

Iowa Smart Planning Task Force *Report / November 2010*



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Submittal Letter

November 15, 2010

The Honorable Chester J. Culver and
The State of Iowa General Assembly
State Capitol Building
1007 East Grand Ave
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

Dear Governor Culver and General Assembly,

In the 2010 legislative session, the General Assembly passed and the Governor signed into law Senate File 2389 (SF 2389), which provided guidance for Smart Planning in Iowa and established the Iowa Smart Planning Task Force. This Task Force was charged with recommending policies and strategies for creating a stronger planning culture in Iowa, producing more resilient and sustainable communities. In particular, the Task Force was asked to consider how best to:

- Integrate the Iowa Smart Planning Principles into appropriate state policies and programs.
- Determine an effective and efficient coordination and information sharing system to support local and regional planning.
- Suggest appropriate technical and financial incentives to support local and regional planning.
- Develop a framework for regional planning.

The group faced a formidable task in addressing each of those directives by the November 15 deadline. Thanks to the willingness of Task Force members and other interested persons who devoted the time necessary to research and review best practices from other states, solicit input from experts throughout the nation, and craft recommendations in the best interest of the state, we have met your directives within our allotted timeframe.

We are grateful to the individuals and organizations that participated in the public input process through in-person meetings, the webinar, and email and letter correspondence. The input provided significantly improved the recommendations found in this report. We wish to emphasize that we are still listening to the people of Iowa and will continue to do so throughout the existence of the Task Force. Our goal is put forward effective recommendations that benefit this great state and can be supported by the people of Iowa.

As identified in the Rebuild Iowa Advisory Commissions' *120-Day Report* in November 2008, greater guidance and support for smart local and regional planning is necessary for Iowa to build resilient, economically vibrant communities with a high quality of life. SF 2389 was a good start for the state; implementation of the recommendations that follow this letter will ensure continued progress.

The recommendations contained in this report consider the shared responsibility between all levels of government to proactively plan for the future of this state and its communities. Recommendations range from establishing seed resources for local comprehensive smart planning to crafting an optimistic, yet pragmatic vision for the future of Iowa, which would be informed by public input statewide and set the foundation for state agency strategic plan development and coordination.

We also believe the recommendations guide state and local decision-making in a way that makes the best use of limited public resources. For instance, the return on investment study regarding establishment of a statewide geographic information system shows a return of 24 percent to the state over 20 years. We also know that robust community planning and implementation saves resources in the long-run. A 2005 study shows that states that enact comprehensive planning reform that integrates

hazard mitigation experience a 40 percent reduction in per capita insured losses from natural disasters. Effective state-level coordination will also assist in achieving multiple desired outcomes through individual state agency investments. We can choose to plan for the future or simply react to costly future events.

We would also like to point out that Smart Planning concepts have been encouraged in numerous reports and studies in recent years as a means of mitigating future disaster losses, fostering economic development and job creation, safeguarding and improving quality of life, improving public health outcomes, reducing reliance on non-renewable energy sources, and protecting natural and agricultural resources. We believe the recommendations included in this report further each of these efforts in Iowa and finally provide a focus that has been recognized but lacking.

Please feel free to call upon us if you have questions about the report. We stand ready and willing to help in any future charge to the Task Force to support local and regional smart planning in Iowa.

Respectfully,



Nancy Richardson
Director, Iowa Department of Transportation
Co-Chair



Ruth Randleman
Mayor, City of Carlisle
Co-Chair

Acknowledgements

The Iowa Smart Planning Task Force Co-Chairs gratefully acknowledge the following individuals and organizations who contributed significantly to the successful completion of the Task Force's first report to the Governor and General Assembly:

Members of the Iowa Smart Planning Task Force are to be commended for their willingness to commit their time, energy, and expertise to this effort. We greatly appreciate the dedicated leadership and thoughtful guidance of the Committee Co-Chairs: Les Beck, Rick Hunsaker, Emily Shields, and Don Temeyer. The Task Force would also like to recognize the 65-plus individuals who participated in the committees and workgroups, spending many hours studying, formulating, and deliberating recommendations throughout this process.

Our great appreciation goes to the coordinators of the Task Force, Aaron Todd and Nichole Warren, who worked with Task Force leadership to prepare for meetings, arrange meeting locations, draft reports, communicate with Task Force members, and complete any other necessary tasks. The following persons were instrumental in coordinating the work of the four workgroups: Susan Judkins Josten, Annette Mansheim, Jenna Anderson, Liz Van Zomeren, Cindy Axne and Heather Hackbarth. Special thanks are also due to Adam Bartelt for creating and updating the Iowa Smart Planning Web site, and Tina Potthoff and Juli Probasco-Sowers for creating and issuing press releases.

Additionally, the Task Force would like to thank the Councils of Governments that assisted in securing venues and providing staff support for the public input meetings, including the Northwest Iowa Planning and Development Commission, Southwest Iowa Planning Council, Southern Iowa Council of Governments, Metropolitan Area Planning Agency, Mid Iowa Development Association, Region XII Council of Governments, Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments, Upper Explorerland Regional Planning Commission, and East Central Iowa Council of Governments, as well as the venues that generously provided space for the public input meetings: Spencer City Hall, Montgomery County History Center, Waverly Civic Center, Coralville Public Library, and Boone City Hall. Special thanks are also due to the Iowa State Association of Counties for graciously hosting a public input webinar on Oct. 6, 2010. And thank you to the Iowa Department for the Blind for allowing us to use their facility for each of the Task Force meetings.

Finally, the Task Force would like to express sincere appreciation to all who provided subject matter expertise while recommendations were being crafted and to all members of the public who provided comments and suggestions to improve the recommendations.

Section 1: Executive Summary

The Rebuild Iowa Advisory Commission's *120-Day Report* issued in November 2008 recommended the state provide greater guidance and support for local and regional planning to build resilient, economically vibrant communities with a high quality of life. Senate File 2389 (SF 2389), passed during the 2010 legislative session, responded directly to this recommendation, establishing Smart Planning Principles to guide planning and decision-making, and providing guidance for local comprehensive planning. SF 2389 also established the Iowa Smart Planning Task Force, which was charged with recommending policies and strategies for effective implementation of SF 2389 and for fostering a stronger planning culture in Iowa. In particular, the Task Force was asked to consider how best to:

- Integrate the Iowa Smart Planning Principles into appropriate state policies and programs.
- Determine an effective and efficient coordination and information sharing system to support local and regional planning.
- Suggest appropriate technical and financial incentives to support local and regional planning.
- Develop a framework for regional planning.

The Task Force, along with its two committees and four workgroups, met throughout the summer and fall of 2010 to identify and review best practices, consult local and national experts, and craft recommendations in the best interest of Iowans. A public input process was also implemented, resulting in improved recommendations. Detailed information regarding the legislative directive and Task Force activities can be found in Section 2.

The recommendations set forth in Section 3 of this report seek to establish a coordinated planning framework to support and incentivize local and regional smart planning. A system is laid out to support local governments in their consideration of Iowa's Smart Planning Principles and application of them when planning for the future. Support to municipalities includes tools and technical assistance, guidance from the regional plan, and financial incentives. If desired, municipalities may submit their comprehensive plan to their Plan Review Committee for designation as a "qualified" plan, which will be recognized by state agencies making resource funding decisions. In addition, local planning may be guided and enhanced by integration of watershed plans as they become available and by data that will be coordinated and made readily available by a state office.

The proposed planning framework mandates that regional plans will be developed and made available as a guiding document for local planning. Local planning priorities will also inform the development of regional plans. Regional plans will incorporate goals and strategies of the area's watershed plan once complete. Councils of Governments are tasked with developing a regional plan and coordinating a Plan Review Committee for the purpose of reviewing local plans to qualify them as a smart plan. Once qualified, all state agencies will recognize the distinction for additional consideration when making investment decisions.

The proposed system identifies the role of the state to provide service to local and regional entities by coordinating GIS data, coordinating the development of a planning educational program and toolkit, and providing technical assistance and incentives for completing qualified smart plans. Another important aspect is the development of a shared state vision by which state agencies would align their programs and services. This greater coordination of state agencies will provide efficiencies to be realized even at the local level.

Implementing the proposed framework is based upon 16 recommendations as listed below:

1. State-Level Coordination
 - 1.1: Establish the Office of Planning and Geographic Information Systems (OPGIS) and OPGIS Coordinating Council.

- 1.2: Develop an accessible statewide GIS and data system.
- 1.3: Integrate the Smart Planning Principles into the State's Enterprise Strategic Planning Process.
- 1.4: Provide training and technical assistance to state agencies to facilitate integration of Smart Planning Principles into state investment decision-making processes.
- 1.5: Identify *State of Iowa Smart Planning Goals and Benchmarks* as measurable goals and benchmarks for the state.
2. Regional Planning Framework
 - 2.1: Identify Councils of Governments as the primary organizations responsible for comprehensive regional smart planning throughout Iowa.
 - 2.2: Comprehensive regional smart plans should be completed within five years after legislation is enacted.
 - 2.3: Create a sustainable funding source for regional smart planning.
 - 2.4: Councils of Governments should establish a Plan Review Committee in each region for local smart plan review.
 - 2.5: A regional entity or entities should be established or identified in Central Iowa for the purposes of regional planning, implementation, and local smart plan review.
3. Financial Incentives and Technical Assistance
 - 3.1: Create a sustainable funding source for a smart planning grant program at the state-level for local smart plan development and implementation.
 - 3.2: Expand the menu of financing options available for local governments to develop and implement smart plans.
 - 3.3: State agencies should give additional consideration for having a qualified smart plan to receive state funding for infrastructure and public facilities projects that affect land use, transportation, stormwater management, and floodplain protection.
 - 3.4: Create a smart planning education program and toolbox for local government staff, officials, and the public.
4. Watershed Planning and Implementation
 - 4.1: Enhance watershed planning, coordination, and implementation by creating goals and strategies referencing land use for each of Iowa's six major river basins and three major river regions.
5. State Code Consistency
 - 5.1: Make the definition of "local comprehensive plan" uniform through the Iowa Code.

The Task Force believes that each of these recommendations merits action by the Governor and General Assembly. Recognizing the chronological order associated with some of the recommendations, as well as state budget realities, a timeline is proposed in Section 4. It is believed that the recommendations presented in this report are achievable over five years and that these actions are truly necessary to build sustainable, resilient communities throughout Iowa.

The next steps for the Task Force are identified in Section 5. Finally, the appendices begin in Section 6, including an annotated bibliography of the references included in this document.

Section 2: Legislative Background and Task Force Processes

Legislative Overview

In its November 2008 report, the Rebuild Iowa Advisory Commission (RIAC) called on the state to “lead in developing guidance and support for integrated, regional planning to address recovery and leverage multi-jurisdictional strengths for ongoing initiatives (RIAC Recommendation #8).” As outlined in the report, such guidance and support includes providing seed resources and technical assistance for comprehensive planning, fostering multi-jurisdictional planning, seeking additional resources for councils of governments to undertake regional planning, establishing a state resource devoted to integrating planning and programming functions, developing and adopting a core-level land use policy that incorporates natural hazards risk reduction, undertaking watershed planning, and incorporating smart development principles into planning activities and infrastructure projects.

Responding to this directive, the Legislature passed and the Governor signed into law on April 26, 2010, Senate File 2389 (SF 2389), which includes Division VII: Iowa Smart Planning. The Iowa Smart Planning legislation includes three primary components:

1. Articulates ten Iowa Smart Planning Principles for application in local comprehensive plan development and public investment decision-making;
2. Provides comprehensive planning guidance for cities and counties; and
3. Establishes the Iowa Smart Planning Task Force with various responsibilities.

The Iowa Smart Planning bill does not mandate how communities should grow, rather it requires that communities and state agencies consider Smart Planning Principles when planning for the future and provides guidance concerning important elements local comprehensive plans should include. Smart Planning is meant to improve community resiliency in ways that increase economic opportunity, protect environmental resources, and improve quality of life.

SF 2389 also established the Disaster Prevention program that provided \$30 million through I-JOBS for infrastructure projects related to disaster prevention in communities and counties that apply Smart Planning Principles and follow the local comprehensive planning guidance found in SF 2389.

The sections of SF 2389 pertaining to Smart Planning can be found in the appendix on page 119.

Smart Planning Task Force Duties

The primary purpose of the Iowa Smart Task Force is to develop recommendations for effective implementation of the Iowa Smart Planning legislation. This document represents the first report to the Governor and General Assembly from the Task Force, which is due by Nov. 15, 2010.

As stated in SF 2389, the duties of the Task Force include:

- Evaluate state policies, programs, statutes, and rules to determine whether they should be revised to integrate the Iowa Smart Planning Principles.
- Develop statewide goals for comprehensive planning that utilize the Iowa Smart Planning Principles and develop recommendations for a process to measure progress toward achieving those goals.
- Evaluate and develop incentives to conduct local and regional comprehensive planning, including but not limited to state financial and technical assistance.
- Develop a model for regional comprehensive planning for Iowa and recommend partnerships between state agencies, local governments, educational institutions, and research facilities.
- Review city and county comprehensive plans to determine the number of such plans that address the hazards as listed in the Hazards Element of the suggested local comprehensive plan guidelines and the adequacy of such plans in addressing those hazards.
- Develop a set of recommendations that is consistent with the Iowa Smart Planning Principles and

that does all of the following:

- Coordinates, facilitates, and centralizes the exchange of information related to state and local planning, zoning, and development between state agencies and the General Assembly.
- Coordinates discussions concerning a proposed geographic information system between the producers and the users of such systems.
- Allows the efficient production and dissemination of population and other demographic statistical forecasts.
- Creates a centralized storage location for all comprehensive plans.
- Facilitates the cooperation of state and local governments with comprehensive planning, educational, and research programs.
- Provides and administers technical and financial assistance for state and local comprehensive planning.
- Provides information to local governments related to state, federal, and other resources for comprehensive planning.

The Task Force is directed to consult land use experts, representatives of cities and counties, agricultural and environmental interests, urban and regional planning experts, reports or information from the Local Government Innovation Commission, and all other information deemed relevant by Task Force members. The Task Force shall also solicit information from the general public on matters related to comprehensive planning. Additionally, the Director of the Iowa Department of Management (DOM) or his/her designee is directed to seek funding to support local comprehensive planning.

The work of the Task Force has been coordinated by the Rebuild Iowa Office, the Iowa Association of Regional Councils, and the DOM. The Task Force is dissolved on Dec. 31, 2012.

Task Force Membership, Structure & Meeting Dates

The Iowa Smart Planning Task Force consists of 33 members - 29 voting members and four non-voting legislative representatives. Six members are appointed by the Governor; of those six, at least one must have experience in land development, at least one must have experience in real estate, and at least one must have experience in residential construction. Additionally, the six gubernatorial appointees must also represent various city and county population thresholds, as identified in the chart below.

1. Dept on Aging - Machel Shaffer
2. Dept of Agriculture & Land Stewardship - Wayne Petersen
3. Dept of Commerce - Rob Berntsen
4. Dept of Cultural Affairs - Paula Mohr
5. Dept of Economic Development - Bret Mills
6. Office of Energy Independence - Bruce Greiner
7. Dept of Management - Heather Hackbarth
8. Department of Natural Resources - Bill Ehm
9. Dept of Defense - David Johnston
10. Dept of Public Health - Ken Sharp
11. Dept of Public Safety - Stuart Crine
12. Rebuild Iowa Office - Emily Shields
13. Dept of Transportation - Nancy Richardson
14. Iowa Workforce Development - Joe Mowers
15. Iowa State University - Gary Taylor
16. University of Iowa - Charles Connerly
17. University of Northern Iowa - LaDene Bowen
18. American Planning Association - David Wilwerding
19. American Institute of Architects - Carey Nagle

20. Iowa Association of Regional Councils - Rick Hunsaker
21. Iowa League of Cities - Jessica Hyland Harder
22. Iowa State Association of Counties - Les Beck
23. School Administrators of Iowa - Dan Smith
24. City: Pop. of 5,000 or less - Ruth Randleman, Carlisle
25. City: Pop. greater than 5,000 & less than 25,000 - Chad Kuene, North Liberty
26. City: Pop. of 25,000 or more - Teri Goodman, Dubuque
27. County: Pop. of 10,000 or less - Jeff Kolb, Butler County
28. County: Pop. greater than 10,000 & less than 50,000 - Pam Myhre, Cerro Gordo County
29. County: Pop. of 50,000 or more - Donald Temeyer, Black Hawk County
30. State Senator, Democrat - Sen. Pam Jochum
31. State Senator, Republican - Sen. Shawn Hamerlink
32. State Representative, Democrat - Rep. Tom Schueller
33. State Representative, Republican - Rep. Nick Wagner

During the first meeting of the Task Force in June, co-chairs were selected by members: Nancy Richardson, Director of the Iowa Department of Transportation; and Ruth Randleman, Mayor of the City of Carlisle.

During the same meeting, the Task Force determined it was necessary to divide its membership into two committees to facilitate in-depth discussion. These committees were each divided into two work groups to focus attention even further. Each committee co-chair led a workgroup. Any interested persons were invited to participate in the workgroups. The workgroups, consisting of more than 65 Iowans from across the state, met from July through early September, consulting various experts and resources regarding Smart Planning. The workgroups funneled recommendations to the committees for review; the committees then submitted recommendations to the full Task Force, which provided the basis for the draft recommendations approved on Sept. 15.

The basic structure and scope of the committees and workgroups are outlined below. Leadership is identified in parenthesis.

- Intergovernmental Coordination and Information Sharing Committee
 - The Integration of Smart Planning Principles Workgroup is charged with evaluating state policies, programs, statutes, and rules to determine whether they should be revised to incorporate the Iowa Smart Planning Principles (Emily Shields, Rebuild Iowa Office).
 - The Information Sharing and Coordination Workgroup is charged with identifying strategies to ensure that data and analysis tools are readily available for plan development and for recommending a coordination mechanism to support local and regional planning efforts (Don Temeyer, HR Green Company).
- Comprehensive Planning Committee
 - The Local Comprehensive Planning Workgroup is charged with developing statewide goals for comprehensive planning, conducting a review of existing plans for inclusion of hazard mitigation elements, and recommending financial incentives and technical assistance to support local planning (Les Beck, Linn County Planning and Development Department).
 - The Regional Comprehensive Planning Workgroup is charged with developing a framework for regional planning throughout Iowa and recommending financial incentives and technical assistance to support regional planning (Rick Hunsaker, Region XII Council of Governments).

More information regarding the scope, membership, and experts and resources consulted in each

committee can be found in the appendix on page 113.

The Task Force met on June 23, 2010, Aug. 11, 2010, Sept. 15, 2010, Oct. 20, 2010 and Nov. 10, 2010. All Task Force meetings were held at the Department for the Blind in Des Moines, with an option to participate via conference phone. The media was notified of all meetings and all interested persons were encouraged to attend. Meeting notes can be found on the Iowa Smart Planning Web site and are also available upon request.

Public Input Process

The Iowa Smart Planning Task Force membership placed a high priority on soliciting and meaningfully considering public input concerning the development and refinement of the recommendations included in this report. Given the time constraints of addressing each of the directives outlined in SF 2389 by Nov. 15, 2010, the Task Force believes the public input process employed provided adequate notice and allowed for multiple opportunities for interested persons and organizations to provide input into the process. That said, the Task Force wants to make it clear that Iowans can continue to be engaged in this process, and further input is welcome and will be actively sought as the Task Force continues its work over the next two years. This report was produced over a very short timeframe; it is hoped that future efforts will allow for a longer period of time for public input.

The Task Force provided multiple means for public input throughout the process of developing and finalizing the recommendations included in this report. While crafting draft recommendations, workgroup membership was open to all interested persons and organizations. Once draft recommendations were approved at the Sept. 15, 2010, Task Force meeting, the following opportunities were offered for public comment:

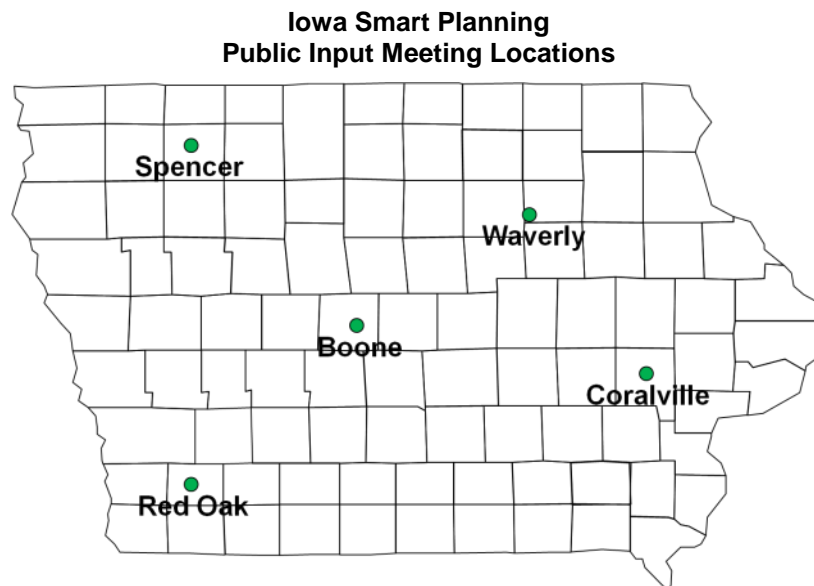
- **Public Input Meetings:** Meetings were held in five communities across the state. These meetings began with a brief presentation by a Task Force member, outlining the draft recommendations and providing some context. Following the presentation, attendees were encouraged to ask questions and provide suggestions for improving the recommendations.
- **Webinar:** The Iowa State Association of Counties hosted a webinar on behalf of the Iowa Smart Planning Task Force that provided an overview of the draft recommendations, and then provided an opportunity for attendees to ask questions and provide suggestions for improving the recommendations. The webinar was held on Oct. 6, 2010, from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m.
- **Survey:** A survey was developed that allowed respondents to articulate support, neutrality, or opposition to each of the draft recommendations approved on Sept. 15. Additionally, two qualitative questions were included that asked respondents to suggest items that should be changed, added, or deleted, and to offer any other comments or suggestions. Surveys were posted on the Iowa Smart Planning Web site beginning Sept. 16, 2010, and hardcopies were provided at each of the public input meetings. Respondents could submit the applications anonymously, if desired. Respondents who provided a legible email address were sent an email with a link to the compiled public input comments so that they may review the comments and stay up-to-date on the activities of the Task Force. The Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization also issued a survey that borrowed a few questions from the Task Force's survey and added others.
- Finally, interested persons and organizations were encouraged to submit comments and suggestions via email and letter.

The Task Force relied upon the Task Force members' associated organizations to publicize the public input opportunities – in addition to press releases and information posted on the Iowa Smart Planning Web site – and to encourage participation from various groups and interested persons across the state.

As of Nov. 15, 2010, 206 persons participated in the public input meetings and webinar, 59 surveys

were submitted, 20 e-mails were submitted, and nine letters were submitted. In general, public comments showed that the concepts presented in the draft recommendations were supported but greater clarification and revisions were needed on a few topics, particularly related to regional comprehensive smart planning.

A brief analysis of the public comments, followed by the survey reports and raw comments and letters, are provided in the appendix on page 56.

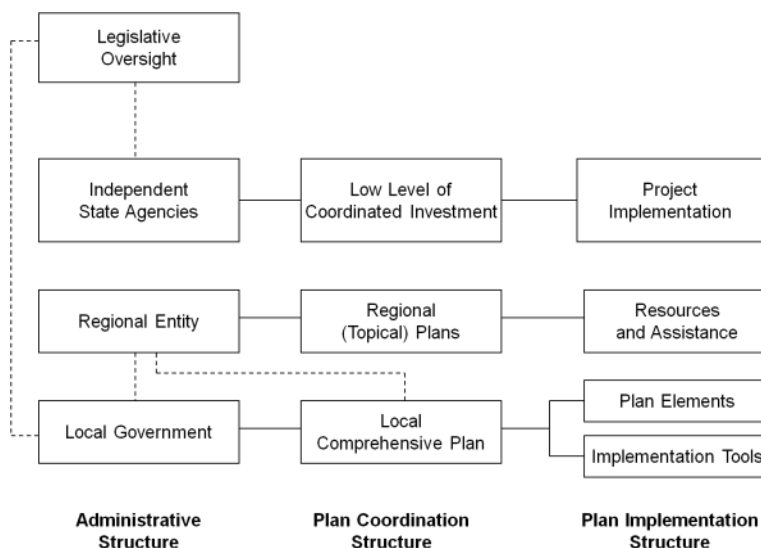


Section 3: Policy Recommendations

Research and experiences in other states show that the most effective community and regional planning structures are both vertically integrated (between levels of government, local-regional-state) and horizontally integrated (between state agencies or between neighboring jurisdictions). The following diagrams illustrate the planning structure that existed in Iowa prior to passage of Senate File 2389 (SF 2389), after SF 2389 was passed, and, finally, the structure the recommendations in this report seek to establish.

Prior to the passage of SF 2389, comprehensive planning in Iowa was mostly conducted at the local level, with topical plans (e.g. transportation, economic development, trails, etc.) made at the regional level, creating a siloed, horizontal framework. Figure 1.1 conceptually illustrates these relationships, noting little legislative guidance for local and regional planning, topical regional plans produced by Councils of Government (COGs), assistance provided to local governments by COGs upon request, and a low level of investment coordination among state agencies.

