



SUSTAINABILITY

A sustainable community *is* more resilient. Sustainability is often defined by embracing the interconnectivity between the economic, social and environmental components of any given community. For decades in Florida, rapid growth was the norm, local governments had a continuously increasing tax base and relatively new infrastructure. Developments were approved following a plan that secured revenue to pay for required infrastructure. This financial feasibility worked in the short-term. The recession, aging infrastructure and the pending 2018 ballot amendments are encouraging some communities to reconsider how to develop in a way that secures revenues needed to fund all ongoing obligations; long term fiscal *sustainability*.

Over the last ten + years, Osceola County has been redefining what it means to live in the County and what it will look like. During the ECFRPC May Council meeting, Susan Caswell presented Osceola Counties Strategies for a Sustainable Future. By asking the question, “How we maximize the counties fiscal picture?” they looked at the revenue and expenditures relative to the built environment. They found the cost of providing geographically- based, basic services increased with a network of roadways that were *not* connected. Basic services such as spraying for the Zika virus during the recent scare and fire response were noting that a lack of roadway connection significantly increased the amount of time it took to complete any given job. Development patterns have a direct effect on our resiliency.

The City of Orlando, whom will present to the Council in September this year, sets their focus in the Municipal Sustainability Plan by understanding, “The built environment, such as the design, construction and operation of buildings and infrastructure has a direct effect on the City’s resiliency.” In SoDo, redevelopment occurred on a 22-acre site with a taxable value of \$5.2 M in 2005. The City approved this redevelopment as mixed use, residential, office, retail and restaurants with a Target. The road network was recreated to add connectivity through the project. The development opened in 2008 and by 2010 had a taxable value of \$42 M and reached \$71 M by 2016 and spurred other redevelopment in the area with no investment in infrastructure by the City.

The East Central Florida Strategic Regional Policy Plan (SRPP) adopted in 2011, reflected the How Shall We Grow collaboration with more than 20,000 people to define a new regional vision with three main themes that marked a change from low density sprawl;

- Centers- a strong preference to promote development in centers
- Corridors-establish high density transit corridors
- Conservation- conserve green space.

The challenge for the 2060 East Central Florida SRPP was to create simple compelling policies that would filter down to the 93 Central Florida land use jurisdictions (at plan adoption) to change the regional development patterns over the next 50 years. The following policies were unanimously adopted: (Policy 4.1) Promote integrated land uses and multimodal transportation strategies that support diverse economic centers; (Policy 10.6) an interconnected network of streets; prohibiting new dead end streets unless absolutely necessary to accommodate natural resources of regional significance, and (Policy 3.1) Prevent the incremental severing of regional ecosystems and ecological corridors by identifying and protecting natural resources of regional significance.

These are just two examples of sustainable actions occurring around the region, supported by the SRPP. Moving away from policy driven, mitigation-based response, to an integrated built form that promotes sustainability and resiliency. These local governments are planning their work and working their plans; driving change from the bottom up for the greater good.

