

**HIGHLANDS COUNCIL  
SMART GROWTH AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
CHAIR REPORT  
FOR THE JANUARY 30, 2006 MEETING**

On January 30, 2006, the Smart Growth and Economic Development Committee held a meeting at the New Jersey Highlands Council office in Chester, New Jersey. Notice of a special meeting was sent to the following newspapers: the Daily Record, Easton Express Times, Daily News, Star Ledger, New Jersey Herald and The Record. Notice of the meeting was also provided to the public on the Highlands Council's web site. Council members present at the meeting were: Committee Chair Ben Spinelli and Councilmembers Tim Dillingham, John Weingart, Glen Vetrano, Kurt Alstede, and Debbie Pasquarelli via teleconference. Council staff present included Tom Borden, Dante Di Pirro, Steve Balzano, Lisa Voyce, Jeff LeJava, Ross MacDonald and Chris Danis. Mr. Spinelli called the meeting to order at 12:45 p.m. One matter was on the agenda: review of Policy Matrix specifically relating to the Smart Growth committee. Policy action items discussed included build out analysis, criteria for identification of growth receiving areas and wastewater utility capacity.

***1. Draft Policy Matrix – Smart Growth***

Mr. Balzano introduced the various build out model scenarios being prepared as an element of the Smart Growth component of the Regional Master Plan (“RMP”). The Highlands Council staff has identified the build out model scenarios as a key issue in the draft matrix that must be reviewed by the Smart Growth and Economic Development Committee. The working draft of the policy matrix will be used to track the data, approaches, next steps, and policy decisions leading up to a draft RMP.

The Highlands Council has contracted with The National Center for Neighborhoods and Brownfields Redevelopment (NCNBR), Bloustein Planning School, Rutgers University to develop various build out scenarios. The build out analysis is being developed to produce four scenarios. (For a more complete analysis of the build out scenarios see attachment 1). The four scenarios include the build out of the Highlands Region based on existing zoning or the “Trend Baseline”, the build out based on the State Plan Planning Areas or the “State Plan Baseline”, the build out based on the RMP’s Land Use Capability Map or the “Highlands Land Capability Baseline”, and the build out based on the RMP after adjustment for higher permitted residential densities in specific growth centers or the “Highlands Growth Capacity.”

The results of the build out analysis will provide a basis to estimate various issues central to the development of the RMP including population, households, employment, schoolchildren, water consumption, wastewater generation, vehicle trips generated, and impervious cover. The Committee was briefed on the impact factors and data sources that are being used for the composite zones as well as the State Planning designations. (For a more complete analysis of the sources of data for the impact factors see attachment 2).

Regarding the State Plan Baseline analysis, the Committee was briefed on the estimated residential density factors based on 2000 census data correlated to State Planning Areas at the municipal zone level. These estimated residential density factors are the best estimates to identify realistic density averages for each of the Planning Areas for use in the build out analysis (For a more complete analysis of the State Plan density factors see attachment 3).

Mr. Dillingham questioned how designated centers, as opposed to the Planning Areas, would be analyzed in the build out analysis. Mr. Balzano and Ms. Danis discussed the challenges to identify specific density factors relating to designated centers due to the variable nature of the goals of the designated centers (economic development, tourism, commercial development) and the variable nature of additional residential density associated with centers. It was pointed out that because the build out model captures existing zoning and the Planning Area designation, the model should be adequately representative for designated centers. After additional discussion, the Committee came to a consensus on the following additions to be reflected in the draft Policy Matrix relating to the build out scenarios (See attached “Policy Action - Regional Development & Design”):

- Include existing approved designated centers in State Plan scenario that relies on existing underlying zoning and/or estimated residential density factors based on state planning area designation
- Develop criteria for defining existing “areas of concentrated growth”
- Provide a ranking system based on proximity to available infrastructure and other appropriate growth receiving attributes

Lastly, the Committee discussed the approach to estimate utility capacity limitations under the build out scenarios. Mr. Balzano discussed the proposed utilization of population projections and per capita water use to determine water use and existing available wastewater capacity to determine wastewater use for each of the four build out scenarios. After additional discussion, the Committee concurred with the proposed use existing available wastewater capacity to be reflected in the draft Policy Matrix relating to the utility capacity with the following additional provision (See attached “Policy Action - Utility Capacity”):

- Provide identification of wastewater treatment facilities where existing permitted capacity may impair receiving waterway based on best available information including the results of an Assimilative Capacity screening analysis.

Mr. Spinelli announced that the next meeting of the Committee would focus on the transfer of development rights program. He asked members, staff, and the public to consider TDR approaches that would address the varying issues of concern for different types of land and landowners. He specifically wanted consideration of flexibility and incentives in the TDR program, such as installment payments, tax benefits, annuities, to address concerns over land owner equity.

The meeting adjourned at 4 p.m.