Figure 1.1
Planning Framework Before Passage of SF 2389



After being signed into law in April 2010, SF 2389 modified the existing framework by adding some vertical coordination. This legislation endorsed Smart Planning Principles that must be considered and may be applied to appropriate planning, zoning, development, and resource management decisions; outlined Smart Comprehensive Plan Elements to guide local plan development; and created the Smart Planning Task Force to craft recommendations for a more integrated, supported planning framework. Figure 1.2 conceptually illustrates these existing relationships, noting stronger legislative guidance for local planning, greater consistency in local plan development, and overarching principles to guide planning and decision-making processes.

Figure 1.3 outlines the planning framework that this report's recommendations seek to establish. This improved framework strengthens vertical coordination at all levels of government (local-regional-state) and horizontal coordination at the state level, while also encouraging multi-jurisdictional coordination at the local level. Goals and benchmarks are included so that progress can be measured. Additionally, greater investment coordination is emphasized at the state level. The concepts illustrated in Figure 1.3 can be made most effective with the identification of a state coordinating entity. The Task Force believes that this framework will serve Iowa well, ensuring that issues that impact multiple political jurisdictions,

such as flooding, have a forum in which they can be effectively addressed, and that the state is coordinating investment decisions to maximize the impact of limited state resources and efficiently and effectively promoting implementation of smart projects.

Figure 1.2
Planning Framework After Passage of SF 2389

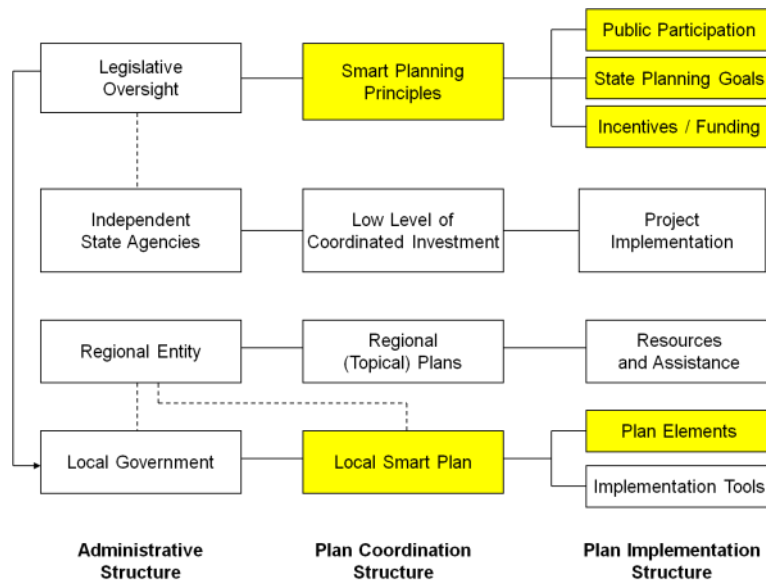
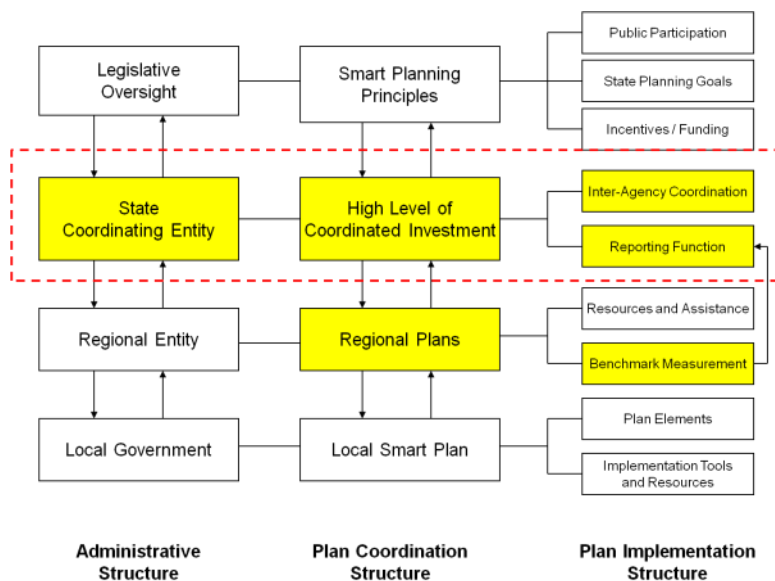


Figure 1.3
Proposed Smart Planning Framework

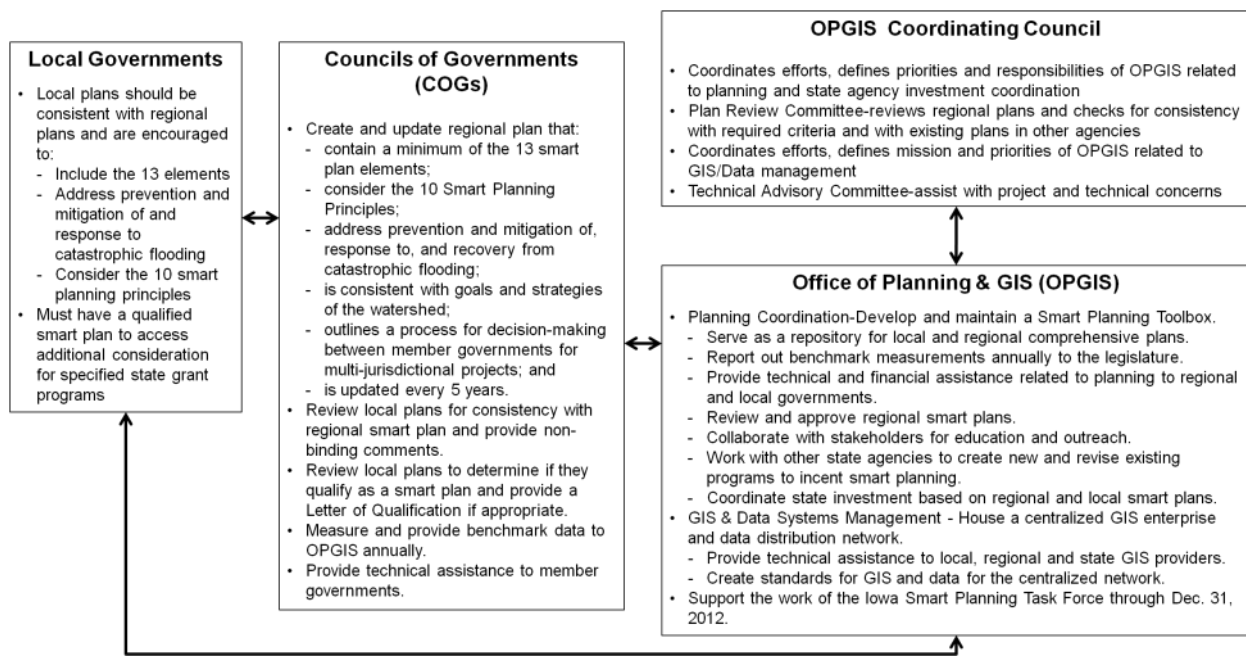


The following policy recommendations were approved at the Iowa Smart Planning Task Force's Nov. 10, 2010, meeting. The Task Force believes that these recommendations will provide the structure at the

state, regional, and local level, as well as the resources necessary, to effectively implement Smart Planning in Iowa, producing more resilient and sustainable communities, enhancing economic development, improving the state's quality of life, and ensuring that tax dollars are wisely spent.

Figure 1.4 below illustrates how the recommendations fit together and interact among local, regional, and state entities. One of the key attributes of this framework is the feedback loop among all levels. The improved framework will coordinate efforts and assistance at all levels to create a unified effort for planning, public investment, and hazard mitigation.

Figure 1.4
Detailed Smart Planning Framework



The recommendations are divided into five categories: 1) state-level coordination, 2) regional planning framework, 3) financial incentives and technical assistance, 4) watershed planning and implementation, and 5) state code consistency. Each of the recommendations is described in-depth below, including an overview of the recommendation, a description of why it is needed and beneficial, necessary legislative or administrative action steps, and references. The references are numbered based on the annotated bibliography in the appendix.

1. State Level Coordination

Recommendation 1 satisfies the following tasks charged to the Iowa Smart Planning Task Force in SF 2389:

- Develop a set of recommendations that is consistent with the Iowa Smart Planning Principles and does all of the following:
 - Coordinates, facilitates, and centralizes the exchange of information related to state and local planning, zoning, and development between state agencies and the General Assembly.
 - Coordinates discussions concerning a proposed geographic information system between the producers and users of such systems.
 - Allows the efficient production and dissemination of population and other demographic

- *statistical forecasts.*
- *Creates a centralized storage location for all comprehensive plans.*
- *Facilitates the cooperation of state and local governments with comprehensive planning, educational, and research programs.*
- *Provides and administers technical and financial assistance for comprehensive planning.*
- *Provides information to local governments related to state, federal, and other resources for comprehensive planning.*
- *Develop statewide goals for comprehensive planning that utilize the Iowa Smart Planning Principles and develop recommendations to measure progress toward achieving state goals.*
- *Evaluate state policies, programs, statutes, and rules to determine whether they should be revised to integrate the Iowa Smart Planning Principles*

The following recommendations outline a framework to coordinate smart comprehensive planning, geographic information and data systems, and state-level investment in programs and projects that affect community building, land use, and quality of life.

Recommendation 1.1: Establish the Office of Planning and Geographic Information Systems (OPGIS) and OPGIS Coordinating Council.

The Office of Planning and Geographic Information Systems (OPGIS) and OPGIS Coordinating Council should be established to better coordinate state investments and integration of Smart Planning Principles throughout appropriate state programs and policies, administer financial and technical assistance for local planning, implement a statewide geographic information system (GIS) clearinghouse, and provide technical assistance and training for GIS data management.

Planning efforts of this entity will also complement and strengthen the proposed watershed planning and coordination activities (Recommendation 4).

Office of Planning and Geographic Information Systems

Effective and efficient coordination of smart planning efforts across the state requires an entity at the state level that can foster successful partnerships between state, regional, and local governments and resource organizations. The OPGIS Coordinating Council, described below, will define OPGIS's mission and establish priorities.

The recommended scope of work for OPGIS includes:

- Planning Coordination
 - Collaborate with stakeholders to develop and coordinate Smart Planning educational programming for planning professionals, elected officials, and the public (Recommendation 3.4).
 - Serve as an electronic repository for local and regional comprehensive plans.
 - Report out benchmark measurements annually to the Legislature (Recommendation 1).
 - Administer and deliver smart planning technical and financial assistance to regional organizations and local governments (Recommendation 3).
 - Work with other state agencies to create new and revise existing programs to incentivize smart planning (Recommendation 1.4).
 - Provide staff support to a Plan Review Committee that reviews and approves regional smart plans.
 - Support the Planning Coordination Council in efforts to coordinate state investment based on regional and local smart plans.
 - Support the activities of the Iowa Smart Planning Task Force, in collaboration with the Iowa Association of Regional Councils.

- GIS & Data Management
 - Develop and maintain a centralized GIS enterprise and data distribution network (Recommendation 1.2).
 - Provide technical assistance to local, regional, and state GIS providers and users.
 - Create standards for GIS and data for the centralized network.

OPGIS Coordinating Council

The OPGIS Coordinating Council coordinates efforts and establishes priorities and responsibilities of the OPGIS. The Council will act as a forum for coordination of state investment based on regional and local smart plans and the realization of co-benefits of state investment, and coordinate the effort to establish the statewide GIS system.

The Council is made up of appointees from state, regional, and local governments, universities, and/or the private sector. Suggested membership includes:

- Iowa League of Cities (3)
- Iowa State Association of Counties (2)
- Iowa Association of Regional Councils (1)
- Regents Universities (3)
- State Department Directors or Their Representatives (7)
 - Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship
 - Department of Cultural Affairs
 - Department of Economic Development
 - Department of Management
 - Department of Natural Resources
 - Department of Transportation
 - Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division
- Appointed by Governor (5)

The three Iowa League of Cities (League) appointees should represent a small, medium, and large community respectively. One appointee for the Iowa State Association of Counties (ISAC) should represent a rural county and the other an urban county. The Gubernatorial appointees should include representatives from impacted sectors; for example, the energy and/or private development sectors.

The appointments by the League, ISAC, Iowa Association of Regional Councils, and Governor should be coordinated so that all geographic regions of the state are equitably represented.

A Planning Technical Advisory Committee and a GIS Technical Advisory Committee may be established through the Coordinating Council to assist with implementation of specific tasks and projects of the OPGIS, including the review of regional smart plans. The Iowa Geographic Information Council, a voluntary group, may serve this purpose for the GIS Technical Advisory Committee and has indicated their willingness to take on such a role in a letter to the Smart Planning Task Force (see Appendix C, page 56).

Location of the OPGIS and OPGIS Coordinating Council

The Task Force believes it is important to note that OPGIS and OPGIS Coordinating Council necessitate autonomy, authority, and responsibility to lead and coordinate smart planning and investment processes at the state level.

With that in mind, the Task Force recommends the OPGIS and associated Coordinating Council would be established as an independent office, similar to the way in which the Iowa Office of Energy Independence or the Rebuild Iowa Office is structured. Such an office would outsource human

resources, accounting, and information technology services to keep personnel costs to a minimum.

Other options considered by the Task Force included placing the OPGIS and associated Coordinating Council within an existing agency; however, the planning and GIS functions must still retain autonomy under this scenario. Existing agencies that could be considered include the Departments of Economic Development, Administrative Services, or Management. Alternatively, the planning and GIS functions could be separated completely and either exist as independent offices or be placed within an existing agency.

Justification

- Effective coordination of state-level assistance, resources, and strategies will require a state-level coordinating entity.
- Creation of the Coordinating Council will ensure that the mission and priorities of the OPGIS reflect interagency, intergovernmental, and interdisciplinary collaboration.
- Development of a centralized comprehensive plan database, GIS and data systems network, and resource and educational programming will greatly aid regional and local governments in the creation of smart plans.
- Dedicating staff and experts to provide technical assistance to local governments will ensure that all entities wishing to create a smart plan have the capacity to do so.
- A return on investment study showed that the establishment of a GIS/data management system in Iowa could produce a 24 percent return on investment and return \$5 for every \$1 spent over 20 years; such a system becomes even more valuable during disasters, such as the floods of 2008.

Action Steps (Legislative/Administrative)

- Establish the OPGIS and OPGIS Coordination Council in the Iowa Code.
- Allocate the necessary resources to the OPGIS for effective implementation.
- Create administrative rules for the OPGIS and OPGIS Coordinating Council.

References

1. Connecticut Office of Policy and Management: Office of Responsible Growth.
2. Conservation and Development Policies Plan for Connecticut (2005). Office of Policy and Management.
3. Delaware Office of State Planning Coordination.
4. Delaware's Cabinet Committee on State Planning Issues.
5. Delaware Geographic Data Committee.
6. Florida Department of Community Affairs: Division of Community Planning.
7. Georgia Department of Community Affairs.
8. Iowa Geospatial Infrastructure: A Strategic ROI Business Plan for the Iowa Geographic Information Council (June 30, 3008).
9. Minnesota Department of Administration: Office of Geographic and Demographic Analysis
10. New Jersey Department of Community Affairs: Office of Smart Growth.
11. New York Environmental Conservation Law, Article 6- State Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Policy Act.

Recommendation 1.2: Develop an accessible statewide GIS and data system.

To facilitate creation of smart plans at the regional and local level, an accessible GIS and data management system should be readily available. Such a system would serve as a clearinghouse for GIS data across the State. Depending on the source and circumstances, some data would be housed by the clearinghouse while other data would be accessed through a central directory of providers. The OPGIS should work with existing providers to standardize the collection and storage of geospatial information.

All levels of government would be encouraged to share their data. Sensitive data would be removed prior to being submitted to the clearinghouse. This data will be useful to planners, as well as all who consume Iowa geospatial data, and across all levels of government.

Justification

- For local governments to create effective and complete comprehensive plans, mapping functions and data needs to be readily available. Local governments across the state would benefit from a centralized system compiled from accurate and standardized sources.
- Such a system would reduce duplication of efforts, time delays, and costs in the long-run for all levels of government.
- A return on investment study showed that the establishment of a GIS/data management system could produce a 24 percent return on investment and return \$5 for every \$1 spent over 20 years; these systems become even more valuable during disasters, such as the floods of 2008.

Action Steps (Legislative/Administrative)

- Adequate resources need to be provided by the Legislature to the OPGIS to develop and maintain the GIS system, and provide necessary technical assistance to providers and users of data.

References

8. Iowa Geospatial Infrastructure: A Strategic ROI Business Plan for the Iowa Geographic Information Council (June 30, 2008).
9. Minnesota Department of Administration: Office of Geographic and Demographic Analysis.
12. GeoStor: Arkansas' Official GIS Platform. Arkansas Geographic Information Office.
13. Maryland State Geographic Information Committee.
14. Massachusetts Office of Geographic Information.
15. Minnesota GeoSpatial Information Office.
16. New York State Geographic Information Systems Clearinghouse. New York State Office of Cyber Security.
17. NH GRANIT: New Hampshire's GIS Clearinghouse. University of New Hampshire
18. Utah GIS Portal. State of Utah.
19. Washington State Geographic Information Council.

Recommendation 1.3: Integrate the Smart Planning Principles into the State's Enterprise Strategic Planning process.

The Iowa Department of Management (IDOM) oversees the state of Iowa's Enterprise Strategic Planning Process through which individual agencies develop three- to five-year plans that outline essential goals, strategies, and measures. This helps ensure that each agency remains focused on and makes progress toward achieving its vision and mission. This process currently lacks the direction of an overall statewide vision and goals.

State agencies are required to consider the Smart Planning Principles in planning and resource management decisions. The Task Force recommends that the Enterprise Strategic Planning Process be modified to incorporate Iowa Smart Planning Principles in the following ways, utilizing technical assistance from OPGIS staff:

- Create and regularly update a statewide vision and strategic plan that incorporates the Iowa Smart Planning Principles to which agency strategic plans should align.
- Update the *Guide for Agency Strategic Planning* to explain how state agencies should incorporate Smart Planning Principles as stated in SF 2389.
- Create and update metrics toward the Principles in both the statewide and individual agency plans.

- IDOM should be a clearinghouse of agency strategic plans and provide accountability and transparency on metrics.

Justification

- Establishing an overall vision for the state with specific goals will provide direction for agencies to align strategies and objectives and provide clarity at the local level when all agencies are working toward achieving a shared vision.
- A survey was distributed to nine state agencies and two regents' universities to determine familiarity with and incorporation of the Iowa Smart Planning Principles. Discussion following review of the preliminary results of the survey and the Enterprise Strategic Planning Process identified a lack of an overall statewide vision and goals.

Action Steps (Legislative/Administrative)

- Integration of Smart Planning Principles into the Enterprise Planning Process administrative rules.
- Allocate funding for IDOM for additional staff resources to implement a process to facilitate the creation of a statewide vision and goals that incorporate the Iowa Smart Planning Principles.

References

20. Guide for Enterprise Strategic Planning (May 2007), State of Iowa.

Recommendation 1.4: Provide training and technical assistance to state agencies to facilitate integration of Smart Planning Principles into state investment decision-making processes.

The Task Force recommends that Iowa Smart Planning Principles be integrated into state investment decisions, particularly grant programs administered by state agencies. The first step to integrating the Principles into state investment decisions is by having state agency strategic plans align with a shared vision that incorporates the Principles as described in Recommendation 1.3 above. Grant decisions made by agencies should subsequently support and align with Smart Planning Principles and state goals. This strategy encourages and provides an incentive for local municipalities to develop comprehensive plans that incorporate the Iowa Smart Planning Principles.

OPGIS should help ensure success of integrating the Principles into grant award processes by providing training to state grant administrators. This activity would include establishing measures for success.

Justification

- Implementation of this recommendation will provide state grant administrators the necessary tools to effectively incorporate the Smart Planning Principles into the grant process.
- Effective incorporation of the Smart Planning Principles within state grant programs will provide clear direction and incentive to local governments to incorporate Iowa Smart Planning Principles into local comprehensive planning and decision-making processes.
- Incorporating Smart Planning Principles into state grant programs will better align state agency investments with the statewide vision and goals, which also incorporate the Principles.

Action Steps (Legislative/Administrative)

- Allocate funding for OPGIS to provide training to state grant fund administrators on how to effectively incorporate Smart Planning Principles into funding decisions.

References

20. Guide for Enterprise Strategic Planning (May 2007), State of Iowa.

Recommendation 1.5: Identify “State of Iowa Smart Planning Goals and Benchmarks” as measurable goals and benchmarks for the state.

The Task Force recommends that the OPGIS and OPGIS Coordinating Council adopt the “State of Iowa Smart Planning Goals and Benchmarks” as part of their goals and guiding principles. The Smart Planning Goals and Benchmarks stem from the vision that smart planning should result in greater economic opportunity, enhanced environmental integrity, improved public health, and high quality of life for all Iowans. The following goals and benchmarks should be considered a sample starting point.

State of Iowa Smart Planning Goals and Benchmarks

Goal 1: Collaboration

To foster a collaborative planning process through partnerships between state agencies and organizations, regional entities, counties, cities, the rural community, and the public.

Strategy 1.1 - Encourage public involvement in the planning process.

Benchmarks:

- 1.1.1: Increase in the number of public input sessions and in the number of participants in these input sessions.
- 1.1.2: Increase in the public access to plans through online availability and outreach materials.

Strategy 1.2 - Increase access to partner resources for more efficient and effective planning.

Benchmarks:

- 1.2.1: Creation and maintenance of a Smart Planning Toolbox to include best practices, resources and models; with an interactive comment process for user recommendations on improvements and additions.
- 1.2.2: Collection and reporting of baseline data regarding planning and development at the local, regional and state level.
- 1.2.3: Identification and prioritization of areas of the state that have greater needs and issues requiring assistance.
- 1.2.4: Collection of all comprehensive plans to establish an electronic database.
- 1.2.5: Increase in availability of best available data on flood mapping, runoff and precipitation.

Strategy 1.3 - Provide education on smart planning.

Benchmarks:

- 1.3.1: Creation of an education program on smart planning through collaboration among the Iowa League of Cities, the Iowa State Association of Counties (ISAC), Iowa Association of Regional Council (IARC), regent universities and other interested stakeholders.
- 1.3.2: Increase in the number of participants (public, elected and appointed officials, staff, youth and schools) completing a smart planning education program.

Goal 2: Efficiency, Transparency, and Consistency

To provide for increased efficiency, transparency, and consistency in planning and investment processes, and to ensure equitable availability of resources.

Strategy 2.1 - Promote coordination among state agencies for investment in smart planning.

Benchmarks:

- 2.1.1: Increase in percentage of investment in localities with smart plans compared to overall investment in similar projects/programs.
- 2.1.2: Increase in incentives for implementation of smart plans and watershed planning.

Strategy 2.2 - Encourage consistency in development standards.

Benchmarks:

- 2.2.1: Increase in the number of Iowa cities and counties that have an adopted and are enforcing a nationally recognized building code, including the state energy code.
- 2.2.2: Increase in the percentage of new construction in compliance with a nationally recognized building code, including the state energy code.

Strategy 2.3 - Report successes and desired improvements.

Benchmarks:

- 2.3.1: Completion of an annual "State of Smart Planning" report on key metrics and success stories around the state.
- 2.3.2: Increase in the effective use of technology for collaboration, education, and participation in the planning process.

Goal 3: Livable Communities and Quality of Life

To promote livable communities and maintain a high quality of life through housing and transportation diversity.

Strategy 3.1 - Promote housing diversity.

Benchmarks:

- 3.1.1: Increase in housing diversity through adaptive reuse of existing structures (e.g. granny flats, accessory apartments, lofts, etc.).
- 3.1.2: Increase in the number of affordable housing units.
- 3.1.3: Decrease in the number and percentage of residents who spend more than 30 percent of their household income on housing, including utilities.

Strategy 3.2 - Encourage multimodal transportation.

Benchmarks:

- 3.2.1: Decrease in the growth rate of vehicle miles (or vehicle hours) traveled.
- 3.2.2: Increase in the number of trips made by carpool, public transportation, bicycles, walking or working at home.
- 3.2.3: Increase in the number of trail, pedestrian and/or bike plans.
- 3.2.4: Increase in the number of bikeways, bicycle facilities, walkways, and paths built.

Goal 4: Sustainable Design and Community Character

To encourage the sustainable design of communities with the goal of reducing urban sprawl while supporting and strengthening the character of the community.

Strategy 4.1 - Identify "Priority Growth Areas" based on application of Smart Planning Principles to projected development and population demand identified in the local smart plan. Priority Growth Areas may include those which focus on aspects of development such as revitalization, expansion, rural/transitional, and Transportation Oriented Design (TODs), among others.

Benchmarks:

- 4.1.1: Identification, quantification, and prioritization of Priority Growth Areas for a 20 year period and percent of projected demand the Priority Growth Areas will accommodate.
- 4.1.2: Increase in the percentage of new development in a Priority Growth Area compared with all new development.
- 4.1.3: Increase in the average density (persons/acre) of new development in Priority Growth Areas compared to the average density of existing development.
- 4.1.4: Decrease in annexation of land that is not within a Priority Growth Area.
- 4.1.5: Increase in public investment in Priority Growth Areas.

Strategy 4.2 - Identify “Natural Resource Protection” and “Agricultural Protection” areas.

