Strategy

Citizen Participation

- Steering Committee
- Plan Forum
- Focus Group Interviews
- Workshops
- Open Houses
- Web Sites
- Newsletters
- Surveys
- Special Purpose Committees

Creating a Factual Base:
Forecasts and Capacity

- How much new growth do we expect to occur under certain circumstances?
- How much growth can we reasonably accommodate based on certain constraints?

Policy Questions

- Are the growth forecasts viewed as being desirable?
- Is the growth too fast? Too slow?
- Do the commercial and residential growth rates bode well for fiscal health?
- Is the growth occurring in the right areas?
Policy Direction

- Values of the community
- Create consensus before you put lines on the map
- Turning the "could be" into the "should be":
  - Goals/Visioning
  - Objectives/Benchmarking
  - Policies/Strategies
- Citizen Participation
- Get the approval of the elected officials

Dimensions of Growth

- Location of Growth
- Amount of Growth
- Rate of Growth
- Intensity and Density of Growth
- Quality and Character of Growth
- Relationship of Growth to Infrastructure
- Fiscal Dimensions of Growth

What Type of Plan is Best for Your Community?

- Parcel Specific
- Character Based
- A Mixture of the Two

Implementation

- Integrated Throughout the Process
- Many Tools Available
- Land Use Regulations
- Capital Facilities Planning
- Infrastructure Financing Techniques
- Economic Development Programs
- Redevelopment Programs

Fair Decision Making

- Notice
- Opportunity to Be Heard
- Full Disclosure
- Unbiased Decisions
- Timely Decisions
- Complete Records
- Clear Rules
- Findings

Findings of Fact

- Principles of Findings
  - You are not committees of compassion
  - Your decisions must be based on facts
  - The facts must address the standards
  - The burden of proof is on the applicant
  - Information is not the same thing as facts
  - Weighing of the evidence is your responsibility
Findings of Fact

Principles of Findings
- You do not have to believe everything you hear
- Opinions without a factual basis are without merit
- Public sentiment is not a basis for decisions
- You can rely on personal knowledge, but make it a part of the record

Suggestions and Resources

Advisory Committees
- Special purpose committees – Comprehensive Plan, special project
- “Circuit rider” planners
- Consultants
- Universities / colleges
- APA – National, State Chapters, Local Sections, conferences and publications

Build Relationships

Private Organizations
- Regional Agencies
- State Agencies
- Federal Agencies

Private Agencies
- Land Trusts
- Housing Trusts
- Economic development groups
- Environmental groups
- Neighborhood groups or associations
- Homebuilders, developers, realtors

Regional Agencies

Regional planning agencies
- Regional service providers – such as sewer and water authorities
- Regional housing agencies
- Regional environmental agencies

State Agencies

- Departments of Transportation
- Environmental Protection Agencies
- Health Departments
- Community Development Departments
- Departments of Natural Resources
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Federal Agencies</th>
<th>Conclusion</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✷ FEMA</td>
<td>✷ Plan, don't just react</td>
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<tr>
<td>✷ Transportation Department/Federal</td>
<td>✷ Have good and fair decision making practices</td>
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<tr>
<td>Highways</td>
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<tr>
<td>✷ Housing and Urban Development</td>
<td>✷ Make time to plan – planning work sessions, guest speakers</td>
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<tr>
<td>✷ Fish and Wildlife</td>
<td>✷ Put the planning back in Planning Commissions</td>
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Internet Resources

APA
http://www.planning.org
http://www.planning.org/smalltown/

APA Commissioners Site
http://www.planning.org/commissioners/index.html

State Planning Chapters
http://www.planning.org/chapters/links.html

The Planning Commissioners Journal
http://www.plannersweb.com/

On-line Code Libraries
http://www.municodes.com/
http://www.amlegal.com/library/

Planner Community Sites (Message Boards and resource links)
http://www.cyburbia.org/
http://www.planetizen.com/
http://www.smartgrowth.org/
http://web.ufljib.ufl.edu/afa/urp/web.htm