Benchmarks:

- 4.2.1: Identification, quantification, and prioritization of Natural Resource Protection areas.
- 4.2.2: Decrease in the percentage of new development in protection areas compared with all new development.
- 4.2.3: Increase in the amount of land within protection areas which are protected by land development regulations, special state programs or voluntary means.
- 4.2.4: Identification, quantification and prioritization of Agricultural Protection areas.
- 4.2.5: Increase in the amount of land devoted to local food production.

Strategy 4.3 - Encourage sustainable development and building practices and energy efficiency.

Benchmarks:

- 4.3.1: Increase in the amount of new development utilizing low impact development (LID) techniques.
- 4.3.2: Increase in the amount of new development meeting or exceeding recognized energy conservation standards.
- 4.3.3: Increase in the amount of development of “reused” land and buildings (i.e. redevelopment and historic preservation as opposed to new development on greenfield sites).
- 4.3.4: Increase in the conversion of vacant or underutilized, buildable land within Priority Growth Areas.
- 4.3.5: Increase in the amount of new development achieving energy conservation certification from a recognized national program (e.g. LEED, NAHB, IGCC).

Strategy 4.4 - Maintain and strengthen community character and identity.

Benchmarks:

- 4.4.1: Identification of cultural and historic districts.
- 4.4.2: Increase in compatible development in cultural and historic districts.
- 4.4.3: Increase in access to local foods through farmer’s markets, community gardens, community supported agriculture (CSAs), institutional purchase programs and other programs.
- 4.4.4: Increase in the number of local food system plans adopted across the state through participation in regional food system working groups and other similar programs.

Justification

- Goal setting gives the OPGIS and Coordinating Council a basis from which programs crafted and resources allocated.
- Clear benchmarks give the State, COGs, and local governments guidance on smart plan implementation and smart investing.
- Pre-set benchmarks give local governments and COGs adequate notice on what measurements need to be collected in the future, allowing for efficiency in collecting data.
- Quantifiable and specific benchmarks that are reported out annually give the Legislature hard data from which new programs can be created or existing programs and processes adjusted.

Action Steps (Legislative/Administrative)

- Incorporate “State Goals and Benchmarks” into OPGIS Administrative Rules.

References

2. Conservation and Development Policies Plan for Connecticut (2005). Office of Policy and Management.
21. Oregon’s Statewide Planning Goals and Guidelines (March 2010) Department of Land Conservation and Development.

22. Rules of Georgia Department of Community Affairs Chapter 110-12-1-06. State Planning Goals and Objectives (May 2006).
23. Vermont Statutes Chapter 24, Section 4302: Planning and Development Goals. State of Vermont.

2. Regional Planning Framework

Recommendation 2 satisfies the following tasks charged to the Iowa Smart Planning Task Force in SF 2389:

- *Develop a model for regional comprehensive planning for Iowa and recommend partnerships between state agencies, local governments, educational institutions, and research facilities.*
- *Review city and county comprehensive plans to determine the number of such plans that address the hazards as listed in the Hazards Element of the local comprehensive plan guidelines and the adequacy of such plans in addressing those hazards.*

The regional planning framework proposed below will facilitate the development of regional smart plans that will promote greater economic opportunity, enhance environmental integrity, improve public health, and foster a high quality of life for rural and urban areas within each region. The regional plans will evaluate and plan for the present and future needs and resources of the entire region, fostering a unified vision and collaborative actions to address issues that extend beyond one political jurisdiction's boundaries. The need for regional planning was emphasized by the Rebuild Iowa Advisory Commission as particularly useful for mitigating the impacts of natural disasters. While regional planning activities are proposed to be mandatory across the state, they will serve as advisory guidance documents for local government planning and decision-making.

Recommendation 2.1: Identify Iowa's Councils of Governments (COGs) as the primary organizations responsible for comprehensive regional smart planning throughout Iowa.

Councils of Governments (COGs) provide professional planning, programming, and technical assistance to Iowa's cities and counties, and across multiple jurisdictions. COG regions are based on various county aggregations. Currently, the state is served by 17 COGs, with each agency serving between four and nine counties. Seven counties in central Iowa are currently not served or served in-part by a COG.

The proposed regional planning framework suggests that Iowa's COGs serve as the primary responsible entities for developing comprehensive regional smart plans for their regions. Each of Iowa's regions should prepare a smart plan that guides coordinated, efficient, and effective development of and service provision throughout the region. As no COG exists at this time in central Iowa, recommendation 2.5 of this report addresses regional planning and implementation in those seven counties.

Regional smart plans will be mandatory under this framework and must be updated every five years. COG staff will work with local governments within their region to develop the regional smart plan, while taking into account existing local comprehensive plans and local priorities. The plans must include the required elements and components described in Recommendation 2.2.

Other recommended roles and responsibilities of the COGs as the regional planning entity include:

- Creating a regional committee to review local comprehensive plans for consistency with the regional smart plan and to provide non-binding comments on those local plans.
- Submitting local comprehensive plans to the regional committee for qualification as a "Smart Plan," upon request of local governments (Recommendation 2.4).
- Measuring and submitting benchmark data to OPGIS on an annual basis (Recommendation 1.5).
- Providing technical assistance to member governments on development of local comprehensive plans, as requested.

- Providing representation on the Watershed Planning Advisory Council.
- Incorporating watershed strategies and goals from watershed plans into the comprehensive regional smart plans (Recommendation 4.1).

To facilitate development of comprehensive regional smart plans, Iowa's COGs must be provided with adequate resources to carry out recommendations from the Iowa Smart Planning Task Force related to regional planning efforts. Options for providing financial resource could include allowing COGs to receive levy authority or tapping into other guaranteed funding streams discussed later in this report (see Recommendation 3).

Justification

Iowa's COGs serve as the state's regional planning entities. Established almost 40 years ago, COGs are familiar entities throughout the state with established partnerships with local governments and state and federal agencies. COGs currently prepare various regional plans, which should be integrated into the proposed regional comprehensive plans.

As Regional Planning Affiliations through the Iowa Department of Transportation, COGs plan for and program the distribution of federal transportation funds within their regions, including highway projects, transit projects, trails and other enhancement programs. Iowa's COGs serve as Economic Development Districts for the United States Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration. As such, each COG prepares a comprehensive economic development strategy for their respective region. Iowa's COGs have been very involved with hazard mitigation planning efforts throughout Iowa, including the development of multi-jurisdictional hazard mitigation plans. Many of the COGs are administering regional housing trust funds throughout the State, and have prepared regional housing needs assessments. COGs are experienced in working with local governments, community groups, and residents to develop regional plans or strategies.

Action Steps (Legislative/Administrative)

- Identify COGs as responsible entities for creation of a regional smart plan via legislation or administrative rule.
- Allocation of resources to COGs for regional comprehensive planning purposes via an existing funding source, identification of a new funding source, or a combination of new and existing resources. Matching resources via COGs, local governments, federal agencies, or other sources should be considered.

References

24. Integrating Land Use, Transportation, and Economic Development in Pennsylvania (2010). NADO Research Foundation.
25. Iowa Code Chapter 28H: Councils of Governments. State of Iowa.
26. Land Use Planning and Management in Iowa (1977). State of Iowa Office for Planning and Programming.
27. Milestone Report #3, Goals, Strategies, and a Plan for Action - Year 2030 Regional Comprehensive Plan (April 25, 2008). East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.
28. Regional Planning in America: Updating Earlier Visions (November 2000). Seltzer, E. *Land Lines*: Volume 12, Number 6. Lincoln Institute of Land Policy.
29. Shaping Our Future 21st Century: FAQs (February 2007). East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.
30. The Promise of Wisconsin's 1999 Comprehensive Planning Law: Land Use Policy Reforms to Support Active Living (2208). Schilling, J & Keyes, S. *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law*: Volume 33, Number 3. Duke University Press.
31. Iowa Association of Regional Councils.

Recommendation 2.2: Comprehensive regional smart plans should be completed within five years after legislation is enacted.

Under this framework, regional plans are advisory in nature. Regional plans are designed to serve as a guidance document for local governments as they prepare their local comprehensive plans. Regional plans would not establish requirements for local comprehensive plans within the region, but would establish goals and identify resources that local governments may wish to consider when creating their local plan. Regional smart plans should also be impacted by local comprehensive plans. Many regions will be developing their smart plans concurrently with local governments in the area. As regional plans are developed, they should consider the priorities and goals outlined in local comprehensive plans from within the region. Information provided in local plans can help shape regional priorities and strategies. The relationship between the regional plan and local comprehensive plans should be collaborative and symbiotic.

Regional smart plans would be required from all 18 regions. The characteristics of each region are unique. As such, the contents of regional smart plans will vary somewhat based on the attributes and priorities of the region. Regional smart plans should include, at minimum, the requirements listed below:

1. Regional plans must include the 13 elements outlined in the Iowa Smart Planning Legislative Guide. These elements include:
 - A. Public Participation
 - B. Issues and Opportunities
 - C. Land Use
 - D. Housing
 - E. Public Infrastructure and Utilities
 - F. Transportation
 - G. Economic Development
 - H. Agricultural and Natural Resources
 - I. Community Facilities
 - J. Community Character
 - K. Hazards
 - L. Intergovernmental Collaboration
 - M. Implementation
2. Regional plans must consider the following 10 Smart Planning Principles:
 - A. Collaboration
 - B. Efficiency, Transparency and Consistency
 - C. Clean, Renewable and Efficient Energy
 - D. Occupational Diversity
 - E. Revitalization
 - F. Housing Diversity
 - G. Community Character
 - H. Natural Resources and Agricultural Protection
 - I. Sustainable Design
 - J. Transportation Diversity
3. Regional plans must address prevention and mitigation of, response to, and recovery from catastrophic flooding.
4. Regional plans must be consistent with the goals and strategies developed for the applicable watershed(s) if such plan exists (Recommendation 4.1).
5. Regional plans must outline a process for cooperation, collaboration and decision-making between member governments for multi-jurisdictional projects/programs.

6. Regional plans must be updated every five years. Any amendments to the regional plans within intervening years must be submitted for review and approval by the state Office of Planning and Geographic Information Systems (OPGIS).

Justification

Regional planning helps create efficiencies by maximizing investments made in regional services (i.e. regional transportation systems) and infrastructure investments. Joint projects may be identified by the process, allowing local governments to explore ways to share costs while addressing their communities' needs.

Planning at the COG level will help promote multi-jurisdictional collaboration on projects and address issues that span across local governments. Watersheds are a critical issue to address within regional plans, and an issue that does not abide to city and county boundaries. However, other issues impact entire regions as well. Regional planning provides a forum to discuss and address those issues as well as an opportunity to collaborate on solutions. COG regions are established forums for other areas of planning, and these regions are familiar to local governments.

Local planning involves considerable time and financial resources. For many small communities, these are barriers to undertaking a planning process. Regional planning is beneficial to these communities, as it provides planning resources to those communities that struggle to find the resources to plan independently.

Regional plans can also provide baseline data to communities as they develop their local comprehensive plans. Information in the areas of transportation, economics, natural resources and other areas can be shared with local governments through the region plan. This information can also be shared with the State, as Iowa looks for the most effective ways to collect and share data.

Action Steps (Legislative/Administrative)

- Amend Iowa State Code chapter 28H to include the requirement that regional plans be developed every five years and identify required elements of a regional plan.
- Allocation of resources to COGs for regional comprehensive planning purposes via an existing funding source, identification of a new funding source, or a combination of new and existing resources. Matching resources via COGs, local governments, federal agencies, or other sources should be considered.

References

32. Wisconsin Code 66, Section 1001, Subsection 5: Applicability of a Regional Planning Commission's Plan. State of Wisconsin.
33. 2030 Regional Development Framework (2006). Twin Cities Metropolitan Council.

Recommendation 2.3: Create a sustainable funding source for regional smart planning

A sustainable funding source should be created to aid COGs in creating regional smart plans. There are several options for funding these activities. The Smart Planning Task Force recommends considering:

- Redirecting a portion of existing funding sources (e.g. Community Development Block Grant funds, Real Estate Transfer Tax, etc.).
- Establishing a new funding source.
- Allowing COGs levy authority to conduct regional planning.

Justification

To undertake regional comprehensive planning, Iowa's COGs will need additional resources. Development of regional plans will require considerable resources and staff time. In the early 1990's when Iowa's COGs partnered with the Iowa Department of Transportation to carry out regional transportation planning, most COGs did not have professional transportation planners on staff. However, funding was allocated to the COGs for this effort, which allowed each organization to provide staff and resources necessary to conduct regional transportation planning. Today, the COGs continue to manage transportation planning for their regions. COGs will have the capacity to take lead regional comprehensive planning efforts with sufficient funding.

Such planning is necessary to address issues that are geographically large in scope and cross multiple jurisdictions, such as flood mitigation.

Action Steps (Legislative/Administrative)

- The Legislature should consider all options and take action as deemed appropriate to adequately support regional planning. Options for funding regional planning efforts could include, but should not be limited to:
 - Amending the Iowa Code to create a new funding source(s).
 - Redirecting current appropriations.
 - Providing levy authority to COGs.

References

34. Vermont Code Title 24, Chapter 117, Section 4306: Municipal and Regional Planning Fund. State of Vermont.
35. Connecticut Statutes Chapter 4, Section 124q: Regional Planning Grant-in-Aid. State of Connecticut.

Recommendation 2.4: Councils of Governments should establish a Plan Review Committee in each region for local smart plan review

Regional Plan Review Committees (PRC) should be formed by each COG to assist with regional planning and local plan review. Upon request, the PRCs would be responsible for reviewing and qualifying regional smart plans before submittal to the state Office of Planning and Geographic Information Systems (OPGIS).

PRCs should review local comprehensive plans from within the region to qualify plans as a "Smart Plan." Regional PRCs will review local plans on behalf of the State, eliminating the need for the state OPGIS to review all local comprehensive plans.

To qualify as a "Smart Plan," local plans must meet the following elements, as outlined in Senate File 2389:

1. Contain the 13 Smart Plan Elements;
2. Address prevention and mitigation of, response to, and recovery from catastrophic flooding;
3. Consider the 10 Smart Planning Principles.

The committees will utilize a checklist or similar instrument to determine if the plan addresses the three items listed above. PRCs will issue a Letter of Qualification for local plans that qualify. This letter may be provided to state agencies to document the community has a smart plan, which should provide the community additional consideration for state funding programs and technical assistance.

An appeal process should be instituted to allow local governments an avenue to pursue should a local government disagree with a PRC's decision on local smart plan qualification. The appeal process should be conducted at the state level to provide local governments with the opportunity to have their local plan reviewed by the state OPGIS.

The PRCs should also provide non-binding comments to cities and counties after plan review. Comments may relate to the regional plan, and provide suggestions as to items the community may wish to consider further in their planning efforts. Once comments are provided, it is up to the local government as to how those comments are addressed. Local governments may or may not make revisions to the local plan based on comments received from the PRC. Comments provided by the PRC are advisory only and will not require any additional action on the part of the local government.

While each region will establish its own PRC, some requirements for committee membership should be established. At minimum, each RPC should include representation from the following areas:

- Planning and zoning officials
- Elected officials
- Watershed planning entities
- Real estate/developers
- Economic development organizations
- Environmental organizations

Regions should have the ability to add additional members to their PRCs in order to accurately reflect the interests within their region.

As some COG regions are multi-state, each PRC shall include only Iowa residents to ensure statewide consistency in committee make up and plan review process. Limiting PRC membership to Iowa residents also acknowledges challenges faced by Iowa's border communities.

The intent of the regional review of local plans is to encourage collaboration between local governments within the region, and to share information with local governments that can be helpful as they develop local comprehensive plans. Local planning continues to be locally-driven under the proposed framework.

Justification

Establishing a regional review process for local comprehensive plans creates a streamlined review process for local governments. This should provide communities with qualification in a timely manner, which is important for communities seeking additional consideration for state funding programs. Allowing regional PRCs to qualify local plans as a "Smart Plan" on behalf of the state will limit paperwork and create efficiencies at the state-level.

Regional review of local plans will encourage the inclusion of hazard mitigation elements in local comprehensive plans. As tasked in SF2389, the Iowa Smart Planning Task Force's Local Comprehensive Planning Committee evaluated local comprehensive plans in the State of Iowa to determine the extent to which hazards were considered in planning. Nine cities and three counties (based on population tiers) were used in the evaluation. This study showed that:

- Only six of the nine cities sampled has an approved FEMA Hazard Mitigation Plan or is part of the county's plan. Only one of the counties sampled has an approved plan while a second county is in the process of updating their expired plan.
- None of the sampled comprehensive plans contained a Hazard Mitigation or Hazards Assessment section, although many of the plans referenced considering certain hazards in the planning process.

These references were mostly concerning flood plains and flood damage mitigation.

- Only half of the plans sampled contained a section specifically on flood plain management with regard to land use. These sections came in the form of both text and maps.

A 2005 study by Burby indicated that per capita insured losses decreased from \$33 to \$20 if all states enact legislation requiring local comprehensive plans that require consideration of natural hazards. This estimate is conservative as Burby's data relies only on insured losses; with most losses the result of flooding in Iowa, which has a higher likelihood of not being covered by insurance, the savings would likely be significantly higher. FEMA estimates that in 2008, fewer than 10 percent of property owners impacted by the flood had flood insurance. Additionally, Iowa is experiencing flooding on a more regular basis, resulting in more savings over a longer period of time.

The regional review process also encourages collaboration between entities, and promotes consistency between the regional plan and local plans. Comments provided by the PRCs can inform local governments on projects in other communities that may be of interest, identify opportunities for cost-sharing on services or projects, and provide input regarding regional priorities that a community may wish to consider when developing its local plan.

Action Steps (Legislative/ Administrative)

- Development of qualification review guidance by the state OPGIS
- Establish criteria for PRC membership
- Creation of the PRCs by the COGs

References

36. Integrating Hazard Assessment into Comprehensive Planning (August 2010). Iowa Smart Planning Task Force – Comprehensive Planning Committee.
37. Have State Comprehensive Planning Mandates Reduced Insured Losses from Natural Disasters? (2005) Burby, R. *Natural Hazards Review: Volume 6, Issues 2*.
38. Vermont Statutes Title 24, Chapter 117, Section 4350: Review and Consultation Regarding Municipal Planning Efforts. State of Vermont.

Recommendation 2.5: A regional entity should be established or identified in Central Iowa for the purposes of regional planning, implementation and local smart plan review.

Currently, there is no Council of Governments located in the central Iowa region. This region consists of seven counties: Boone, Dallas, Jasper, Marion, Polk, Story, and Warren. A regional entity should be formed or an existing entity should be charged with undertaking regional planning for this area. This regional entity should also create a Plan Review Committee to handle review of local comprehensive plans within the region.

The central Iowa region could be addressed in a number of ways. The responsibilities of an existing entity could be expanded to include regional planning activities. The Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, which is now undertaking comprehensive regional planning for the Des Moines metropolitan area, or another organization could fill this role. Local governments in the central Iowa region could opt to form a new regional planning organization. The central Iowa region may also decide that more than one entity should be formed to serve the seven-county area. Regardless of the option selected, it is essential for central Iowa to identify a planning entity to ensure that regional planning occurs in a consistent manner across the state.

As the determination of a regional planning entity is made, local governments within central Iowa may wish to seek assistance from a variety of entities. Groups able to assist this region include the Iowa

League of Cities, the Iowa State Association of Counties, the Metropolitan Coalition, Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, the Iowa Association of Regional Councils, and the State of Iowa.

Justification

As the proposed regional planning framework is designed around COG boundaries, the seven-county central Iowa region currently not served or served in-part by a COG must be addressed. A regional planning entity needs to be identified and deemed responsible for regional planning in the area. In addition to preparing a regional comprehensive plan, this entity is needed to facilitate the creation of a Plan Review Committee responsible for reviewing and commenting on local comprehensive plans. Identification or the creation of a central Iowa organization is necessary to ensure consistent application of regional planning and qualification procedures for local smart plans.

Action Steps (Legislative/ Administrative)

- Amend Iowa State Code Chapter 28H to recognize the entity or entities responsible for regional planning in the central Iowa region.

References

25. Iowa Code Chapter 28H: Councils of Governments. State of Iowa.

3. Financial Incentives & Technical Assistance

Recommendation 3 satisfies the following tasks charged to the Iowa Smart Planning Task Force in SF 2389:

- *Evaluate and develop incentives to conduct local and regional comprehensive planning, including but not limited to state financial and technical assistance.*
- *Recommend the means by which technical and financial assistance for comprehensive planning can be provided and administered.*
- *Evaluate state policies, programs, statutes, and rules to determine whether they should be revised to integrate the Iowa Smart Planning Principles.*

The Task Force is recommending an array of financial incentives and technical assistance to encourage smart planning at the local and regional level. The State has a vested interest to ensure there is capacity for regional and local planning. Regional planning entities and COGs do not typically engage in comprehensive regional planning due primarily to a lack of statutory requirement and necessary resources. In addition to financial resources, meaningful application of smart planning principles may not be possible without a necessary educational component to increase capacity and advocate best practices. This proposal recommends financial and programmatic incentives, as well as establishing sound technical assistance and availability of resources.

Recommendation: 3.1: Create a sustainable funding source for a smart planning grant program at the state level for local smart plan development and implementation.

A sustainable grant program should be created at the state level to assist local governments in the development of local smart plans. Such support could also be used to create multi-jurisdictional comprehensive plans for neighboring communities and counties. While plan creation is the focus, a portion of the funding may be allocated to plan implementation. There are several options for funding these activities. The Task Force recommends considering:

- Redirecting a portion of existing funding sources, such as Community Development Block Grant, gaming monies, Real Estate Transfer Tax, etc.
- Establishing a new funding program.

Justification

- Many local governments currently lack the necessary resources to conduct local smart planning. State support for a portion of the cost of undertaking local smart planning would significantly incentivize this action.
- The Rebuild Iowa Office and the Iowa Department of Economic Development recently made \$1 million of supplemental disaster Community Development Block Grant funds available to local governments for the purpose of developing local comprehensive plans. These are one-time funds that were available to any city or county government in the 85 counties that were declared Presidential disasters areas from the 2008 storms. Even with the relatively short notice and application window (2.5 months) and ineligibility of 14 of the state's counties, local governments responded enthusiastically to the opportunity. Fifty-one applications were submitted, including eight multi-jurisdictional applications. The total grant request was just over \$1.225 million, exceeding the amount available. The success of this program illustrates demand and demonstrates how relatively small incentives can generate traction for smart planning in communities across the state. Figure 3.1 below shows the communities and counties that submitted applications.

County

Multi-Jurisdictional County Lead

Ineligible County

City

Multi-Jurisdictional City Lead

- 33

Action Steps (Legislative/ Administrative)

- Legislature should consider all options and take action as deemed appropriate to adequately support local planning:
 - Amend the Iowa Code to create a new funding source(s).
 - Redirect current appropriations.

References

34. Vermont Code Title 24, Chapter 117, Section 4306: Municipal and Regional Planning Fund. State of Vermont.
37. Have State Comprehensive Planning Mandates Reduced Insured Losses from Natural Disasters? (2005) Burby, R. *Natural Hazards Review*: Volume 6, Issues 2.
39. Wisconsin Statute Chapter 16, Section 965: Planning Grants to Local Government Units. State of Wisconsin.

Recommendation 3.2: Expand the menu of financing options available to local governments to develop and implement smart plans.

While smart planning will save local governments money in the long-run, additional funding will be required to begin the process in many communities. In order to make smart planning a viable option for local governments that may not currently have the capacity, a variety of financial options should be considered. One such option is to allow local governments the authority to levy a special property tax for creation of a smart plan. This levy would fund activities related to the planning process, including creation of the plan document, data collection, visioning and public input sessions, and other related activities.

To help implement smart plans, funding options for projects outlined in or consistent with their qualified smart plan may be made available. Funding streams may be layered and leveraged for planning and implementation activities, resulting in complementary community benefits from multiple funding streams.

The following are funding examples that may be considered for planning and/or project implementation and are not to be construed as a comprehensive list:

- Review existing levies and budgets to determine how funds could be redirected for planning.
- Expand use of franchise fee revenue to include smart plan implementation.
- Add X cents to capital improvement fund levy to only be used for capital improvement projects described in the smart plan.
- Consider various new taxes and fees for plan development and implementation.
- Define smart planning efforts and municipal building projects in identified Priority Growth Areas as an essential corporate purpose in Iowa Code, Chapter 384.24.
- Allow the City Capital Improvement Levy already allowed by law through referendum to be initiated by reverse referendum.

Justification

- Local governments may struggle to identify necessary resources to undertake smart planning. This recommendation provides an additional option for meeting that challenge. Comprehensive smart plans range in cost from approximately \$10,000 for small communities to over \$100,000 for complex plans in the state's largest communities.
- This recommendation allows local governments flexibility and additional options for accessing and utilizing sources of revenue to implement projects. Local governments would not be required to utilize such options.

Action Steps (Legislative/Administrative)

- Amend Iowa Code (Chapters 381 and 384) to allow cities and counties to levy for creation of a smart plan.
- Legislature should consider the above implementation assistance options and amend the Iowa Code to provide local governments with the appropriate authority and guidance.
- Define Priority Growth Area in State Code, possibly within the Local Comprehensive Planning guidance section (SF 2389). Example definition: Priority Growth Areas (PGAs) are overlay zones in which local governments wish to steer development and funding to further the visions and goals identified in their smart plan. PGAs should have existing or currently planned infrastructure access and should generally follow smart planning principles. Local governments may designate PGAs during the comprehensive planning process. Examples of PGAs include areas targeted for revitalization or infill, Transportation Oriented Design (TOD) development areas, and mixed use zones.

References

40. Wisconsin Statute Chapter 16, Section 0617: Impact Fees. State of Wisconsin.
41. Washington Code 82.02.060: Impact Fees. State of Washington.
42. Utah Code Title 11, Chapter 36: Impact Fees. State of Utah.
43. Indiana Code Title 36, Article 7, Chapter 4, Section 1300: Impact Fees. State of Indiana.
44. New Energy Use Tax Allows City to Increase General Fund Expenditures (June 13, 2010). *Standard Examiner*.
45. Climate Action Plan Tax (2006). City of Boulder.
46. New Hampshire Statute Chapter 83-E: Electricity Consumption Tax. State of New Hampshire.

Recommendation 3.3: State agencies should give additional consideration to grant applications from communities that have adopted a qualified smart plan to receive state funding for infrastructure and public facilities projects that affect land use, transportation, stormwater management, and floodplain protection, where appropriate.

The OPGIS Coordinating Council will assist with coordination of state investment decisions regarding public facilities related to land use, transportation, stormwater management, and floodplain protection. To support this work, the Task Force recommends that state agencies provide additional consideration on grant applications for projects that are identified in and are consistent with local and/or regional smart plans. For projects that are not specifically described in the smart plan of the local government, applications could include a question(s) to explain how the proposed project is consistent with an adopted smart plan. Additional consideration will provide an incentive to local communities to conduct smart planning and ensure that projects identified within those plans follow the Smart Planning Principles. Additionally, support for smart planning projects will facilitate achievement of the State's vision (Recommendation 1.3).

Justification

- Communities that work to meaningfully develop and implement smart plans should receive some form of priority for state funding.
- Additional consideration on grant applications will help to guide state investment to smart projects, thus ensuring limited state resources are directed toward the most effective and efficient use.
- A successful model for such an incentive has been implemented by the Iowa Great Places program, which is administered by the Department of Cultural Affairs.

Action Steps (Legislative/Administrative)

- Amend the Iowa Code to direct agencies to provide additional consideration for grant applications for projects that are identified in and are consistent with local and/or regional smart plans.

- State agencies should amend appropriate administrative rules to include additional consideration of smart plans.
- The State of Iowa should use the existing Community Rating Survey (CRS) framework to create an incentive program that rewards communities that exceed the minimum State and National Flood Insurance Program requirements with an increased State contribution toward the local cost match following flood-related Federal disaster declarations. Points can be earned for existing CRS activities, and for other activities the State finds suitable: e.g., adopting some of the Water Resources Coordinating Council's recommendations for reducing flood damages, or including specific goals and measures in their Hazard Mitigation Plan. The amount of points awarded for these activities should be similar to those awarded by the CRS.

References

11. New York Environmental Conservation Law, Article 6- State Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Policy Act
47. Capital Improvement Program: Capital Project Evaluation Criteria. Baltimore County, MD.
48. Smart Growth Redevelopment Funding. State of New Jersey.
49. Iowa Code Chapter 38 – Iowa IJobs II Program
50. Connecticut Governor Rendell's Executive Order #15: Section 2, Paragraph G and H (October 2006). Office of the Governor.

Recommendation 3.4: Create a smart planning education program and toolbox for local government staff, officials, and the public.

Smart planning educational programming should be developed and provided to professional planners, elected officials, and all interested persons. The programming should focus on the benefits of smart planning for communities, and what smart planning means in terms of plan elements and implementation. The programming should reflect the Iowa Smart Planning Principles.

One product that should be produced through this effort is a Smart Planning Toolbox. The Toolbox should include information, clarification, and examples on the smart planning process and smart planning principles; model plans, ordinances, zoning codes, energy codes, building codes, and permitting; regulatory mechanisms; best practices and lessons learned from poor planning and development decisions; and a clearinghouse of grant opportunities and contact information for further assistance. A menu of free or low-cost planning services available to communities through non-profit and private organizations should also be included in the Toolbox.

The educational programming will be led by the Iowa League of Cities, ISAC, IARC and the regent universities in collaboration with the OPGIS and other interested stakeholders. The Smart Planning Toolbox should be housed at and made accessible by the OPGIS.

Justification

- An educational program is necessary to ensure that local elected officials, staff, and citizens are knowledgeable about the benefits of smart planning and have the necessary knowledge to effectively apply smart planning concepts within their communities.
- A centralized location for smart planning tools and best practices is necessary to complement educational efforts concerning smart planning and will facilitate consistency of application across the state.

Action Steps (Legislative/ Administrative)

- Allocation of resources to support educational programming.

References

51. Institute for Local Government
52. Local Government Institute of Wisconsin
53. Municipal Research and Services Center for Washington
54. Louisiana Land Use Toolkit
55. Green and Growing: Tools for Responsible Growth. State of Connecticut
56. Florida Planning Toolbox

4. Watershed Planning & Implementation

Recommendation 4 satisfies the following task charged to the Iowa Smart Planning Task Force in SF 2389:

- *Develop a model for regional comprehensive planning for Iowa and recommend partnerships between state agencies, local governments, educational institutions, and research facilities.*

Iowans have been engaged in numerous water-related task forces in the past decade. The overarching theme that has emerged from each is that planning for water-based issues needs to take place on a watershed basis. As a result of the 2007 Watershed Quality Planning Task Force report, the Water Resources Coordinating Council (WRCC) was established in 2008 to coordinate the work of state and federal agencies in watershed work. The Task Force report identified the need for \$5 million annually to carry out HUC-8* watershed assessment, planning, and prioritization. The same report identified a need of \$2-5 million for planning and implementation in each of the state's 1,700 HUC-12* sub-watersheds. Federal and state agencies are carrying out this effort now, but additional resources would fulfill the need to take this to the level recommended by every task force (including the WRCC Flood Plain Task Force) that has been convened in the past 10-12 years. The Watershed Planning Advisory Council (WPAC) was established in 2010 to provide a mechanism for interested stakeholders to make watershed-related recommendations to the WRCC, the Legislature, and the Governor. The varied makeup of each council provides an opportunity for coordination among agencies and stakeholders to improve watershed planning and implementation.

Recommendation 4.1: Enhance watershed planning, coordination, and implementation by creating goals and strategies referencing land use for each of Iowa's six major river basins and three major river regions.

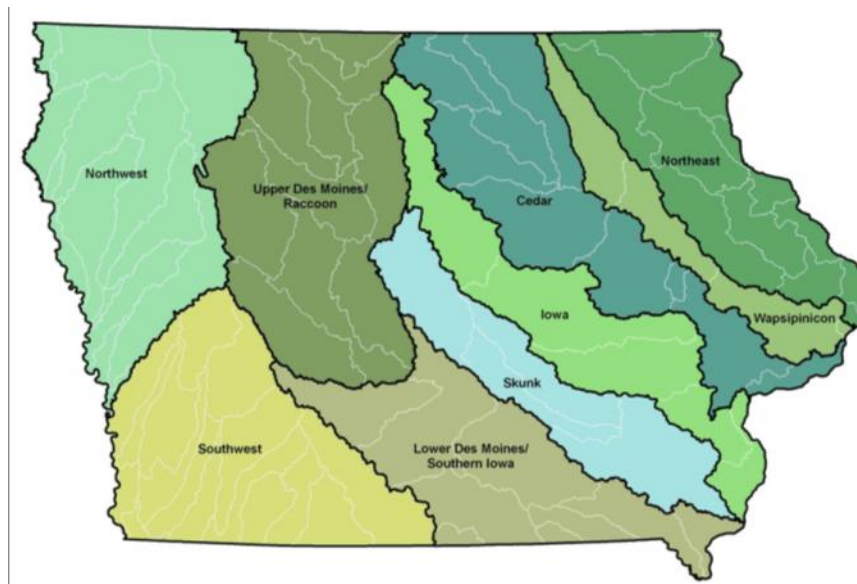
The Task Force recommends that watershed planning be coordinated by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) in conjunction with the Iowa Flood Center, the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS), the United States Army Corps of Engineers, and the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). Attention should be focused on creation of goals and strategies for each of the six major river basins and three major river regions in Iowa (see Figure 4.1) and exchange information and recommendations with community planners, COGs, and local governments for integration of watershed strategies into smart comprehensive land use plans. A coordinator should be assigned to each basin and region to lead planning efforts, coordinate across political boundaries, and translate technical information. The six major river basins are the Cedar, Iowa, Lower Des Moines/ Southern Iowa, Skunk, Upper Des Moines/ Racoon, and the Wapsipinicon. The three major river regions include Northeast Iowa, Northwest Iowa, and Southwest Iowa.

Justification

- Few decisions have as big an impact on the volume of runoff, water quality, and the sustainability of water resources as land use, yet these water-related concerns are often disconnected in terms of comprehensive land use planning. Developing watershed plans that specifically identify critical land use issues, opportunities, and goals will help planners create more integrated and effective regional comprehensive smart plans.

- Consideration of watershed goals fosters stewardship of resources and greater collaboration between neighboring regions.
- Connecting watershed issues with land use will help mitigate and prepare for flooding hazards.
- Goals and strategies prepared by the Iowa DNR and other stakeholders provide scientific data on which COGs and local governments can base floodplain land use, significantly streamlining the workload of regional and local governments in addressing catastrophic flooding, as well as other concerns like water quality issues.
- Coordination of visioning and planning should be done throughout the river basin or river region to ensure compatibility with watershed planning and smart comprehensive land use plans throughout the basins and regions (including both upland and lowland areas). It is recommended that more detailed planning take place in HUC-8 sub-basins. These HUC-8 plans can be incorporated into regional planning processes.
- HUC-8 plans should be further refined by planning implementation of watershed protection projects at a scale no larger than HUC-12 sub-watersheds. HUC-8 planning should prioritize and target HUC-12 sub-watersheds with the most opportunity for flood reduction and water quality improvement for implementation projects.

Figure 4.1
The Major River Basins and River Regions in Iowa



Action Steps (Legislative/Administrative)

- Add a requirement for watershed plans (with elements to be determined by IDNR and others) to the Iowa Code.
- A watershed advocate position should be created to assist the WRCC and the WPAC with their work, to carry out these recommendations, and to oversee basin coordination and basin planning. Appropriate funding needs to accompany such a position. This position may be appointed by the Governor.
- Add a representative from the Iowa Association of Regional Councils to the WPAC.
- An intensive strategic review of watershed planning and implementation should take place and involve significant watershed-related partners from federal, state, and local agencies, non-

governmental organizations, and institutions. Such a review would, at a minimum, identify a collective vision for watershed programs, inventory existing watershed programs, highlight gaps and duplications of existing programs, and establish steps necessary to realize the collective vision for watershed planning and implementation.

- Watershed planning, targeting, and implementation require skilled staff to deliver plans acceptable to a broad range of stakeholders and that are targeted to priority landscape issues. The State needs to provide adequate funding that maintains and enhances a watershed delivery system that meets these goals and yields transformative, beneficial enhancement of water resources in Iowa.

References

57. Water Resources and Land Use Planning: Watershed-based Strategies for Amador and Calaveras Counties (2008). Local Government Commission.
58. Keuka Lake Watershed Land Use Planning Guide – An Intermunicipal Action Strategy (2009). Genesee Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council.
59. Elwha-Dungeness Watershed Plan – Land Use and Land Management Recommendations (2005). Clallam County, WA.
60. Watershed Based Plans and Watershed Management Plan. Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection.
61. Approved Watershed Plans. Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment.
62. Kentucky Wet Growth Tools for Sustainable Development: A Handbook on Land Use and Water. University of Kentucky.
63. Protecting Water Resources with Smart Growth. United State Environmental Protection Agency.

**A Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC) is a U.S. Geological Survey term/method for identifying watersheds throughout the world; the larger the digit, the smaller the watershed. A HUC-8 ranges in size from 500,000 to 2 million acres and is generally considered a watershed. A HUC-12 ranges in size from 10,000-40,000 acres and is generally considered a sub-watershed. Combinations of HUC-8 watersheds that lead from one to another are generally considered basins. For example, the Cedar basin is made up of six HUC-8 watersheds. There are approximately 56 HUC-8 watersheds in Iowa and approximately 1700 HUC-12 sub-watersheds.*

5. State Code Consistency

Recommendation 5 supports all of the Iowa Smart Planning Task Force's recommendations by beginning the process of creating consistency and clarity in the Iowa Code regarding smart planning.

Recommendation 5.1: Make the definition of "local comprehensive plan" uniform throughout the Iowa Code.

Many sections of the current State Code regarding planning issues are out of date. Specifically, the Committee recommends that the term "general plan" should be changed to "comprehensive plan" or otherwise stated to be equivalent in Chapter 403. Additionally, the term "comprehensive plan" in Chapters 354 and 368 should be made uniform with SF 2389. This change would be a necessary first step to creating consistency in language and policy.

Justification

- Development of a transparent and efficient planning process at all levels of governments requires consistency and clarity between sections of the Iowa State Code relating to local comprehensive planning.

Action Steps (Legislative/Administrative)

- Update Chapter 403, changing “general plan” to “comprehensive plan” and using the same “comprehensive plan” definition as utilized by Chapters 335 and 414 as amended by SF 2389.
- Update Chapters 354 and 368 to ensure that the definition of “comprehensive plan” is made uniform with the definition as amended by SF 2389.

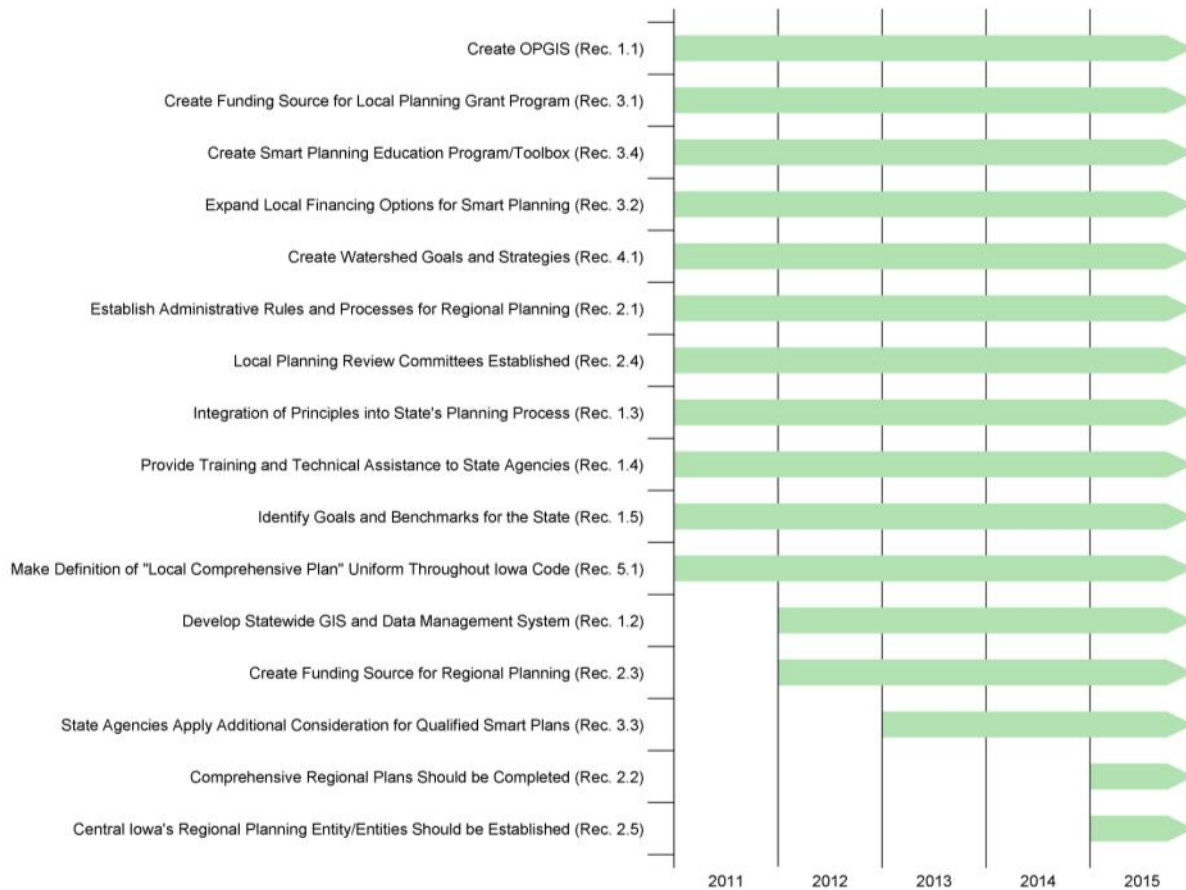
References

64. Iowa Code- Chapter 354: Platting – Division and Subdivision of Land.
65. Iowa Code- Chapter 368: City Development.
66. Iowa Code- Chapter 403: Urban Renewal.

Section 4: Timeline

The Iowa Smart Planning Task Force believes that each of the recommendations included in this report are worth serious consideration by the General Assembly and Governor, and provide the necessary structure and tools for effective implementation of the Iowa Smart Planning bill. Recognizing that certain actions need to happen before others, as well as budget constraints, the following chart proposes a timeline as a guide for implementing the Task Force's recommendations:

Suggested Timeline for Implementation of Recommendations



Section 5: Next Steps

The Iowa Smart Planning Task Force remains in existence through Dec. 31, 2012. This document is the first report from the Task Force. The Task Force will be available for dialogue with the General Assembly and Governor's Office during the 2011 legislative session as decisions are made regarding these recommendations. Upon adjournment of the session, the Task Force will meet to review legislative actions and any additional legislative directives, and determine priorities for additional research and discussion. The Task Force will look to other professionals and interested persons to identify issues that the Task Force should address. Throughout this entire process, the Task Force is open to and encourages comments and suggestions from the public regarding the recommendations found in this report, as well as issues to discuss in future meetings.

Section 6: Appendices

Appendix A: Annotated Bibliography

1. **Connecticut Office of Policy and Management: Office of Responsible Growth.** <http://www.ct.gov/opm/cwp/view.asp?a=2990&q=385462>
 The Office of Responsible Growth was established to coordinate state efforts to revitalize cities, preserve the unique charm of Connecticut and build livable, economically strong communities while protecting natural resources for the enjoyment of future generations. The Office is responsible for:
 - preparation of the State Plan of Conservation and Development;
 - reviewing state agency plans and projects for consistency with the State Plan and targeting state funding to goals consistent with State plan;
 - coordination of the Housing for Economic Growth Program, the Environmental Policy Act and the Neighborhood Revitalization Program;
 - facilitation of interagency coordination on infrastructure improvements involving land use and/or water resources;
 - creating regional roundtables on planning;
 - developing support and incentives for communities to engage in regional planning; and
 - other activities to promote sustainable land use and planning.
2. **Conservation and Development Policies Plan for Connecticut (2005). Office of Policy and Management.** <http://www.ct.gov/opm/lib/opm/igp/cdplan/adopted20052010cdplan.pdf>
 The Conservation and Development Policies Plan provides the policy and planning framework for administrative and programmatic actions and capital and operational investment decisions of state government. The objective of the plan is to guide a balanced response to the current and future human, economic, and environmental needs of the state. The plan identifies six growth management principles that address redevelopment and revitalization, expansion of housing options, supporting the viability of transportation options, conserving and restoring the natural environment and cultural resources, protecting and ensuring public health and safety, and promoting integrated planning across all levels.
3. **Delaware Office of State Planning Coordination.** <http://www.stateplanning.delaware.gov/>
 The Office of State Planning Coordination works to improve the coordination and effectiveness of land use decisions made by the state, county and municipal governments while building and maintaining a high quality of life in the state. The Office coordinates planning efforts across all levels; provides planning assistance to local governments; researches, analyzes and disseminates information concerning land use planning; updates the Delaware Strategies for State Policies and Spending; works to meet the spatial data and GIS needs of the state; and coordinates state agency review of major land use changes.
4. **Delaware Cabinet Committee on State Planning Issues.** <http://delcode.delaware.gov/title29/c091/sc01/index.shtml>
 The committee makes growth and development recommendations for effective and coordinated planning throughout the state. It addresses such issues as farmland preservation, open space retention, reuse of aging industrial sites, and development of transportation, water, and wastewater systems. Membership includes budget, finance, education, agriculture, transportation, economic development, public safety, health and social services, natural resources and environmental control, and the housing authority.
5. **Delaware Geographic Data Committee.** <http://stateplanning.delaware.gov/dgdc/default.shtml>
 The Delaware Geographic Data Committee is a cooperative effort among all levels of government, the academic sector, and the private sector, to build a Delaware GIS Community and improve the coordination of the use of GIS tools and spatial data in Delaware.

6. **Florida Department of Community Affairs: Division of Community Planning.** <http://www.dca.state.fl.us/fdcp/dcp/>

The Division of Community Planning administers Florida's growth management programs and works closely with local governments and other state agencies to ensure high-quality growth and sustainable patterns of development across the state. The division ensures that comprehensive plans comply with the Local Government Comprehensive Planning and Land Development Regulation Act. See Florida Chapter 9J for further information on roles and responsibilities of the Division.

The division has a wide-ranging impact on a number of issues affecting land use decisions and uses five regional planning teams which provide effective, hands-on support to local governments as they implement their comprehensive plans. These teams conduct reviews of comprehensive plans and developments of regional impact and related planning and development proposals. The teams also provide technical assistance to local governments, businesses, and citizens. The division's program areas include the following:

- Local Government Comprehensive Plan Review
- Areas of Critical State Concern
- Developments of Regional Impact
- Waterfronts Florida Program
- Hazard Mitigation Planning
- Post-Disaster Redevelopment Planning
- Homeowners' Association Covenant Revitalization

7. **Georgia Department of Community Affairs.** <http://www.dca.state.ga.us/>

The Department of Community Affairs operates a host of state and federal grant programs; serves as the state's lead agency in housing finance and development; promulgates building codes to be adopted by local governments; provides comprehensive planning, technical and research assistance to local governments; and serves as the lead agency for the state's solid waste reduction efforts.

8. **Iowa Geospatial Infrastructure: A Strategic ROI Business Plan for the Iowa Geographic Information Council (June 30, 2008).** http://www.iowagic.org/igi/documents/IGI_Final_Report.pdf

This report provides a business plan and Return on Investment (ROI) analysis for the creation of the Iowa Geospatial Infrastructure (IGI), a statewide GIS system. The report was commissioned by the Iowa Geographic Information Council (IGIC). The goal of the report is to facilitate the implementation of the IGI by assessing the needs of local entities that are not currently using geospatial technology, as well as those trying to maintain existing investments, and further support and promote the creation of high-quality local datasets compatible with the IGI.

9. **Minnesota Department of Administration: Office of Geographic and Demographic Analysis.** <http://www.gda.state.mn.us/>

The Office of Geographic and Demographic Analysis offers a diverse variety of services and information to state and local government and to the public. It is comprised of the Minnesota Geospatial Information Office (MnGeo), Office of the State Demographer, Office of the State Archaeologist, and the Environmental Quality Board.

10. **New Jersey Department of Community Affairs: Office of Smart Growth.** <http://www.nj.gov/dca/divisions/osg/>

The Office of Smart Growth coordinates planning throughout New Jersey to protect the environment and guide future growth into compact, mixed-use development and redevelopment. The Office implements the goals of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan to achieve

comprehensive, long-term planning; and integrates that planning with programmatic and regulatory land-use decisions at all levels of government and the private sector.

11. **New York Environmental Conservation Law, Article 6- State Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Policy Act.** <http://public.leginfo.state.ny.us/>

The New York State Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Act was passed in 2010. The Act declares “a fiscally prudent state policy of maximizing the social, economic and environmental benefits from public infrastructure development through minimizing unnecessary costs of sprawl development including environmental degradation, disinvestment in urban and suburban communities and loss of open space induced by sprawl facilitated by the funding or development of new or expanded transportation, sewer and waste water treatment, water, education, housing and other publicly supported infrastructure inconsistent with smart growth public infrastructure criteria.”

12. **GeoStor: Arkansas' Official GIS Platform. Arkansas Geographic Information Office.** <http://www.geostor.arkansas.gov/G6/Home.html>

This Web site is maintained by the Arkansas Geographic Information Office. The GeoStor Platform:

- Allows state and local entities to create GIS applications;
- Allows entities to search and receive data in a format of their choosing;
- Provides quick access to disaster GIS data;
- Provides FTP access to large raster files; and
- Provides updates, technical assistance and links to outside resources.

13. **Maryland State Geographic Information Committee.** <http://www.msgic.state.md.us/>

The Maryland State Geographic Information Committee (MSGIC) was established in 1992 by the Governor of Maryland. The MSGIC acts to promote coordinated development and efficient use of resources amongst all entities involved in the collection and/or use of spatial data and GIS technologies in Maryland.

14. **Massachusetts Office of Geographic Information.** <http://www.mass.gov/mgis/>

MassGIS is the Commonwealth's Office of Geographic and Environmental Information, within the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEEA). Through MassGIS, Massachusetts has created a comprehensive, statewide database of spatial information for environmental planning and management. The state legislature has established MassGIS as the official state agency assigned to the collection, storage and dissemination of geographic data. In addition, MassGIS is responsible for coordinating GIS activity within the Commonwealth and setting standards for geographic data to ensure universal compatibility. MassGIS staff are advised by the Massachusetts Geographic Information Council (MGIC). MGIC includes representatives from federal, state, regional, and local government agencies, GIS consultants, utilities, non-profit organizations, and academia.

15. **Minnesota GeoSpatial Information Office.** <http://www.mngeo.state.mn.us/>

MnGeo coordinates the development, implementation, support and use of geospatial technology; offers guidance, training, and consulting to agencies needing extra help to improve services by implementing GIS; offers technical services to state agencies and the statewide GIS community; and promotes an enterprise-wide approach to delivery of GIS technological services.

16. **New York State Geographic Information Systems Clearinghouse. New York State Office of Cyber Security.** <http://www.nysgis.state.ny.us/>

NYGIS Systems Clearinghouse contains data accessible by county, dataset name, organization or sector as well as imagery datasets, GIS tools and GIS standards.

17. **NH GRANIT: New Hampshire's GIS Clearinghouse.** University of New Hampshire. <http://www.granit.unh.edu/>
NH GRANIT offers an array of geospatial services including data development and distribution, spatial analysis, online mapping, image processing, application development and training.
18. **Utah GIS Portal. State of Utah.** <http://gis.utah.gov/>
The Utah GIS Portal is the statewide resource for sharing information pertaining to digital mapping and related technologies. The site is maintained by the Utah Automated Geographic Reference Center (AGRC) which provides GIS and other geospatial support services.
19. **Washington State Geographic Information Council.** <http://wagic.wa.gov/>
The WAGIC is recognized as the statewide body responsible for coordinating and facilitating the use and development of Washington State's geospatial information. The work of the WAGIC is based on the Washington State Geographic Information Strategic Plan which acts as a roadmap for utilization of the state's GIT assets on an enterprise basis.
20. **Guide for Enterprise Strategic Planning (May 2007). State of Iowa.** http://www.dom.state.ia.us/planning_performance/files/aga/2007/Enterprise_Strategic_Planning_Guidebook_2007.pdf
Enterprise strategic planning provides direction and focus for all executive branch agencies. The enterprise strategic plan establishes long-range goals to achieve results valued by Iowans. The planning process and goals encourage agencies to collaborate across agency boundaries to focus on both results for Iowans and internal improvements for increased state government effectiveness and efficiency. Planning helps guide budgeting.
21. **Oregon's Statewide Planning Goals and Guidelines (March 2010). Department of Land Conservation and Development.** http://www.oregon.gov/LCD/docs/goals/compilation_of_statewide_planning_goals.pdf
Oregon's planning program is based on 19 statewide planning goals. The goal's express the state's policies on land use and related topics. The goals cover citizen involvement, land use planning, land use types, quality of resources, natural hazards, quality of life, economic development, housing, public facilities, transportation, energy, and sensitive areas.
22. **Rules of Georgia Department of Community Affairs Chapter 110-12-1-.06: State Planning Goals and Objectives (May 2005).** <http://www.dca.state.ga.us/development/PlanningQualityGrowth/programs/downloads/MinimumStandardsAdopted.pdf>
The Department of Community Affairs established six statewide goals, as well as 15 Quality Community Objectives that further elaborate the state goals, based on growth and development issues identified in local and regional plans throughout the state. These goals and objectives are intended to provide guidance or targets for local governments to achieve in developing and implementing their comprehensive plan.

The goals cover economic development, natural and cultural resources, community facilities and services, housing, land use and transportation, and intergovernmental coordination. The Quality Community Objectives focus on sense of place, resource protection, regional cooperation, growth and infill, education and employment options, transportation, and housing.
23. **Vermont Statutes Chapter 24, Section 4302: Planning and Development Goals. State of Vermont.** http://www.smartgrowthvermont.org/fileadmin/files/Toolbox/Images/Publications/State_Planning_Goals_final.pdf
The State of Vermont has outlined 12 broad goals for planning and development in the state. These goals address compact growth, a strong and diverse economy, educational and vocational

opportunities, diversified and sustainable transportation systems, protection of historical and natural features, efficient and renewable energy usage, recreational opportunities, agriculture and forestry industries, natural resources, housing, and public facilities and services.

24. **Integrating Land Use, Transportation, and Economic Development in Pennsylvania (2010). NADO Research Foundation.** <http://www.ruraltransportation.org/uploads/nadoluted.pdf>

This report outlines the presentations and comments given at the Peer Exchange hosted by the NADO Research Foundation Center for Transportation Advancement and Regional Development and the Federal Highway Administration in April 2010. The Exchange provided an opportunity for participants to discuss the Land Use, Transportation, and Economic Development (LUTED) effort that has been undertaken statewide to develop regional visions and strategies that identify projects involving multiple issue areas.

The LUTED initiative and State Interagency Team were developed as a result of participation in the National Governors Association Policy Academy. The aim of LUTED was to better coordinate planning efforts across all levels of government. A Statewide Action Plan was created and the LUTED process was initiated and implemented in 10 planning areas covering the state.

25. **Iowa Code Chapter 28H: Councils of Governments. State of Iowa.** <http://coolice.legis.state.ia.us/cool-ice/default.asp?category=billinfo&service=iowacode&ga=83&input=28H>

Chapter 28H identifies 17 Councils of Government (COGs) and outlines the duties and membership responsibilities of the COGs.

26. **Land Use Planning and Management in Iowa (1977). State of Iowa Office for Planning and Programming.**

The State and Community Services Section of the former Iowa Office for Planning and Programming prepared this report as part of a series on land use planning and management in the state. The purpose of this report is to “summarize the activities of all state agencies, commissions, boards and committees with respect to land use management”. The report concludes that “it is important that the state [all agencies] develop a greater sensitivity to their individual and collective impacts on Iowa’s land and water resources” and that “it is crucial that steps be taken to assure that coordinated land use policies for federal, state and local agencies are developed and implemented.”

27. **Milestone Report #3: Goals, Strategies and a Plan for Action -Year 2030 Regional Comprehensive Plan (April 25, 2008). East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.** <http://www.eastcentralrpc.org/planning/compplan/milestone3/MS3Final/ms3final.htm>

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission has created this regional plan with the support of a \$175,000 state planning grant from the Wisconsin Department of Administration’s Office of Land Information Services (OLIS). The plan provides information on the current state of the region, planning process, public input process, issues and opportunities, and a regional vision. In addition, the plan details goals, strategies and a plan for action for economic development, housing, transportation, community and public facilities, agricultural resources, natural resources, cultural resources and land use, as well as including a Plan for Implementation.

28. **Regional Planning in America: Updating Earlier Visions (November 2000). Seltzer, E. *Land Lines: Volume 12, Number 6*. Lincoln Institute of Land Policy.** http://www.lincolninst.edu/pubs/274_Regional-Planning-in-America--Updating-Earlier-Visions

The article summarizes the roundtable discussions held at the American Planning Association conference in New York in April 1999. The roundtable began with a screening of the 1938 film “The City” and discussions focused on regions as networks, what the role of a regional planning entity should be, encouraging the regional mindset, and themes for future action.

29. **Shaping Our Future in the 21st Century: FAQs (February 2007). East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission.** <http://www.eastcentralrpc.org/planning/compplan/FAQ.htm>
This Web site succinctly answers standard questions posed by local governments regarding Wisconsin planning law. Topics covered include:
 - Origin and impacts of Wisconsin Planning Law
 - Requirements for local planning and benefits to planning
 - Technical aspects of planning versus zoning, components of a plan, and the planning process
30. **The Promise of Wisconsin's 1999 Comprehensive Planning Law: Land Use Policy Reforms to Support Active Living (2208). Schilling, J & Keyes, S. *Journal of Health Politics, Policy and Law*: Volume 33, Number 3. Duke University Press.** <http://jhppl.dukejournals.org/cgi/reprint/33/3/455>
Schilling and Keyes explore “the competing interests and underlying political forces behind the design and passage of Wisconsin’s Comprehensive Planning Law.” The article specifically focuses on smart growth and active-living with references to the nation’s obesity problem. The authors observe that “compared with other state enabling acts, Wisconsin’s planning law sets forth a comprehensive framework of carrots and sticks to encourage good planning and hence better land use policy.”
31. **Iowa Association of Regional Councils.** <http://www.iarcog.com/>
The Iowa Association of Regional Councils (IARC) is the statewide association for Iowa’s Councils of Governments (COGs), and was incorporated in the State of Iowa in February 1988. IARC is a non-profit organization as determined by the Internal Revenue Service. There are 18 member organizations in IARC. Each executive director of the member organizations serves on the IARC Board of Directors which meets monthly in Des Moines.
32. **Wisconsin Code Chapter 66, Section 1001, Sub-section 5: Applicability of a Regional Planning Commission's Plan. State of Wisconsin.** <http://www.doa.state.wi.us/docview.asp?docid=5436>
This subsection states that: A regional planning commission’s comprehensive plan is only advisory in its applicability to a political subdivision and a political subdivision’s comprehensive plan.”
33. **2030 Regional Development Framework (2006). Twin Cities Metropolitan Council.** <http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/framework/Framework.pdf>
The purpose of this *2030 Regional Development Framework* is to provide a plan for how the Metropolitan Council and its regional partners can address regional planning challenges. The Development Framework is the initial “chapter” and the unifying theme of the Council’s Metropolitan Development Guide. It is the umbrella statement of regional policies, goals and strategies that will inform the Council’s metropolitan system plans for airports, transportation, regional parks and wastewater service, as well as other policy plans adopted by the Council. The Framework addresses regional opportunities and challenges, policy directions and strategies, strategies for geographic planning areas, and implementation.
34. **Vermont Code Title 24, Chapter 117, Section 4306: Municipal and Regional Planning Fund. State of Vermont.** <http://www.leg.state.vt.us/statutes/fullsection.cfm?Title=24&Chapter=117&Section=04306>
Chapter 117, Section 4306 of the Vermont Statutes describes the Municipal and Regional Planning Fund. The fund is comprised of 17 percent of the revenue from the property transfer tax. All balances at the end of the fiscal year and all interest is kept in the fund. The fund is allocated as follows:

- 10 percent to Vermont Center for Geographic Information
 - 70 percent to Regional Planning Commissions (based on formula allocation) to provide planning services
 - 20 percent to municipalities for planning (competitive)
35. **Connecticut Statutes Chapter 4, Section 124q: Regional Planning Grant-in-Aid. State of Connecticut.** http://www.ct.gov/opm/cwp/view.asp?a=2985&q=383160&opmNav_GID=1807
This program provides grants to support planning activities by the 15 Regional Planning Organizations (RPOs) in Connecticut. Each RPO receives a base grant of \$53,000 funded 100 percent by the General Fund.
36. **Integrating Hazard Assessment into Comprehensive Planning (August 2010). Iowa Smart Planning Task Force- Comprehensive Planning Committee.** http://rio.iowa.gov/smart_planning/assets/2010-08-11_Hazard_Elements_Report.pdf
This report was prepared by the Comprehensive Planning Committee of the Iowa Smart Planning Task Force as a direct response to the legislative charge of the Task Force to “Review municipal comprehensive plans to determine the number of such plans that address the hazards identified in section 18B.2 subsection 2, paragraph k (Hazards Element), and the adequacy of such plans in addressing those hazards.” To conduct an evaluation of the adequacy of plans to address the Hazards Element section of the legislative guide, a sample (based on population tiers) of nine cities and three counties was evaluated. The evaluation showed that:
- Six of the nine cities sampled has an approved FEMA Hazard Mitigation Plan or is part of the county’s plan. Only one of the counties sampled has an approved plan, while a second county is in the process of updating their expired plan.
 - None of the sampled comprehensive plans contained a Hazard Mitigation or Hazards Assessment section, although many of the plans referenced considering certain hazards in the planning process. These references were mostly concerning flood plains and flood damage mitigation.
 - Half of the plans sampled contained a section specifically on flood plain management with regard to land use. These sections came in the form of both text and maps.
37. **Have State Comprehensive Planning Mandates Reduced Insured Losses from Natural Disasters? (2005). Burby, R. *Natural Hazards Review: Volume 6, Issue 2.*** <http://cedb.asce.org/cgi/WWWdisplay.cgi?146592>
This article examines the relationship between state requirements for preparation of local government comprehensive plans and claims paid by property insurance companies for losses due to weather-related natural disasters between 1994 and 2000. Although a majority of states do not require local governments to prepare comprehensive plans, 24 states do require plans, and 10 states specifically require that mandated plans pay attention to natural hazards. Multivariate analyses indicate that insured per capita losses to residential property over the period studied were reduced from \$33 to \$20 if states require local comprehensive plans and require consideration of natural hazards in local plans. Over the period studied, if all states had required comprehensive plans with hazard mitigation elements, the toll in insured losses to residential property from natural disasters would have been reduced by approximately \$213 million in constant 2000 dollars (\pm \$98 million at the 95 percent level of confidence).
38. **Vermont Statutes Title 24, Chapter 117, Section 4350: Review and Consultation Regarding Municipal Planning Efforts. State of Vermont.** <http://www.leg.state.vt.us/statutes/fullsection.cfm?Title=24&Chapter=117&Section=04350>
Chapter 117, Section 4350 of the Vermont Statutes describes the role of the Regional Planning Commissions as reviewer and consultant of municipal comprehensive plans. More specifically, the

RPC must:

- Consult with municipalities to determine needs as individual municipalities and as neighbors in a region in regards to planning and provide assistance.
- Review and approve local plans when requested by the municipality based on state guidance.
- File any adopted plan or amendment with the Department of Economic, Housing and Community Development.

This section also states that a municipality with a “confirmed planning process”:

- Does not have to have their plan reviewed by the Commissioner of the Department of Economic, Housing and Community Development;
- May levy impact fees on new development; and
- May be eligible to receive additional funds.

39. **Wisconsin Statute Chapter 16, Section 965: Planning Grants to Local Government Units. State of Wisconsin.** <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/statutes/Stat0016.pdf>

Section 16.965 gives the Department of Administration authority to “provide grants to local government units to be used to finance the cost of planning activities, including contracting for planning consultant services, public planning sessions and other planning outreach and educational activities, or for the purchase of computerized planning data, planning software or the hardware required to utilize that data or software.”

Subsection 4 gives award preference to local governments that engage in planning efforts that:

- address overlapping or neighboring jurisdiction collaboration;
- address 14 smart growth goals identified in the section;
- identify smart growth areas; and
- emphasize public participation, among other criteria.

40. **Wisconsin Statute Chapter 66, Section 0617: Impact Fees. State of Wisconsin.** <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/statutes/Stat0066.pdf>

Section 66.0617 defines impact fees as “cash contributions, contributions of land or interests in land or any other items of value that are imposed on a developer by a municipality.” This section gives municipalities the authority to “enact an ordinance to impose impact fees on developers to pay for the capital costs that are necessary to accommodate land development.” Revenues must be kept in a separate account and may only be expended for the particular capital cost for which the fee was imposed. This section requires that a Public Facilities Needs Assessment be completed before enactment of an impact fee ordinance, and also allows for an exemption for low-income housing.

41. **Washington Code 82.02.060: Impact Fees. State of Washington.** <http://www.mrsc.org/mc/rcw/RCW%20%2082%20%20TITLE/RCW%20%2082%20.%2002%20%20CHAPTER/RCW%20%2082%20.%2002%20.060.htm>

Chapter 82 outlines the provisions required in a local ordinance to assess impact fees. These provisions include, among others:

- A schedule of fees
- A credit for developer improvements
- A process for adjustments based on unusual circumstances or developer study

The ordinance may also include an exemption for low-income housing or other public purpose developments.

42. **Utah Code Title 11, Chapter 36: Impact Fees. State of Utah.** http://le.utah.gov/~code/TITLE11/11_36.htm

Chapter 36 details the authority of communities to assess impact fees and the process for expending the revenue. Impact fee is defined here as “a payment of money imposed upon new development activity as a condition of development approval to mitigate the impact of the new development on public facilities.” Communities must have a Capital Facilities Plan before imposing impact fees. Impact fees may only be expended on system improvements identified in the Capital Facilities Plan.

43. **Indiana Code Title 36, Article 7, Chapter 4, Section 1300: Impact Fees. State of Indiana.** <http://www.in.gov/legislative/ic/2010/title36/ar7/ch4.html>
Section 1300 outlines the statutes applicable to a community’s ability to assess impact fees. Impact fee is defined as “a monetary charge imposed on new development by a unity to defray or mitigate the capital costs of infrastructure that is required by, necessitated by, or needed to serve the new development.”
44. **New Energy Use Tax Allows City to Increase General Fund Expenditures (June 13, 2010). Standard Examiner.** <http://www.standard.net/topics/energy/2010/06/13/new-energy-use-tax-allows-city-increase-general-fund-expenditures>
In March 2010, the city council of Woods Cross, UT passed the energy use tax to add an additional \$400,000 to the general fund for the 2011 budget. Woods Cross was one of only two cities in Davis County not imposing the tax.
45. **Climate Action Plan Tax (2006). City of Boulder.** http://www.boulder.colorado.gov/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=7698&Itemid=2844
The Climate Action Plan (CAP) tax was passed in November 2006. The tax is levied on residents and businesses based on electricity usage (kWh) and provides funding for programs to reduce community-wide greenhouse gas emissions. Wind energy is not taxed. Programs funded include energy audits for homes and businesses, rebates and financing assistance for energy efficiency improvements and solar installations, and bus pass subsidies.
46. **New Hampshire Statute Chapter 83-E: Electricity Consumption Tax. State of New Hampshire.** <http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/RSA/html/NHTOC/NHTOC-V-83-E.htm>
Chapter 38 details the imposition and collection of the electricity consumption tax in New Hampshire. The tax is imposed at the rate of \$0.00055 per kilowatt-hour (kWh), is collected by the provider, and is remitted monthly to the state.
47. **Capital Improvement Program: Capital Project Evaluation Criteria. Baltimore County, MD.** http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/Agencies/planning/public_facilities_planning/cip.html
The Capital Improvement Program for Baltimore County “plans for the construction and maintenance of the County’s water, sewer and storm drain improvements, roads, bridges, refuse disposal facilities, government buildings, parks, schools and watershed restoration.” Capital project requests are evaluated based on a set of criteria that includes but is not limited to:
 - Does the project fit within the guidelines of the State’s Smart Growth Initiative?
 - Does the project fit within the guidelines of the Baltimore County Master Plan?
 - Does the project serve to protect or enhance the environment?
 - Does the project enhance or strengthen communities and neighborhoods?
48. **Smart Growth Redevelopment Funding. State of New Jersey.** http://www.state.nj.us/njbusiness/financing/enviromental/smart_growth.shtml
The Smart Growth Redevelopment Fund is administered by New Jersey’s Economic Development Authority (EDA). The fund provides loans and guarantees up to \$1 million for non-contamination-related site preparation costs (e.g. land assemblage) as well as low-interest financing for

infrastructure improvements. New Jersey also offers funding through the Urban Fund to stimulate investment in its urban communities by providing financial and technical tools needed to grow and revitalize neighborhoods.

49. **Iowa Code Chapter 38- Iowa IJobs II Program.** http://ijobsiowa.gov/documents/filelibrary/Rules_6910_210D0C4AE4AEE.pdf
The administrative rules of the IJobs II grant program require that applicant communities have adopted a comprehensive plan that applies smart planning principles, are in the process of updating an existing plan to incorporate smart planning principles, or have committed to adopting a comprehensive plan that applies the smart planning principles within three years; additionally, the comprehensive plans need to have followed the state guidance for local comprehensive planning.

50. **Governor Rell's Executive Order #15: Section 2, Paragraph G and H (October 2006). Office of the Governor.** <http://www.ct.gov/governorrell/cwp/view.asp?a=1719&Q=320908>
Executive Order No. 15 states that the Connecticut Office of Responsible Growth is responsible for “reviewing all state funding that has an impact on the growth and development of Connecticut and establishing criteria that will target funds for uses that are consistent with goals that emerge for responsible growth,” and “targeting economic incentives to support development in designated Responsible Growth areas.”

51. **Institute for Local Government.** <http://www.ca-ilg.org/>
The Institute for Local Government (ILG) is the research and education partnership of the California State Association of Counties and the League of California Cities. The ILG offers five programs that focus on Ethics, Intergovernmental Conflict Resolution, Local Government 101, Public Engagement and Collaborative Governance, and Sustainable Communities.

52. **Local Government Institute of Wisconsin.** <http://www.localgovinstitute.org/>
The LGI is a non-profit partnership created in October 2007 for the purposes of research, collaboration, and education. The LGI was founded by the Wisconsin Counties Association, the League of Wisconsin Municipalities, the Wisconsin Alliance of Cities, and the Wisconsin Towns Association. The LGI is funded by the founding partners and research contracts.

53. **Municipal Research and Services Center for Washington.** <http://www.mrsc.org/>
The MRSC is a non-profit based in Seattle whose mission is to promote excellence in local government. Services offered include professional consultation, research and information services. All information and research is available free of charge to elected officials, government staff, and public hospitals.

54. **Louisiana Land Use Toolkit.** <http://landusetoolkit.com>
The Louisiana Land Use Toolkit is supported by the Louisiana Department of Development and the Center of Planning Excellence. The toolkit offers a model development code that integrates smart growth principles. This code can be tailored by local governments and used to guide future development.

55. **Green and Growing: Tools for Responsible Growth. State of Connecticut.** <http://www.dir.ct.gov/opm/IGP/Tools/index.asp>
Green and Growing is the State of Connecticut's toolbox for policies, plans and programs administered by state agencies represented on the Interagency Responsible Growth Steering Council. Tools are searchable by keyword or by relevance to the role of the audience (e.g. municipal, developer, farmer, etc.). Tools include grants, loans, tax credits and technical assistance, among others.

56. **Florida Planning Toolbox.** <http://www.cues.fau.edu/toolbox/>

The Florida Planning Toolbox was made possible by a grant from the Florida Department of Community Affairs to further regional visioning initiatives in Florida by providing descriptions and examples of planning tools designed to protect and enhance natural resources, promote economic prosperity for all residents, and enable a sustainable quality of life. The toolbox is housed at the Center for Urban and Environmental Solutions (CUES) at Florida Atlantic University.

57. **Water Resources and Land Use Planning: Watershed-based Strategies for Amador and Calaveras Counties (2008). Local Government Commission.** <http://water.lgc.org/amador-calaveras/amador-cc%20watershed%20plan%202.pdf>

The Watershed-based Strategies for Amador and Calaveras Counties was developed by the Local Government Commission and a Stakeholder Advisory Committee with funding from the California State Water Resources Control Board. The plan contains sections on area issues, open space and infrastructure, sustainable water and watershed management, and water quality monitoring guidelines.

The plan also provides a section on Community Planning and Design which recommends “town-centered development with a greater mix of land uses and housing types, connected by safe and walkable streets.” This section includes specific strategies focused on strategic location, compact design, mixed use development, and transportation networks and street design. The Community Planning and Design section also gives information on the effects of land use patterns on the watershed and provides specific recommendations for municipalities within the watershed.

58. **Keuka Lake Watershed Land Use Planning Guide - An Intermunicipal Action Strategy (2009). Genesee Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council.** <http://www.gflrpc.org/Publications/Keuka/Plan/Guide/LandUseGuide.pdf>

This document was developed to provide the municipalities in the watershed a resource for land use -watershed planning. The guide provides a profile on the watershed, current conditions of the watershed, a watershed vision, as well as watershed goals and objectives, potential strategies, and an implementation strategy and update process. The plan has a specific goal titled “Sustainable Development” with 10 action steps including:

- Revise local codes to encourage the use of “Green Building” techniques.
- Include environmental considerations as a component of subdivision and site plan approvals.
- Promote sustainable agriculture.

59. **Elwha-Dungeness Watershed Plan- Land Use and Land Management Recommendations (2005). Clallam County, WA.** http://www.clallam.net/environment/html/wria_18_draft_watershed_plan.htm

The Elwha-Dungeness Watershed Plan was developed by the member governments of the Water Resource Inventory Area 18 (WRIA 18) in Washington. The primary goals of the plan are to assess the status of water resources and address issues relating to water quantity, water quality, aquatic and riparian habitat, instream flows and water storage. The plan contains a section on Land Use and Land Management Recommendations for each participating government. These recommendations cover:

- Land Conversions
- Development in Sensitive Areas
- Interaction between Septic and Wellhead Zones of Control
- Watershed Boundaries
- Water Conservation in Land Development
- Forest Lands Management

60. **Watershed Based Plans and Watershed Management Plans. Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection.** http://www.ct.gov/dep/cwp/view.asp?a=2719&q=335504&depNav_GID=1654
The goal of Connecticut's Department of Environmental Protection's Watershed Management Program is "to assist in the development of comprehensive watershed management plans, to protect and restore water quality, and conserve and manage water resources, by guiding local land use decision making, and enhancing pollution prevention programs." The website provides a list of completed and approved plans, examples of watershed plans, and resources on water management.
61. **Approved Watershed Plans. Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment.** http://www.michigan.gov/deg/0,1607,7-135-3313_3682_3714_4012-95955--,00.html
The Michigan Department of Natural Resources provides a map and copies of approved watershed plans in the state. The Department states that a "Watershed Management Plan considers all uses, pollutant sources, and impacts within a drainage area." Over 150 local watershed plans have been developed utilizing Department of Environmental Quality grants. Funding for implementation of plans is available from federal sources and the Clean Michigan Initiative.
62. **Kentucky Wet Growth Tools for Sustainable Development: A Handbook on Land Use and Water (2009). University of Louisville.** <http://louisville.edu/landuse/healthy-watersheds-land-use-initiative.html>
This handbook is designed to be a general overview of the many tools available to accomplish wet growth policy goals. "Wet growth" refers to a wide range of growth management and land use policies that give high priority to water quality, water conservation, and overall watershed health.
63. **Protecting Water Resources with Smart Growth (2004). United States Environmental Protection Agency.** <http://louisville.edu/landuse/healthy-watersheds-land-use-initiative.html>
This publication is intended for audiences who seek specific ideas on how techniques for smarter growth can be used to protect water resources. Smart growth principles provide a foundation for the 75 policies described in this report. The majority of these policies (46) are oriented to the watershed, or regional level; the other 29 are targeted at the level of specific development sites.
64. **Iowa Code Chapter 354: Platting- Division and Subdivision of Land.** <http://coolice.legis.state.ia.us/Cool-ICE/default.asp?category=billinfo&service=iowaCode>
This chapter provides for "a balance between the review and regulation authority of governmental agencies concerning the division and subdivision of land and the rights of landowners." Language involving comprehensive plans can be specifically found in section 354.1, subsection 4 and section 354.8.
65. **Iowa Code Chapter 368: City Development.** <http://coolice.legis.state.ia.us/Cool-ICE/default.asp?category=billinfo&service=iowaCode>
This chapter concerns city development including annexation and municipal services. Language involving comprehensive plans can be found throughout several sections of this chapter.
66. **Iowa Code Chapter 403: Urban Renewal.** <http://coolice.legis.state.ia.us/Cool-ICE/default.asp?category=billinfo&service=iowaCode>
This chapter provides for identification of urban renewal areas by cities and creation of urban renewal programs and plans. The term "general plan" is used throughout the chapter to mean "comprehensive plan."

Appendix B: Draft Recommendations for Public Comment – Approved Sept. 15, 2010

The following draft recommendations, along with greater explanation, were approved by the Iowa Smart Planning Task Force on Sept. 15, 2010. These recommendations were presented at public input meetings and were the basis for soliciting public comment. The full document outlining these recommendations can be provided by request.

- 1. Establish a framework to coordinate planning, geographic information and data systems, and state level investment.**
 - 1.1. Establish the GIS and Data Systems, and Planning Coordination Councils, and the Office of Planning and Geographic Information Systems (OPGIS).
 - 1.2. Integrate the Smart Planning Principles into the State's Enterprise Strategic Planning Process.
 - 1.3. Iowa Councils of Government (COGs) should serve as the geographic entities for regional smart plans.
 - 1.4. A Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) for each region should be established by the COGs for local smart plan review.
 - 1.5. A COG or COGs should be established in central Iowa for the seven counties (Boone, Dallas, Jasper, Marion, Polk, Story, and Warren Counties) not currently served or served in-part by an existing COG by June 30, 2015.
 - 1.6. Identify "State of Iowa Smart Planning Goals and Benchmarks" as statewide goals for the OPGIS.
- 2. Require completion of regional comprehensive smart plans within 5 years after legislation is enacted.**
- 3. Create financial incentives and offer technical assistance to incent smart planning at both the regional and local levels.**
 - 3.1. Create a sustainable funding source for regional smart planning conducted by the COGs.
 - 3.2. Create a sustainable funding source for a smart planning grant program at the state level for local smart plan development and implementation.
 - 3.3. Expand the menu of financing options available to local governments to develop and implement smart plans.
 - 3.4. Provide training and technical assistance to state agencies to facilitate integration of the Smart Planning Principles into state investment decision-making processes, particularly grant programs.
 - 3.5. State agencies should set a threshold of or give additional consideration for having a qualified smart plan to receive state funding for infrastructure and public facilities projects that affect land use, transportation, stormwater management, and floodplain protection, where appropriate.
 - 3.6. Create a smart planning education program for local government staff, officials, and the public.
 - 3.7. Develop a smart planning toolbox to be housed at OPGIS that will serve as a one-stop-shop for smart planning information and resources.
 - 3.8. Develop an accessible statewide GIS and data management system.
- 4. Develop a watershed planning and coordination program, including goals and strategies referencing land use for each of Iowa's nine major river basins.**
- 5. Make the definition of "local comprehensive plan" uniform throughout the Iowa Code.**

Appendix C: Public Comments, Survey Results, and Analysis

The Iowa Smart Planning Task Force membership placed a high priority on soliciting and meaningfully considering public input concerning the development and refinement of the recommendations included in this report. Given the time constraints of addressing each of the directives outlined in SF 2389 by Nov. 15, 2010, the Task Force believes the public input process employed provided adequate notice and allowed for multiple opportunities for interested persons and organizations to provide input into the process. Information below provides a brief outline of the common themes and remaining concerns identified through the public input process, followed by the survey results and raw comments and letters submitted.

Analysis of Public Input

The following bullet points were identified by Task Force leadership and presented to the Task Force on Oct. 20, 2010, as the items articulated in the draft recommendations approved by the Task Force on Sept. 15, 2010, that appeared to be well received by the public and interested organizations:

Areas of Agreement:

1. Smart Planning concepts are generally supported, producing tangible benefits to communities and the state.
2. The Smart Planning framework should remain flexible and locally-driven.
3. Watershed planning is a critical component.
4. Education is essential.
5. Inclusiveness of stakeholders is necessary.
6. Costs should be shared across all levels of government.
7. Streamlined access to GIS data is needed.

The following bullet points were identified by Task Force leadership and presented to the Task Force on Oct. 20, 2010, as the items articulated in the draft recommendations approved by the Task Force on Sept. 15, 2010, that appeared to need further refinement and clarification based on the input received by the public and interested organizations.

Remaining Questions and Concerns:

1. Planning and GIS Office Structure
 - Independent planning office versus incorporated within an existing agency
 - Need to reconcile governance issues with two boards
 - Board membership may be too large
2. Regional Planning
 - Concern regarding capacity of COGs to undertake regional planning
 - Planning Advisory Committees – need greater clarification of role; committee membership concerns
 - Regional planning concerns with border states
 - Options for regional planning administration in Central Iowa
3. Funding
 - Greater support for “additional consideration” versus threshold requirement for competitive state grants
 - Adequate funding is necessary for success
 - Prefer no new taxes, fees, or additional government layers
 - Are incentives a de facto mandate?
 - Would like to see quantified costs and benefits
4. GIS
 - Need to address funding and security issues pertaining to GIS data

The Task Force considered the areas of agreement and the remaining questions and concerns while refining the draft recommendations during the Oct. 20, 2010, meeting. The public input process significantly improved the final recommendation included in this report.

Iowa Smart Planning Draft Recommendations Survey Overview of Responses

Oct. 13, 2010

The Iowa Smart Planning Draft Recommendations Survey was posted to the Iowa Smart Planning Web site and publicized beginning September 16, 2010. Task Force members were encouraged to send information about the public input process, including the survey, to their constituents, and the survey was referenced in the press release issued on Sept. 16, 2010, announcing the public input process. The surveys were provided at the five public input meetings in Spencer, Red Oak, Waverly, Coralville, and Boone, and webinar participants were directed to the electronic form. All surveys were collected at the public input meetings or submitted via email to the Rebuild Iowa Office. Responses were requested by Oct. 10, 2010.

Respondents were asked to indicate support, neutrality, or opposition to each of the draft recommendations approved by the Iowa Smart Planning Task Force on Sept. 15, 2010. Two qualitative questions were asked at the end of the survey. The responses to those questions are included at the end of this document.

Quantitative Results

Surveys were submitted by 58 persons/entities. Responses are presented below. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

	<u>Recommendations</u>	Support	Neutral	Oppose
1	Establish a framework to coordinate planning, geographic information and data systems, and state-level investment.	93%	4%	4%
1.1	Establish the GIS & Data Systems and Planning Coordination Councils, and the Office of Planning and Geographic Information Systems (OPGIS).	82%	14%	4%
1.2	Integrate the Smart Planning Principles into the State's Enterprise Strategic Planning Process.	71%	25%	4%
1.3	Iowa Councils of Government (COGs) should serve as the geographic entities for regional smart plans.	64%	25%	11%
1.4	A Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) for each region should be established by the COGs for local smart plan review.	52%	30%	18%
1.5	A COG or COGs should be established in central Iowa for the seven counties (Boone, Dallas, Jasper, Marion, Polk, Story, and Warren Counties) not currently served or served in-part by an existing COG by June 30, 2015.	66%	29%	5%
1.6	Identify "State of Iowa Smart Planning Goals and Benchmarks" as statewide goals for the OPGIS.	77%	18%	5%

	Recommendations	Support	Neutral	Oppose
2	Require completion of regional comprehensive smart plans within 5 years after legislation is enacted.	79%	14%	7%
3	Create financial incentives and offer technical assistance to incent smart planning at both the regional and local levels.	98%	2%	0%
3.1	Create a sustainable funding source for regional smart planning conducted by the COGs.	68%	27%	5%
3.2	Create a sustainable funding source for a smart planning grant program at the state level for local smart plan development and implementation.	68%	26%	6%
3.3	Expand the menu of financing options available to local governments to develop and implement smart plans.	80%	15%	5%
3.4	Provide training and technical assistance to state agencies to facilitate integration of the Smart Planning Principles into state investment decision-making processes, particularly grant programs.	80%	20%	0%
3.5	State agencies should set a threshold of or give additional consideration for having a qualified smart plan to receive state funding for infrastructure and public facilities projects that affect land use, transportation, stormwater management, and floodplain protection, where appropriate.	76%	18%	5%
3.6	Create a smart planning education program for local government staff, officials, and the public.	87%	11%	2%
3.7	Develop a smart planning toolbox to be housed at OPGIS that will serve as a one-stop-shop for smart planning information and resources.	78%	20%	2%
3.8	Develop an accessible statewide GIS and data management system.	85%	13%	2%
4	Develop a watershed planning and coordination program, including goals and strategies referencing land use for each of Iowa's nine major river basins.	89%	7%	4%
5	Make the definition of "local comprehensive plan" uniform throughout the Iowa Code.	91%	7%	2%

Qualitative Results

The following comments were included with the survey results. They include responses to two statements: 1) Recommendations that should be changed, added, or deleted and 2) Additional comments and suggestions. Not all surveys included written comments.

Survey #1

I support all the recommendations of the Task Force. I feel that #4 is an especially crucial component to Smart Planning. "Develop a watershed planning and coordination program, including goals and strategies referencing land use for each of Iowa's nine major river basins."

I notice incentives are mentioned in #3 "Create financial incentives and offer technical assistance to incent smart planning at both the regional and local levels." I believe that incentives, in some instances, are not enough. There need to also be consequences for poor land use and management. For instance, stream buffers should be mandated, not just incentivized. We also need more stringent restrictions for development in floodplains.

Thank you for the chance to give input.

Survey #4

Should continue prioritizing watershed planning and grants toward impaired waterways. Grade existing comprehensive plans as to how they integrate Smart Planning Principles.

Survey #5

Additions pertaining to Item 4: Involve the agricultural community/producers

- Consider requirements for vegetated stream bank buffers and field perimeter buffers to reduce erosion and pollution
- Consider incentives to encourage no-till farming practices

Survey #6

Delete "and paths built from 3.2.3. Add a new goal: "3.2.4 Increase the number of bikeways, bicycle facilities, walkways, and paths built." The current goal locks Iowa into a path is the only bikeway or walkway mindset. The suggested language opens the door to bike lanes, sharrows, and more. Bicycle facilities could address bike racks on buses, bike parking, or similar infrastructure. A good plan should allow for innovation. Look to Wisconsin, Oregon, California and Colorado for examples.

Also, perhaps investments in alternative transportation such as trains, van pools, etc.

Survey #7

Establish an Office of Sustainable Planning and Programming to coordinate Iowa's land use planning and management and coordinate work done by other state agencies. This would avoid duplication of efforts and save the tax payers money while still spending tax dollars where they are vitally needed. Many small towns and rural areas could never afford to do high quality smart growth planning. Even the more populated regions with COGs (presuming they are reestablished) could not do a consistent and high quality job of smart growth planning without a central state agency to provide oversight, guidance and possibly enforcement. The Smart Planning effort would dramatically lose effectiveness without an umbrella agency to coordinate all efforts statewide.

We are in a particularly good position right now to ask the Federal government for a modification of funding rules to allow some of the vast sums now being spent on damage relief to be spent instead on prevention. The Office of Sustainable Planning and Programming could potentially be funded with that money. Even if it were completely funded by State dollars, we will be money ahead in the long run.

Survey #8

Need to make training a priority for local planning & zoning officials. Also all floodplain administrators in the state. Need to implement a statewide floodplain group now and not later. As a floodplain administrator I feel we get no training until it is too late and the group would be a way to do that.

Survey #9

Development of one regional plan vs. state, regional and local may help ease duplication and expense.

Survey #10

Perhaps there should be a provision for a multi-jurisdictional smart plan that may be a plan for a transportation corridor or other shared feature.

In addition, state code needs to make provision for jurisdictions to jointly levy or share taxes and revenue to spur multi-jurisdictional economic development. This is probably beyond the scope of the legislation of the Task Force, but it would be beneficial in the Mason City, Clear Lake, Cerro Gordo County area.

If a plan is prepared by the COG for a city or county, it should be assumed that it will conform to the regional smart plan. Based on this, the process for approval could be streamlined and approved by the Planning Advisory Committee bypassed. Since there are no mandates, incentives must be included.

Survey #13

I would like to see a high degree of coordination between Priority Growth Areas and Transportation Oriented Design. Meaningful financial incentives designed to force those new growth areas to create transit plans prior to development.

Survey #14

A central Smart Planning Clearinghouse is a great idea, along with training on how to use and implement strategies. Creating a new, separate entity may slow the process. Is it possible to use existing entity to support/administer programs? The new body should guard against poor planning practices, not enforce particular developments.

Survey #16

1.4: Probably should let the COG determine how they plan their region.

1.1: Don't like the idea of building a completely new office, should be put in DOM, maybe DOT

More emphasis on affordability for low/middle income families in terms of housing choices, proximity to services and employment, and access to public transit.

Look at/use health impact assessments.

Is there a significant burden to plan a "smart plant" versus a "not smart plant?"

Didn't see any ideas about regional transit.

Worried that these recommendations will be forgotten after the cost estimates are determined for this whole project and smart planning will go by the wayside.

Survey #20

I think the benchmarks are a good idea, but they need to have an incentive to fulfill them. In the presentation, they said that meeting benchmarks would not be required to receiving funding. Why not? School districts should be encouraged to do smart planning, too.

Survey #21

Very skeptical of a statewide GIS. These are very technical programs, varying layers of information at multiple quantities. It has taken city and county 20 years to get where we are and several million dollars later. Don't understand how this will be coordinated. Very diverse interest in the state. Often these plans

will be so high level that they have no way of guiding policy decisions.

Survey #22

Fund is always an issue, especially now. Good emphasis on GIS, a lot to be gained. Perhaps need more emphasis on flood prevention is required.

Survey #23

“Goal #3: Livable Communities & Quality of Life” lacks a comprehensive vision – where could a discussion of social service, environmental pollution reduction, and economic development planning be included as part of livable communities and quality of life? By limiting smart planning to housing diversity and transportation diversity, I think the vision of smart planning is made too narrow.

Survey #28

Regional planning makes no sense when agriculture is exempt. Before legislation, a funding source should be established. No unfunded mandates.

Survey #29

Financial incentives are important! Could there be penalties (return the money) if plan isn't followed?

Survey #30

Consider a hosted solution for GIS as opposed to an actual server that requires IT services, backup, redundancy, and disaster recovery. If this is not a major hindrance to local government's generating comprehensive plans, why isn't funding in place?

Survey #31

Add universal design features as a dedicated part of smart planning. Recommend where OPGIS should be located. The location will impact what is done. Have the courage to give it your best judgment. If judgment is independent agency – say so! Based on question and answer period, it is evident that there is more detail in the framework that makes it difficult to answer this survey; in general, I support the idea.

Survey #34

The problem small cities have with COGS is that they are over an hour or more away in some cases. So setting up meetings with council and committees can be a hassle. It would nice if there was a standard form to give to cities to get their comprehensive planning updated or started. Kind of like a fill in the blank template for cities 5,000 & under, 10,000 & under, etc... So that the City Councils and committees can take ownership of the plans. With COGS, sometimes they come in and talk way above our heads, then fill out a huge document and Council never looks at it because they are too embarrassed to ask questions. Small towns can get lost in the whole process, and if funding is tied to it, they lose out on the funding. It takes a lot of work, but I think the procedures and some of the accountability needs to be put back on the local volunteers and community leaders, so they stay involved and don't just assume the COG knows exactly what they want in the plan. The other problem is I don't see a step by step guide for cities. Like first do this, or have this meeting, then do this... If COGS can provide that to cities ahead of time, it may help keep the costs down for everyone.

Survey #36

I think that it is important to note that the government in Iowa is the single largest employer now. Government continues to grow, and I don't see this slowing or stopping growth of government but increasing it. Continued growth in government only means increased cost to the tax payer either directly to the individual or indirectly through companies that provide a product or service in their cost of doing business in this state. If this is a good thing and economically sustainable, fund it through all levels of government with existing funds and budgets investing in the future savings just like a private company

does and would do. If it isn't economically sustainable, then process should be scrapped. Builders and developers respond to the desire and need of the public. Educate the public to want this, and or need this and then it will be provided. If they don't then stop spending time on thinking that government has the answers, and knows better than the consumer. DO NOT generate NEW funding sources TAXES to do this, please...

Survey #37

More outreach needs to be done to the general public to educate and engage them on the Smart Planning Principles and how they will possible affect and benefit themselves, their family and their communities.

While I agree with the recommendations, I feel that many need to be given more specific details. One of the main areas of concern is the funding sources through which these initiatives will come through. Many of these offices and plans to be created are valuable however without proper funding, will not be done well. It should not be the responsibility of the COG's to raise user fees or charge their communities more for these services.

It will also be crucial for technical education to be given to the individuals who will be working with the smart planning process and creating these documents so that they can be made as effective as possible.

Survey #39

Items 1 and 3.8 already have some momentum. AS this moves forward, I think it is important to take an inventory of what pieces are already in place and reuse some of what is already in place. Many individuals in the GIS community have invested a lot of effort in construction some of the components of what eventually would be a spatial data infrastructure for the state. Activities such as the ICIT data repository, the Iowa Geospatial Data Clearinghouse, state-wide geospatial metadata training, GIS ROIs and the Iowa DNR NRGIS data library are just some of the activities that have been working towards a GIS data infrastructure over the last decade or longer.

Survey #40

This plan makes a lot of sense. A few comments:

- Chain of command - figure 1.4 shows GIS/Data Systems Council and Planning Coordination Council as separate and at the same level. What if they don't agree and give contradicting guidance to the OPGIS?
- The format of GIS varies from county to county. The format of parcel # varies from county to county though most contain section-township-range. Exporting basically parcel polygons and numbers to a shape file may not be as bad as if you also want additional GIS data now stored differently from county to county. Some counties do their own GIS work inhouse and some use a vendor that has their own standards they follow so may not be as flexible
- A lot of GIS work has been done by counties and there has been some discussion on county level of trying to set standards - be sure to get a lot of input from county GIS personnel
- Some counties sell their data and some give it away so there may be resistance depending on who would have access to county data

Survey #42

I'd like to know more about the abilities of COGs to provide regional planning services, especially if grant funding is contingent upon having a "smart" plan. My experience with COGs is that member cities drop out and rejoin on a whim or perceived slight. This affects funding, which affects staff levels and work outputs.

Survey #43

Support making regional plans mandatory, but need to keep them advisory. There should be guarantees that the various committees and agencies formed are not dominated by developers, the chambers of commerce, the Farm Bureau, or other groups that already hold positions of power in regard to land use decisions. Good science must be emphasized in regard to environmental decisions. In general, I support this, but it must not be allowed to concentrate power and become an obstacle to positive environmental progress. Nothing should prevent a city or county from adopting a plan that is more restrict than the regional one. For example, if one county in a region wants to do more to protect farmland, or to manage stormwater, then its regional plan calls for, this should not be prevented. For instance, this happens now in regard to citing large hog lots. The state restrictions pre-empt any attempt at local regulations. Strongly support regional watershed planning.

Survey #44

- 1.1: does a new state office need to be formed or can these duties be rolled into an existing state agency?
- 1.5: simply mandate a COG be formed with/by those 7 counties to more closely match Region 11 as it exists for transit and transportation planning.
- 2: Tight timeframe when this not even in effect yet. 7 or 10 years?

Why would the region (COG) review and “certify” the smart plans if they may have written the plan in the first place? Shouldn’t the state review the plans against a standard?

Survey #45

We need to involved drainage districts in Iowa.

Survey #46

Will there be standardized state-wide zoning? Need greater building construction inspection. Watershed management plan – does it include Ag land tile water and surface water sheeting into ditches? Update drainage district rule and appeal process.

Survey #47

Use an existing department rather than creating new government department. Need rules immediately after the regional planning mandate is passed. Make sure that funding makes it affordable for entities to do a plan. Opposed the threshold of a having a smart plan to access funding streams, but would support additional points. Do not make the plans so intensive that it makes the development of the plan too expensive that entities cannot afford to do it. Do not make it so plans become a “fill in the blank” plan that entities develop them only to get grant funding. Entities do not need another “put on the shelf” plan, makes sure these plans have involvement.

Survey #49

In the 13 elements, Agriculture and Historical Resources should be two separate elements. Mandating regional plans is the key. The case for funding should stress how the costs from lack of planning and poor planning are passed onto local governments and taxpayers.

Survey #50

I think regional plans are very important. They should foster cooperation instead of competition among local entities. Guidelines should be as concrete as possible so they are not open to a lot of interpretation. Education will help local entities see the advantages to smart planning and regional planning.

I like the 13 elements in requirement #1 of recommendation 2. Public input is more challenging on

regional plans because they include more than the local areas people are already familiar with.

Survey #51

I am concerned that using COG boundaries is not as effective at planning for flood mitigation as using river basin boundaries. It surprises me that Recommendation 3.7 does not also require legislative/administrative action steps in order to institute the toolbox. Won't funding be necessary? How will best practices be agreed upon? I think the task force has done a great job! Thank you for all your hard work!

Survey #53

Recommendation 1.4 should contain more specific language about "addressing prevention and mitigation of, ... and recovery from catastrophic flooding"

Iowa needs to make watershed planning (and more specifically water quantity/flooding aspects) a priority in all departments and fund and support these efforts. The need for coordination in the 9 basins is absolutely critical in developing effective planning and implementation, yet it is unfunded. Preventative flood planning is a great investment given the cost of flood recovery. Fully fund 9 large basin coordinators and give them the tools they need to succeed. Further, develop priorities within each watershed to dictate where we will and won't implement BMPs and where they have the most impact. Create a uniform, statewide infrastructure at all levels (from large basins to small, local watersheds) that encourages success. This includes somewhat standardized outreach materials, watershed planning tools, training related to landowner outreach, effectiveness monitoring infrastructure, etc. Our work in small watersheds is critically important to the larger picture, yet these positions are poorly supported in terms of infrastructure for success, as well as funding. Making these more successful should be the ultimate goal of watershed planning. (these suggestions also relate closely to Recc. 4).

Recc. 1.6, Goal 1: The concept of Integrated Watershed Resources Management should be reviewed and considered for improving our state's water resources. Elsewhere these principles are implemented resulting in greater success and improved cooperation/collaboration. There are many principles that Iowa can quickly adopt that will quickly improve how we do business! These principles are analogous to more general 'smart planning' principles, but are more focused on water resources planning.

If a technical advisory council is created, how will it be an agency priority? When budgets are tight will people participate? I'm not opposed, but without teeth, this might be difficult. GIS Data is not too difficult to find, but a centralized library would be useful. More importantly, if such a clearinghouse is created, would be to ensure data is updated and all data is available. City or County data is much harder to access, but should be made available in a similar fashion!

Creating a new office of planning and GIS makes me a bit nervous. How do we ensure effectiveness? Will this just create another agency that makes effective implementation more tedious and difficult? Again, I'm not against it, but it needs to be effective. Can it have a sunset clause, based upon outside review, to determine if it is making an impact?

I strongly support the Rec 1.2 "proved accountability and transparency on metrics". Also, will establishing a statewide vision create a mechanism to minimize overlap of duties/programs among Departments within the state?

Recc. 1.6, Goal 4.2. Iowa has long needed priorities for Natural Resource protection. We currently work under the incorrect assumption that everything is a priority, yet we see little impact in general. We need to identify where natural resources protection (whether for endangered species, water quality improvement, water quantity/flood abatement, source water protection, etc. etc.) areas are located, then 'stack' these ecosystem services-focusing on areas of greatest impact. The converse is also true... there

are places we must not devote public funded efforts. The quicker we get down this road, the quicker we will see impact. We must also lead by example to encourage federal programs to show similar prioritization. A great majority of our land use improvement projects are dependant on federal programs. We must demand prioritization.

Survey #54

Re 1.3 and 1.4. I attended the Oct. 6 meeting in Coralville and support concerns raised about having the COGS serve as the central organizing factor. I realize many COGS work well and that it is practical to rely on them for the most part if we want to get planning underway sooner than later. However, I agreed with several individuals who pointed out that using the watersheds as the primary organizing principle for regional planning would be ideal. I believe that item 4 should be strengthened so that it can be effective - can you add that there will be guidelines or requirements, not just goals land strategies, re land use in the river basins? I also have concerns about the COGS because they are based on the 99 county-system, which, with all due respect to needs of the past, is antiquated in some ways. I realize it's beyond the scope of the smart planning effort, but the county-system ideally should be overhauled to create fewer counties that make more sense from a planning point of view and perhaps provide cost-savings.

Since half of Iowa towns have populations under 500, as was pointed out at the Oct. 6, meeting, I wonder if there are strategies to learn from the state's network of community colleges about how best to do outreach and interact with smaller towns and their citizens. I applaud your efforts. I hope to be a part of successful comprehensive planning and/or training others to do planning in Iowa once I earn my degree in planning. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Survey #57

Include objective criteria for process and substance so that approval of all annexation petitions/ applications is dependent upon municipal compliance with smart plan elements of comprehensive plan. Applicable to all cities population 1000 or more or classified as within growth area/region (defined).

Survey #58

Why would we want to add another body for COGs to staff? Just tweak the makeup of their policy board to be geared toward planning. Even diversifying the makeup of transportation technical committees to serve a dual purpose makes more sense than creating an additional body.

Expanding the scope of the existing MPO is the only reasonable option for a COG in central Iowa. Merge a slightly expanded Metro Advisory Council into the MPO and provide resources for specialized planning staff. Many of the transportation planning staff are already educated in broad based planning.

While the idea of savings combining smaller sheds is appealing financially, I think it is a disservice to not address them independently of each other with the same approach. Each faces its own impacts. I think each river watershed regardless of its size, needs to stand alone just like States in the US Senate.



The MPO Wants to Know: Iowa Smart Planning

In an effort to better understand public views, the MPO has launched a series of online surveys about various transportation-related topics. The survey results will help the MPO develop plans and projects for the future. The responses also will be shared with appropriate roundtables and policymakers. For a list of available surveys, please visit the MPO website at <http://www.dmampo.org/user/survey.html>. Below are the results of a survey related to the Iowa Smart Planning Task Force's draft recommendations. If passed, the recommendations will have implications for planning across the state.

Question 1. Are you familiar with the concept of smart planning?

Yes82.1%
No.....17.9%

Question 2. The draft recommendations propose making the definition of "local comprehensive plan" uniform throughout the Iowa Code. Are you familiar with the components of such plans?

Yes71.4%
No.....28.6%

Question 3. One of the draft recommendations suggests creating one or more council of governments (COG) in central Iowa. According to the recommendations, a COG would "ensure that integrated, regional planning may occur in a manner consistent with the regional planning efforts across the state." Do you think a COG should be established in central Iowa?

Yes64.3%
No.....35.7%

Question 4. Alternatively, the draft recommendations state that the duties of the Des Moines Area MPO or another organization could be expanded to incorporate regional planning responsibilities. How do you feel about the MPO taking on this role?

Nearly 60 percent of respondents support the idea of the MPO taking on regional planning responsibilities. Respondents feel that the MPO is "well suited" to take on this role; "the MPO has the most credibility, leadership,

and professional qualifications to do regional planning in central Iowa.” Another respondent notes that this role would be a “logical extension of what the MPO already does.” Though additional resources would be needed, this expansion of duties for the MPO would eliminate the need for an additional level of government.

Another individual notes that “the MPO is a trusted regional forum. Additionally, the MPO’s transportation planning function directly impacts other decisions related to housing and land use, and should be expanded to be more comprehensive in nature.”

This emphasis on transportation, though, results in concerns from several other respondents. One individual is concerned about the impact on local communities, while another notes that “land use is the sacred power of local governments in Iowa, and it will be very hard for the locals to share that control with the MPO.” Still another respondent mentions that “while transportation is central to regional planning, it might have the potential to crowd out other important and necessary components.”

A few respondents feel that a new body should be created, while others do not think that the state should mandate a COG in central Iowa. As one individual notes, “Is this necessary, especially in central Iowa? What role/purpose/services would a COG or expanded MPO provide?”

Question 5. Another draft recommendation of the Task Force is to require the completion of regional comprehensive smart plans within five years after legislation is enacted. The recommendation notes that such plans will guide the “coordinated, efficient, and effective development of the region.” Do you feel that the creation of a smart plan is important for central Iowa?

Yes	89.3%
No	10.7%

Question 6. The draft recommendations identify goals to measure the progress of smart planning efforts. One goal is to promote livable communities and maintain a high quality of life through housing and transportation diversity, and one strategy to address this goal is to encourage multimodal transportation. How do you think the MPO should help encourage multimodal transportation?

Many respondents want more public transportation options, including bus rapid transit, light rail, and water taxis. Some think that the Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority “should be required to work more closely with the MPO’s planners.” One respondent feels that more park and ride facilities should be made available. Another respondent believes there should be a focus on constructing multi-unit housing on current bus routes, while another individual notes that the area must “be sure that new and

redevelopment land use plans incorporate designs sufficient to support enhanced transit planning services. The MPO should be involved in such planning efforts.” Other respondents desire more bike trails and lanes. There also should be more emphasis on walkability and complete streets.

Automobile driving, according to one respondent, should be made “more difficult and time consuming.” Another respondent suggests, “Stop making new roadways and roadway expansions the top priority. Make a statement that, until the balance is completely shifted, all new focus will be on mass transit options for the entire region. The intention will be that, with effective mass transit options, road expansion will be unnecessary for the foreseeable future... Automobile use does not need any encouragement... Building and expanding roadways ignores this reality and fuels the problem.” In order to achieve this, another respondent suggests that the MPO award more points to projects that include multimodal transportation.¹

Other respondents note that the MPO needs to entice the public to “take advantage of multimodal amenities.” “The MPO should be leading experts in how to encourage multimodal transportation... The most effective way that the MPO can help encourage multimodal transportation is to reach out to the public to let them know that they can provide information on a variety of transportation issue and are a useful resource. The MPO website is a great resource, but, if people do not know that it is there, how effective is it? The MPO needs some positive-reinforcing media attention (like a spot on a local newscast or a *Des Moines Register* article).

Question 7. The MPO will participate in one of the public meetings regarding the Task Force's recommendations. What would you like the MPO to share with the Task Force?

The MPO will share the following ideas with the Iowa Smart Planning Task Force:

- “The recommendations call for too much additional government and regulation; need to simplify.”
- “Most smart growth principles apply to large, dense metropolitan areas. How can those effectively be translated to a small/moderately sized, lower density metro area like Des Moines?”
- “The Des Moines Area MPO needs to be a key part of the new legislation for the region, in principle and out of necessity since it is the fastest growing metropolitan area in the State of Iowa.”
- “Keep planning.”

¹ The MPO Surface Transportation Program Funding and Review Committees currently are considering this option.

- “Communities should be required to have comprehensive plans utilizing smart planning principles for all types of state funding.”
- “Strong integration between transportation and land use planning is critical.”
- “We need more efficient and safe traffic systems. This can be achieved by increasing the use of public mass transit, utilizing more fuel efficient busses and passenger rail, and fewer single occupant vehicles.”
- “COGs should replace MPOs, and an Office of Sustainable Planning and Programming should oversee, coordinate, and provide program development support for the COGs and all smaller entities.”
- “Expand to more than just Boone, Dallas, Jasper, Marion, Polk, Story, and Warren counties.”
- “Where will the initial investment come from? Where will sources of funds come from in the future? Will funding subsidies be required to keep a service in five or ten years?” and,
- “Smart local and regional plans are very important, and even more important is a mechanism to guarantee implementation of the plans.”

***Iowa Smart Planning Draft Recommendations
Public Comments Captured at Public Input Meetings***

Oct. 13, 2010

The following comments/questions were captured by staff during public input sessions held across the state, as well as a webinar hosted by the Iowa State Association of Counties, concerning the Iowa Smart Planning Task Force's draft recommendations approved on September 15, 2010.

Public Input Sessions were held at the following:

- Sept. 28 – Spencer City Hall, Spencer
- Sept. 29 – County History Center, Red Oak
- Sept. 30 – Waverly Civic Center, Waverly
- Oct. 5 – Public Library, Coralville
- Oct. 6 – Webinar
- Oct. 7 – City Hall Auditorium, Boone

A total of 206 persons attended either one of the public input meetings or the webinar. Attendee numbers below do not include RIO staff, Nichole Warren (IARC), or Task Force members in attendance.

These sessions tended to function more as an educational venue for attendees, rather than an opportunity to provide detailed comments on recommendations. Attendees asked a lot of questions to be sure they understand the concepts being presented.

Spencer – Sept 28, 2010 – 9 attendees

Comments and Questions:

GIS

- Need to have discussion about who has access to the GIS data and at what levels.
- What about funding for GIS effort at the local and regional level?
- Would it be a requirement for counties to share their existing GIS data?
- Some areas have parcel data but may want to charge to release it. Areas that don't have parcel data will probably require state funding to acquire it, which could be seen as a problem by those areas that have already invested local resources.
- A bit of clarification on the "who has access" issue – need to ensure safety and security of GIS data.
- Would counties be required to share information – "shall" or "may?"
- Some Iowa counties do not have assessor data available. This information is needed to complete plans, and should be addressed by the State.
- There are concerns among communities with sharing data. The Task Force should discuss how to handle proprietary information and information that has already been paid for by certain communities. Cost sharing needs to be addressed.

Watersheds

- Watershed plans with goals focusing on land use may be drastically different depending on what jurisdiction is writing it (e.g. A tourist town could want to keep a lake for tourism, where a downstream town may be worried about the effects of the lake on flooding and floodplains.) How do we reconcile these differences?
- The 9 regional watersheds can have drastically different resources that need protection within a large area.
- Rick Hunsaker stated that regional plans are advisory; local governments get to decide their comp plans.

Qualifying Smart Plans

- Will the COGs be qualifying plans that they wrote for member governments? How do we rectify this conflict of interest? Should state more clearly that the PAC is made up of representatives from the region, not COG staff. Need to have a mix of representatives. Should consider having P&Z experts/board members from the region on the PAC.
- Concern that the qualifying process will become rubber-stamping.
- Was there a discussion about having the local plan qualifying process at the state level?
- There's a danger of community representatives not approving competing communities' plans.
- In response to a question about who makes up the committee, Rick said it will "probably be a mix since some areas don't have planners."
- How does the appeal process work? To the policy board of the COG, or to the state.
- Planning Advisory Committees should include planning experts, not just elected officials. Need to contain P & Z officials and planning professionals

Cooperation Between Neighboring Jurisdictions

- Are cities and counties required to look at each others' plans and work together? How do we make sure this happens?
- How do we address conflicting visions? Need to talk more about the COGs role in this.
- Suggest a system where neighboring cities/counties comment on each others' plans during the PAC review.
- How do we discourage annexation wars?
- Many communities within a two-mile jurisdiction have very different land use goals for the exact same area, and it may be hard to find agreement.
- Would regional plans have a land management component? "No, because local governments decide."
 - If that's the case, would there be a separate set of criteria for the regional plan since land use isn't a component? Or maybe it SHOULD remain a component.
- Steve Hallgren said he had trouble getting anyone in his COG interested in doing a multijurisdictional plan.
- Regions covering more than one state will need direction on how their regional plans should look and the level of involvement from local governments outside of Iowa.
- Local governments should not be required to seek direction from adjacent cities when preparing a local plan. Each community has their own planning goals and approaches and communities that they should be able to develop.

Other

- Recommend a pilot study (one urban and one rural) to test out the framework.
- A pilot project should be conducted in 1 or 2 regions which would provide funds for development of a regional plan. This would allow an opportunity for revisions in the process prior to requiring all regions to develop a plan.
- What about the COGs that lie within other states?
- What is the Plan B? How do we start doing things now?
- Do we have Plan B in case the legislature won't fund the proposal?
 - Rick Hunsaker responded:
 - The committee will be in place for three years, through 2012.
 - The importance of regional planning is being recognized so will likely get some legislative attention.
 - Recommendations don't have to be implemented all at once, we can take "baby steps."
- The Warren County plan may be a good model: http://www.co.warren.ia.us/Zoning/Land_Use_Plan/Pdf_Files/Warren%20County,%20IA%20Final%20Comp%20Plan.pdf
- The recommendations are good, but not likely to be implemented due to funding constraints. Some recommendations could be implemented with existing resources.

Red Oak – Sept 29, 2010 – 9 attendees

- Want to be sure that there is a balance between top down and bottom up decision-making within the recommended framework.
- There appears to be some overlap with the US Dept of Housing and Urban Development's new sustainable communities planning programs.
- Like that the guidance appears to set minimum thresholds rather than setting up a template that all must follow; this allows for greater innovation and creativity at the local and regional levels.
- Larger communities believe they are already doing this work; smaller communities seem to be most concerned about costs (from COG representative).
- Need to be sure that the DNR, IDALS, and other professionals within the water resources field are consulted on determining what is "best for water management."
- May want to add monitoring of watershed applications to OPGIS' responsibilities.
- Good to see that this framework would allow for a collaborative process for addressing issues affecting an entire region.
- Watershed planning is already occurring; there is a lack of necessary people and resources to have a greater effect.
- Concerned about how easily watershed plans can be produced and implemented on a regional scale; the scope might be too large.
- Would want to see the COGs act as a forum for discussing conflicts between neighboring or nearby jurisdictions.
- Need to encourage COG collaboration.
- Would like to see an unified grant application for state funds and clearinghouse for grant opportunities at the state level.

Waverly – Sept 30, 2010 – 17 attendees

- Need to be sure that the personnel needs of OPGIS are filled with qualified persons.
- Need to include a way for determining adverse impact of proposed developments and land use changes.
 - How do we evaluate when an upstream plan negatively impacts downstream plans?
- Because planning mandates will not be popular, need to be sure there are sufficient incentives to get meaningful action.
- Perhaps watershed plans could be developed on a regional scale, with a signature land use component, rather than using COG boundaries.
- The Iowa Smart Planning: Local Comprehensive Planning Grant Program has energized communities; even small carrots help to move the concepts.
 - The grant process (\$1M) has provided an opportunity to educate communities and get them excited about planning
- Need to be sure that COGs are up-to-date on new programs and incentives.
- There were some concerns about what "accessible GIS" system means; there is concern about the costs that have already been accrued to counties and cities that have independently invested in systems, as well as security concerns; also need to be sure there is sufficient technical knowledge within communities and counties to effectively use the information.
- A GIS structure would be very helpful in standardizing GIS data across the state.
- May want to more specifically provide for the applicability of multi-jurisdictional plans.
- Planning is good for sustainable programming.
- Maintaining local control and sustainable funding are important.
- Are regional plans going to speak to local zoning; not likely.
- Do not be too top-heavy or too prescriptive.
- The Task Force should consider emphasizing multi-jurisdictional planning.

- Multi-jurisdictional planning benefits small communities that may not otherwise do planning
- Define multi-jurisdictional planning
- Within the proposed toolbox, it would be helpful to have illustrations of good planning outcomes and outcomes resulting from poor planning, as well as information about communities that do plan versus those that don't (population growth, job growth, property values, etc.); may want to put out a call for submissions of good planning examples throughout the state.
- Case scenarios would be helpful; what is the impact of planning
- Include "cautionary tales"
- May want to add greenhouse gas emissions as a benchmark.
- There is a need for greater education on Smart Planning in rural areas.
- Need to review existing zoning code language as this is a primary tool for implementing plans.
- Feedback that the COGs are hearing is positive. Once people understood the principles they realized there are positive attributes to planning
- Include educational component on how long it will take to do watershed planning and implement changes

Coralville – Oct 5, 2010 – 74 attendees

Comments and Questions:

Watersheds

- Needs to be more direct focus on mitigation of flash flooding, referencing LIDAR and speeding things up on watershed planning.
- How does the regional plan fit within the watershed plan?
- The state needs to have an overlay watershed plan. It can't be piecemeal.
- How will watershed planning utilize/ have authority over the many existing watershed groups?

Oversight

- How widespread is comprehensive planning now? How much work do we have to do?
- Is there anything that can be done to prevent councils from overruling the smart plan to cater to some development or industry?
- Is there a requirement for how often local plans should be updated? Should there be?
- How will oversight of the COGs be provided?

Politics

- Is this an unfunded mandate? Need to make that more clear, addressing this specifically so it is not assumed.
- How insulated is this from the political arena? Is it supported on both sides of the aisle?
- Concerned about this framework working in the political realities of regional planning. Need to have effective carrots.

Funding/Cost

- Was there discussion about using federal funding?
- Has there been an estimate on what this would cost (i.e. staffing the offices, establishing the GIS system, creating the watershed plans, etc.)? This should be included in the recommendations.

GIS

- Is the proposed GIS system both a repository and a server? What is the cost?

Independent Planning Office

- We need to not make the same mistake that we did with the previous planning office by rolling it into another agency and having it die.

Regional and Local Plans

- Do the local governments have to meet the benchmarks to receive funding?
- It seems as if the recommendations put more responsibility on the COGs. Where does the expertise that exists in many of our cities and counties come into play?
- There is a lot of focus on floods. Are there other specific best practices mentioned in the

recommendations? Other important issues should be mentioned/required of smart plans.

- Will there be different requirements for urban versus rural?
- What is the definition of regional planning?
- Schools need to be considered too. They are a huge factor in sprawl. They should be included in both the state level strategic planning and in regional and local plans.
- Would local smart plans have to fit within the regional plans? What about if a local plan is developed first?

Other

- How does the state expect to do meaningful comprehensive planning when agriculture (specifically CAFOs) is exempt? This needs to be addressed!
- It would be helpful if the recommendations had a proposed timeline/progression of how all of this planning would occur.
- How widespread is comprehensive planning in Iowa? How many cities and counties are currently doing comprehensive planning?
- Is this an unfunded mandate? It appears that the costs all come back on local government. There should be some state carrot other than allowing for tax increases.
- How do you do comprehensive planning in the state when land uses like animal factories are excluded from zoning?
- It would be good to require that local comprehensive plans be updated every “x” number of years.
- Under recommendation #2, what does regional smart planning mean? Regions for COGs are not the same as watersheds.
- Would encourage the recommendation to do more to mitigate flash flooding. Dry Creek in Palo could be a demonstration project.
- What is there in this recommendation that ensures that elected officials will follow the plans and not give in to any developers who come to town?
- Does this have bi-partisan support? Is it insulated from politics?
- Have you thought about funding options under worst-case scenarios? Will federal funding be available for implementation?
- Have you estimated what it will cost to staff an office?
- How will local comprehensive plans fit into regional plans?
- Does regional mean the RPA or multiple counties?
- What happens if they are unable to meet benchmarks is funding removed?
- It looks like COGs are being asked to do a lot more; there isn’t enough focus on how to bolster resources and expertise.
- How can resources from larger cities and counties be pulled in to help?
- The bottom line to mitigate flooding is to not build in floodplains.
- How will this office balance the work of the COGS?
- This is admirable but realistically how do you think you can get the region to work on watershed issues. They aren’t going to do it without incentives.
- How do you define regional planning?
- Are the GIS going to be both a repository and a server?
- We need to establish a culture of planning in this state, not just focused on flooding.
- Which comes first, local or regional planning?
- In recommendation 1.1, why did you not suggest where this office should be located? In recommendation 3.2 you really do not need to start over from scratch for developing a toolbox, use the resources that are already available, recognize that with smart planning you are not looking at universal design to allow aging in place. Housing diversity is not the same as universal design. Should build to accommodate all persons.
- What about school district planning?

- Iowa had a GIS office, are you familiar with the history of what happened?
- How are watershed plans and regional plans going to fit together?
- There should be a overlay watershed plan.
- Are you going to prepare a timeline to explain what happens first? It would be helpful to have a progression to better understand.

Webinar – Oct 6, 2010 – 71 attendees

- Has there been the necessary discussion for GIS data sharing across County/City boundaries, primarily focused standards?
- Why weren't the Big Sioux, Little Sioux, and Missouri River not included? Is there a reason no members on the RIO taskforce are from communities west of Mason City?
- Will the RIO task force meetings on Oct 20 and Nov 10 be open to the public?
- What steps have been taken to solicit input? We feel that little time / effort was given for input. Especially in Western Iowa?
- Have any large Iowa cities used COGs to develop their land use plans? What role would they play with large communities that hire consultants?
- Excuse me if this has already been asked, but how is this proposed state legislation going to meld with already existing federal regulation? It seems like this might be duplicative at the state level.
- It seems like this is very similar to the sustainability planning regulations from HUD. Recommendation 2 discusses in requirements for regional plans that they must include the 13 elements. The legislation used "shall consider and may include" why the difference
- Will there be any training for COGs in how to incorporate Smart Planning into current Comp. plans formatting?
- We are starting to write comp. plans using Smart Planning Principles, is that recommended?
- You stated that the process described in recommendation 1.4 is being done to some degree by the COGs already. How so?
- Do you have any concerns that you will be able to adequately address public comment within the month that you have to do so?
- If Iowa is requiring a regional plan for our bi-state region to include out of Iowa counties, will Iowa also be 100% funding the planning efforts for the out of state counties?
- Could you give a better explanation of a PAC. How many members, where do they come from - citizens, elected officials, local govt. staff, etc. Will there be instruction for PAC members?
- We are a bi-state COG. Would we create a Regional Plan for only the Iowa portion of our region?
- This is Larry Nagle. You discussed possible funding sources. Is the entire process dependent upon locating funding. In other words. Does this effort stop if the legislature not provide a funding source for example for the GIS office?
- Followup: While Smart Growth efforts will continue without funding a GIS office will not be created, right? I'm not trying to throw sand in the gears, just curious.
- Will there be sample plans, goals and objectives available for cities, counties and regions to use to develop local plans and ordinances? When will these tools be available?
- IF Smart Growth is economically sustainable, then why do we need a new funding source vs. diverting existing public funding at all levels to invest in this future vision?
- What does the general public feel about Smart Planning in their backyards? We here buzz locally about it, but don't get the NIMBY's to allow much of it when it has to do with higher density, mixed use, etc.
- Can we get a copy of the presentation?
- what if our county is not part of a cog
- If Marion County is in the process of getting ready to update the comp plan should we wait until more is done with Iowa Smart Planning
- Will there be training for counties updating comp plans

Boone – Oct 7, 2010 – 26 attendees

- Define a COG
- Did the task force discuss complications to forming a COG in central Iowa?
- How much will it cost for regional plans to be developed?
 - How much will a levee be to cover costs?
- At least nine of the recommendations require funding. Will the task force prioritize the recommendations?
- At least two dozen states in the country have similar legislation but it is mandated and regional plans are mandated. Mandated regional plans make a lot of sense for Iowa as well as incentives for local planning. Watershed planning is also very important.
- Different size communities have different concerns. Do all communities have to apply the principles?
- How would this impact inspections and zoning? Will this lead to statewide building code requirements?
- PAC would review a plan to “qualify” it as a smart plan. Need to provide a definition of “meaningfully address.”
- Will a summary of comments/survey results be published as well as the revised recommendations?
- How do cities change their plans?
 - This detail would be in administrative rules
 - There should be a process for “minor” vs. “major” changes.
- Need to bring drainage districts into the process for watershed planning.

Iowa Smart Planning Draft Recommendations Comments Received Via Email

Oct. 13, 2010

The following comments were received via email to the Rebuild Iowa Office regarding the draft recommendations approved by the Iowa Smart Planning Task Force on September 15, 2010. Responses were requested by October 10, 2010.

E-mail #1:

3.2.3 Increase in the number of trail, pedestrian or bike plans and paths built.

I would prefer to delete "and paths built." Then, add a new goal:

"3.2.4 Increase the number of bikeways, bicycle facilities, walkways, and paths built." The current goal locks Iowa into a path is the only bikeway or walkway mindset. The suggested language opens the door to bikelanes, sharrows, and more. Bicycle facilities could address bike racks on buses, bike parking, or similar infrastructure. A good plan should allow for innovation.

E-mail #2:

I appreciate the incorporation of bicycles and alternative transportation as a focal point of the livable communities' goal. However, I would like to point out the benefit of a bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure rather than solely "bike paths."

Changing the language of goal 3.2.3 by deleting "and paths built," and adding a goal, "3.2.4 Increase in the number of bikeways, bicycle facilities, walkways, and paths built," will service a much larger commuting and recreation population. Not all population centers and amenities can be adequately serviced by paths. Creating a larger network of the facilities previously mentioned will truly provide a all encompassing alternative transportation opportunity for livable communities.

E-mail #3:

I would like to see a change in the phrasing of the goal. The current goal is: "3.2.3 Increase in the number of trail, pedestrian or bike plans and paths built."

I would like to vote for the following changes--

Delete "and paths built" from Goal 3.2.3 The current goal locks Iowa into a path is the only bikeway or walkway mindset.

Add a new goal: "3.2.4 Increase the number of bikeways, bicycle facilities, walkways, and paths built." This language opens the door to bikelanes, sharrows, and more. Bicycle facilities could address bike racks on buses, bike parking, or similar infrastructure. A good plan should allow for innovation.

I appreciate your attention and work on developing Iowa's infrastructure.

E-mail #4:

I read recently that The Iowa Smart Planning Task Force has released their draft plan. I've been advised that the plan attempts to organize Iowa's strategic planning process. Since I commute to work on a bicycle regularly and I use my bike as a primary means of transportation, I was pleased to learn that bicycles and alternative transportation are a focal point of the livable communities goal.

I am writing regarding a few concerns that I have about the Plan.

Section 3.2.3 currently reads, "Increase in the number of trail, pedestrian or bike plans and paths built." I would ask that "and paths built." be deleted, and a new goal be added as Section 3.2.4:

"Increase the number of bikeways, bicycle facilities, walkways, and paths built." The current goal locks Iowa into a mindset that says, "'path' is the only bikeway or walkway." My suggested language allows for bike lanes, sharrows, and more. Bicycle facilities could address bike racks on buses, bike parking, or similar infrastructure.

A good plan should allow for innovation. Please do all you can to have the above-mentioned changes made to the Plan, and ensure that the Plan will provide ample room for innovation.

E-mail #5:

A resource that you may wish to utilize for improving resiliency to natural and/or man made disasters is the Iowa Disaster Human Resource Council, (www.iowahomelandsecurity.org/ProgramsIDHRC.html.) This Council is composed of many faith based disaster response agencies/ organizations as well as governmental and business partners.

I have been a part of this Council since 2007, as a representative of Adventist Community Services Disaster Response. I am also Coordinator for Mid-America Adventist Community Services Disaster Response covering nine states.

E-mail #6:

As a smart plan is develop for the State I believe the following things need to be considered.

Coordination of local, regional and state planning for transportation, flood impact reduction and watershed needs can help reduce government duplication and costs. It is important for agencies and local governments to find ways to better coordinate their efforts and increase efficiencies to balance the budget.

Coordination and planning for these purposes is the responsibility of all levels of government. The costs associated with this planning and coordination need to be prioritized by the various state agencies and local governments and paid for with current resources.

The legislature should not be giving new authority for state or local governments to levy new property taxes, franchise fees or energy taxes to raise funds for smart planning and coordination. In an effort to be fiscally responsible, the state legislature should be reducing state expenditures and financial impacts on local governments.

New state agencies or offices do not need to be created for these purposes, especially in poor economic times.

Any local, regional or state plans that force costly state or local regulations on private property owners, or that infringe upon property rights, must be avoided.

Local watershed planning should include a coalition of agricultural, conservation and public interests.

E-mail #7:

As lifelong Iowans my wife and I offer the following as a suggestion for Smart Planning for Iowa:

My wife and I often make auto trips out West. We particularly travel throughout Iowa, Nebraska, Colorado, Wyoming, South Dakota, Minnesota and Wisconsin. Iowa's highways are TERRIBLE in comparison with those states. Iowa's highway infrastructure is embarrassing and in some cases actually dangerous. What has happened in the past 20 years? We've moved from fairly good

highways to the armpit of the Midwest (Okay, Illinois, with all its waste and fraud, is probably worse.

Other Iowans we talk to feel the same way. We'd say: FIX IOWA'S HIGHWAY SYSTEM!

E-mail #8:

I attended the presentation of the draft recommendations in Red Oak on Sept. 29th. I did not complete the survey at the meeting because I felt I needed to think through some of the things before completing it. I will be putting the survey in the mail today or tomorrow.

I have studied the Recommendations distributed at the meeting and do have some comments on them, which I detail below. These are my opinions and reflections and should not be construed to reflect those of our city government or of those employed at City Hall.

I attended the Webinar presented July 7. I was already, as a consultant on economic development, recommending that the residents of Villisca work together to develop a strategic plan with the City of Villisca City Council taking the lead in setting out the process. Once I learned about the Smart Planning process, I added the principles, etc. to my recommendation. To date they have not acted on the recommendation because of other priorities. Hopefully, with this task in front of them, they will act sooner rather than later. The exception could be if they saw that it is something that would be produced by SWIPCO. As I read the recommendations and as you responded to my questions at the Sept. 29th meeting, it seems that you are expecting the documents to be created locally.

Re: Recommendation 3.3: In the Draft Recommendations you discuss providing funding for the COGs. When it comes to the local governments, many of the suggestions for funding comes from an additional tax burden on the local tax payers. This sounds well and good but, I believe our local council members will turn to the COG to write the plan rather than finding the financing for it locally. It would be difficult in these economically tight times to make the case for paying for it with local taxes when it could come at no expense from SWIPCO. It is my belief, and only mine, that that would work against what the Smart Planning is attempting to accomplish.

Since local planning in even the smallest of communities benefits the entire state of Iowa, I believe the costs should be shared not only with the COGS but down to the local level. In reality, it is the smaller communities that probably need a greater amount of funding because they do not have staff in place with the professional experience to write the plan. Part of that can be accomplished by asking the Iowa communities of all sizes to accomplish some of the planning process through the use of volunteers to reduce the costs for all communities.

My recommendation to the City of Villisca is to start with a Study Group process. This is a process that is used in the Horizons program of the Northwest Area Foundation which was facilitated in Iowa through ISU Extension. Villisca was a Horizons community and these study groups were some of the most productive part of the program. If Villisca used this process, they would need to find some source of funds for materials, refreshments, and location for the groups to meet.

Recommendation 3.2: I do like the action step of redirecting current appropriations

Recommendation 3.1; Proposal: * Establish a new funding source. * Allowing COGs levy authority to conduct regional planning.

Granted, there needs to be funding for what will be required of the COGs to review local plans. The COGs or some entity will need to also provide coordination of such things as watershed studies or transportation diversity between community plans. I do feel that as the current recommendation

reads, it does not clearly differentiate what the COGs should be paid for.

Recommendation 3.7: This can be a great resource. It needs to assure that it does not have top-down dictates.

Recommendation 3.8: Is this a duplication of the ISU data bases?

Recommendation 1.1: I would suggest that the number of those appointed by the governor be raised and that there be a requirement that X% must be from communities with a population under 7,500.

Recommendation 1.2 and Recommendation 3.4: I would like to see an addition to the proposal that state agencies should be required to use information from the local plans in their Smart Planning Process. All too often one cannot even see rural communities goals and plans reflected in State plans. With all the emerging technology, it is no longer necessary for populations to be centered in major cities for a state to prosper. Our rural communities have opportunities to grow and prosper perhaps more than they have in the last 50 to 60 years because of technology. In addition to seeing what local communities see as their opportunity to economically grow, the state needs to move many of their jobs out to rural communities. Several years ago there was some talk of that, but I have not seen work toward accomplishing that.

It is entirely possible that rural areas would not continue to see a decline in population if given the tools to rebuild and entice and if the State of Iowa actually put its full strength behind such a movement.

In a document from the Office of Energy Independence, one recommendation to conserving energy is to establish hubs in rural communities from which people could work rather than traveling to another community. If the State gave incentives to some of the states larger corporations particularly to make use of such Hubs – it could save energy and could positively impact communities like Villisca.

Recommendation 1.3: COGS and Regions – This seems to be a constant problem in the State – what makes a region. I don't know how or when the Council of Government boundaries were put in place. SWIPCO serves Villisca well on several levels. In other cases, the Southwest Iowa Coalition, with a membership of 19 counties, serves Villisca. Villisca is a part of another "region" when it comes to regional marketing, and it serves its purpose well.

As I look at some of the specifics in the items the regional plans must consider, the COGs may not be able to necessarily address each one effectively. I would think it would be more effective for there to be one set of regions established on watershed lines; another on transportation diversity; another on hazard mitigation. The plans need to make sense. It is in these areas where a community like Villisca will have to receive outside guidance for inclusion in our Smart Plan. (I will say we have an excellent hazard mitigation plan because of the efforts of SWIPCO and one of our City Council members who was able to refine what SWIPCO created based on his professional expertise.) Initially this would seem that it would cost more money. In reality, if the plans are useful, then there is going to have to be collaboration between the COGs along the watershed lines, the transportation lines, etc. So the money is going to be spent. From my perspective, it makes most sense to spend the money by having it done once whether than over and over through crossing COGs boundaries.

As I indicated at the meeting, there needs to be a way to further encourage communication between communities in their planning process outside the SWIPCO region. This could include tourism, business development, marketing, etc. These areas do not have the same technical connections as watersheds and transportation and working within a COG for a regional plan does not seem to have

the same implications.

A question: What happens if a local community does not write a plan? How will it affect regions that may apply for grants or funding of one kind or another. I don't see that addressed. I mention it because of the problem that was created for some regions when IDED required all communities to be up to date with LOIS if a region was to access state funds. It was a mess for some time trying to get the very small communities to meet their obligation.

Crossing state borders: I well understand that state money cannot go toward strengthening other states but it seems that somewhere in this plan it should address the issues of collaboration with bordering states. There is a mindset here that can also be reflected in the regional collaboration emphasis. Just as Iowa may say – we are not going to provide funding for Nebraska, Missouri, Illinois, etc. so do communities say we are not going to finance growth in neighboring communities and counties saying the same thing. I don't have the solution to setting boundaries. I do know, a community can make the case that they do not need to collaborate with neighboring communities if Iowa does not collaborate with its neighboring states. It is a dilemma.

Rebuild Iowa: I know that the Rebuild Iowa office was established because of the 2008 Floods, etc. It was devastating to Iowa and eastern Iowa specifically. I would say though that the concept could be taken beyond that recovery. The rural parts of Iowa, such as southwest Iowa is in a different kind of recovery – a recovery from the changes in agriculture and the loss of population from those changes. I did not live in Iowa during the prosperous times but I have seen photos and heard stories. With all the changes that technology has brought to society, if Iowa would put some resources toward it, we could rebuild rural Iowa. We could bring back a lot of the vibrancy that once crossed this land. It would not just be a case of moving people from the metro areas such as Des Moines, Davenport, etc. – it would mean bringing people in from other states. Instead of forcing schools into consolidation because of diminishing size – it would make more sense economically to work with these rural communities to retain our young families and to bring new ones into the area. This is a place where the State Smart Planning could be influenced by the Smart Planning of the small communities if they were open to it.

E-mail #9:

1. Please implement coordination of state, local, and regional planning for transportation, flood impact reduction and watershed to reduce government cost and duplication. It is important that both agencies and local governments find ways to coordinate their efforts and increase efficiencies for balancing the budget.
2. The cost associated with this planning and coordination should be put into motion by the State agencies and local government and paid for with current resources.
3. Property taxes and franchise fees shouldn't be used to raise funds for smart planning and coordination.
4. In poor economic times, new State agencies should not be created for these purposes.
5. Any costly state or local regulations that infringe on property rights must be avoided.
6. A coalition of Agricultural, Conservation and public interests should be used for local watershed planning.

E-mail #10:

While it is always a good thing to plan ahead for our needs and to reduce overlap and duplication of government costs and services; We must be certain not to use this as an excuse to grow government and increase costs to the taxpayers of this state. This planning should be the responsibility of all levels of government and should be carried out with existing personnel and within existing budgets. Care must be taken to ensure that any state plans, regulations, or requirements,

don't infringe upon individuals property rights. Any planning that is to be done should have inputs from all parties that may be affected by such plans (public, agricultural, conservationist, and governmental). In these economical times we absolutely must not levy new taxes, fees, or increase other costs as a result of this planning.

E-mail #11:

What is the most cost effective blend of flood protection components? There should be a flood protection study that is framed as a blend of three components. How much upstream detention, together with how much river channel flow enhancement and control, can compliment what levee height adjustment or what reduction in flood insurance rates? I now ask the regional planners, as I have also asked the Corps, to consider a system of six to nine thousand small upstream detention areas— in a plan to temporarily detain storm water where it falls — because upstream detention provides benefits throughout a watershed and all the communities who benefit can share the costs.

The benefits throughout the watershed include:

1. Localized protection from ever more frequent and costly, local flash floods;
2. Reduction in environmental damage from nitrite pollution from fertilizer in the runoff;
3. Replenishment and stabilization of our ground waters and aquifers;
4. Potential for capture and storage for irrigation during periods of dryness.

My visual on site searches for upstream detention sites suggests that there is some quantity of low cost upstream detention (some on lands that the governments already own or control) that can give us some percentage of reduction in the risk of flood crest height at a low cost that can hopefully be cost effective. I believe that the first third of the storage capacity for upstream detention of storm-water can cost significantly less per unit than the last third.

Now that the highly accurate LiDAR topography mapping is available, it is time to ask the Flood Center at the University of Iowa to redo their map of the 42 mini-watersheds in the 26 square mile Dry Creek watershed that flows through Palo, IA which is just upstream from Cedar Rapids. This watershed has been selected as a demonstration watershed for flood risk reduction. Using the LiDAR maps of these mini- watersheds, the goal should be to identify the one-third of the sites for temporary storm-water storage that are the most cost effective. If ranking the best third is harder than it is worth, at least with LiDAR we can make good estimates of costs in several promising mini-water sheds. For each site, we can estimate the quantity of acre-feet of storage, the land area that would be covered with this water, the necessary height, size and cost of the water-gate, and we can ask the crop insurance companies for an estimate for a crop insurance rider to cover the potential crop loss due to temporary storm-water storage at each site. Using these four cost factors we can estimate an average cost per acre-foot of storage. This would be an estimate of the supply side cost of upstream detention.

Then on the demand side we need to estimate of the value of each acre- foot of storage for the city of Palo against the risk of flash flooding. Here the Flood Center would hopefully be willing and able to give a rough estimate the effect of a certain quantity of temporary storage on reducing the probability of a certain elevation of a potential flood crest going through Palo. Facts about the amount paid by residents along Dry Creek for flood insurance and the reduction in insurance rates for each additional foot of elevation that a building has above the 100 year flood elevation are relevant to this point.

Hopefully the potential savings from a reduction in flood insurance costs is larger than the cost of creating these small, distributed temporary storm-water storage sites in the mini-watersheds.

Besides the benefit in reducing the risk of flash flooding in the Dry Creek watershed, this temporary

storage can be used within a larger regionally coordinated system for the release of the stored storm - waters from all parts of a watershed, and the result will be an additional benefit against larger floods in all the communities downstream.

In a flood reduction system that is blending the components, an important factor that needs to be researched is the cumulative effects of river flow enhancements and control through the communities and all the way down the watershed. There are many dams of several kinds spread throughout the Cedar Watershed. It needs to be tested whether a conversion of most of these dams to adjustable dams can create a system of values. Using these adjustable dams as valves will cause small but noteworthy changes in the river's flow speeds that can be used to mitigate the height of flood crests. These flow speeds affect the rate at which areas of the watershed drain. When the risk of flooding increases because the watershed or a region of the watershed is becoming saturated, it is an important factor to drain as much water as possible before the next significant rain. Lowering these dams during high risk times due to high saturation allows as much water as possible to flow by a little sooner than if the existing dams would stand fixed as they currently do. The new adjustable dam at Waverly, IA is an example where having the adjustable dam lowered will reduce the height of the crest over this dam, and then after a crest has passed over a lowered dam, this dam could be raised at a rate to hold the flowing water at a height as high as possible while at the same time not causing more damage at this point in the river. This holding back of the flow will reduce the head and speed of the crest flowing from this point. Using the traffic jam analogy, if distributed storage areas are like the parking lots for storm-runoff, then adjustable dams are like the speed bumps. If these two tools of parking lots and variable speed bumps are used in a coordinated way, they can be complementary. This complementariness is a significant management tool because rainfall predictability has its limits and margins of error. The interrelated use of these two components will help reduce the traffic jams of storm-water known as flood crests.

As the city of Cedar Rapids asks for both federal and state funds for building a local levee, I would think federal and state lawmakers would also be interested in spending the taxpayers' money from these larger jurisdictions on mitigation with benefits throughout the watersheds -- that is federal and state level funding for flood reduction components that have benefits throughout a watershed.

E-mail #12:

I would just like to encourage you to find solutions that reduce the size of government and lower spending and taxes. If your proposals add government agencies or increase spending or taxes, that is moving in the wrong direction.

E-mail #13:

The legislature should not be giving new authority for state or local governments to levy new property taxes, franchise fees or energy taxes to raise funds for smart planning and coordination. Any local, regional or state plans that force costly state or local regulations on private property owners, or that infringe upon property rights, must be avoided. New state agencies or offices do not need to be created for these purposes, especially in poor economic times. Local watershed planning should include a coalition of agricultural, conservation and public interests. Coordination of local, regional and state planning for transportation, flood impact reduction and watershed needs can help reduce government duplication and costs. It is important for agencies and local governments to find ways to better coordinate their efforts and increase efficiencies to balance the budget.

E-mail #14:

The one thing that I wanted to voice my support for, and the sole reason why I'm writing you, is the recommendation 3.8 that calls for the development of an accessible statewide GIS and data system. Ever since I started my work at MIDAS I've been voicing to my coworkers my dream of having a

some kind of GIS branch of the government that would solely exist to be the main distributor of standardized GIS information for the good of all at no cost. I thought that it was just a dream and that it would never actually happen, so you can realize my surprise when I saw it among the recommendations for the Smart Planning Legislation. As well as being a planner at MIDAS, I'm also responsible for a USDA grant that we have to develop GIS usage throughout our COG area and provide free GIS training to entities that qualify in the conditions of the grant. Another responsibility of that grant is to create a regional GIS database to give out to recipients...one of the problems that I've realized while trying to compile that database is that while trying to find data you currently have to go to several different database sources. These sources of course differ in how they prepare and organize that data, and the level of detail that the data goes into. For example, most of the data that is readily accessible is at the state level, when generally the data that we as a COG NEED is local data. This data is often coveted by local entities, especially if they were developed by a third party, which causes more duplication of efforts, often at the cost of local communities. If there was a standard created for all GIS data established at the state level, that all local levels could follow, this would allow different analysis to be performed at region-wide levels, such as economic development for an entire region.

I believe that establishing a GIS office that would set a standard for data, as well as providing a free data clearinghouse for everyone would be a smart economic move. If we would all share the information that we've already developed we could not only be saving money by removing duplication of effort, but enhancing all of our abilities to perform GIS analysis throughout the state.

There is one thing that I would like to add however. If the development of this GIS system could also include the development of data for the benefit of the commonwealth that would be fantastic. At the county level there is generally some kind of GIS activity going on, but at the community level there is generally very little to none. The communities would like to get into GIS, but the cost is prohibitive for them. If something can be done to address that, I believe that the well-being of our entire state would be much improved.

E-mail #15:

Members of Iowa CCI do not think factory farms should be exempt from local zoning and comprehensive plans. Any kind of "smart planning" cannot ignore the detrimental environmental, economic and social impacts of factory farms on local communities. We believe that local communities should have the final say on the siting of large-scale factory farms. We realize these would have to be legislative changes, and ask you to join us in supporting:

Local Control to Counties: Establish real local control over the siting of factory farms. Counties should have the final say on if, and where, factory farms are built in order to: 1.) preserve and protect natural resources, including water sources and fragile environmental locations; 2.) lessen congestion and overcrowding of confined feeding operations, especially near cities; 3.) and to protect the health and welfare of the public.

Fair Taxation: Update Iowa's tax code to make sure factory farms pay their fair share of property taxes. Iowa's tax code has not been updated since the 1970's to account for the shift from family farms to industrial factory farms. This has resulted in a tax code in which factory farm buildings pay the same amount of property taxes as if crops were grown on the land. Factory farms should pay a fair amount of property taxes based on the cost of the buildings and the revenue the factory farms generate.

E-mail #16:

I am writing you tonight to let you know of my concern about the ever expanding roll of

government. There needs to be: Coordination of local, regional and state planning for transportation, flood impact reduction and watershed needs can help reduce government duplication and costs. It is important for agencies and local governments to find ways to better coordinate their efforts and increase efficiencies to balance the budget.

Coordination and planning for these purposes is the responsibility of all levels of government. The costs associated with this planning and coordination need to be prioritized by the various state agencies and local governments and paid for with current resources.

The legislature should not be giving new authority for state or local governments to levy new property taxes, franchise fees or energy taxes to raise funds for smart planning and coordination. In an effort to be fiscally responsible, the state legislature should be reducing state expenditures and financial impacts on local governments.

New state agencies or offices do not need to be created for these purposes. Any local, regional or state plans that force costly state or local regulations on private property owners, or that infringe upon property rights, must be avoided.

Local watershed planning should include a coalition of agricultural, conservation, and public interests. This is not the time to increase the financial burden on Iowans.

E-mail #17:

1. Years ago, I was a volunteer civil defense person in a small county, not much happened except major snow storms, with blocked roads. From the looks of the information it is almost the same, except a great deal of federal money is available.
2. It is important to have all of the planning, contact people, and course of action laid out for any kind of disaster. As simple as it seems, it is what makes things happen. Waiting on the state, and federal Govt, does not make things happen.
3. New Orleans was a prime example of what can happen, if things are not laid out. The history channel had a special on how poorly New Orleans was a couple of years ahead of Katrina. They still have not come out of all the problems and damage.
4. Parkersburg is another example of what can happen in Iowa in a blink of an eye. It happened in a smaller town, so things worked out better.
5. We were in Cedar Rapids, toured the Czech village, and what a mess. It appears the govt has stuck it to all the people in the area. The houses are still damaged, and vacant. The Federal, state, and city govt, have not done anything to help get people back in their homes. Even the owners can not do anything to their homes because of all the red tape.

E-mail #18:

Supports the Farm Bureau and wants to add: While I support the started messages and opportunities to be looked at, the German model of Growing your own fuel from field to fuel tank needs to be implemented for "adaptation" to the Iowa and US economy. Farmers can thus use and sell their "home-grown" fuel at RETAIL. (Not like everything else as WHOLESale) The attached picture is worth exploring! Please help us on how we can be heard for this movement to get a from the ground up hearing! (See "Circle Energy" & "German Oil Mills," available upon request)

E-mail #19:

What I am finding out is that the Mississippi River Basin Initiative is a step in the right direction. The focus is on sub-watersheds of the Mississippi River. Allowing conservation incentives to help in conservation farming practices is a good idea at this point.

E-mail #20:

I think the biggest problem that I'm having is that I can't visualize what sort of document you end up with when you're done. I looked at the link that's below. The concept makes sense, and, if it is a matter of doing something like the graphic in the brochure (a more detailed land use plan,) then I think it is workable. But, I'm wondering about the number of cases where new or revised comp plans aren't as important. For example, 20 years ago, I was on the city council in my hometown, Fairbank, which has a population of about 1000. I'm not aware that we had a comp plan then, and I doubt that they've done one since. While I could see them maybe doing a detailed land use plan, I'm not sure that I see them as concluding that there's need for a comp plan—unless the absence of one disqualified them for funding.

I guess the point that I'm trying to make is that comp plans and smart plans might not be appropriate for all cities. Or, there might be different or more elementary levels of planning that are more appropriate for some cities. Perhaps, the process should allow for that. I'd like to suggest that a smart plan might even be something that's independent of a comp plan—sort of like what the old "community builder plans" were in the 1990s. (However, I can't say that our City really used its community builder plan very much or for very long.)

Lastly, I'd like to add to what I mentioned below about page 28 of the report that the League sent out. I assume that a smart plan will be passed by way of at least one public hearing and probably a Council resolution or ordinance. I assume that there will be undertakings in the plan that will cause future expenses. But, if the funding for these improvements aren't allowed outside of the \$8.10 levy or if they are subject to a referendum or a reverse-referendum, then I think a lot of plans and a lot of goals will be rendered useless because they can't be funded.

This week, our local State Rep, Tom Schueller, stopped by the local Chamber. The chamber director told me that he said that a city that doesn't go into smart planning might become ineligible for grants/financial assistance from entities such as IDED.

--To what degree is that the case?

--Is it a statutory requirement of pursue smart planning regardless of a city's eligibility for grants or funding?

The Chamber faxed me a flyer that Tom left with them. It talks about smart planning workshops in Orient, Mason City, Perry, and Ottumwa.

--Are these workshops in line with your committee's efforts, or are they unrelated?

A few thoughts in the context of Maquoketa...

While I can see the usefulness of updated land use maps to zoning, I've never really seen a lot of use in comp plans. I can't tell you that I've ever had a situation come up where the comp plan has been critical or useful to something.

After many years without an update, our Council approved an update to the land use plan component about 5 years ago. It wasn't an easy sell because (except for some annexations) there hasn't been much that's changed here. Larry Nagle/ECIA told me that updating the remaining parts of our comp plan could cost \$35,000. Then, I think I noticed something about a requirement for 5-year updates to a comp plan thereafter. These, too, would be hard to sell to the Council.

I think my problem might be that I'm not visualizing how things would be different/better than they are now if smart planning is introduced.

--How would things change for Maquoketa if we pursue smart planning?

Lastly, the League sent out a draft of the committee's results. These were the comments that I emailed back. I thought I'd send them to you, too:

"1.) I liked the suggestion from the top of page 28: "Add X cents to capital improvement fund levy to only be used for capital improvement projects described in the smart plan." If a project is approved as a part of the plan, a city ought to be able to levy for it outside of the \$8.10 limit. This would also give cities some motivation to review and update their plans. Otherwise, the plan is just an academic exercise that will general goals that can't be funded.

2.) The report has references to GIS. The usefulness of GIS is becoming more and more recognized. But, there are a lot of engineering firms and vendors that are out there selling systems that might be causing governmental entities to spin-off in their own directions rather than share info. However, as far as smart planning goes, I can't tell from the report what we'd end up with as far as GIS goes."



October 27, 2010

Iowa Smart Planning Task Force
Rebuild Iowa Office
Wallace Building
502 E. Ninth Street
Des Moines, IA 50319

Task force chairpersons Richardson and Randleman,

The Iowa Geographic Information Council has been a very interested observer of the process you have taken to produce the "Iowa Smart Planning Task Force Draft Recommendations for Public Comment." Our members have provided input to the plan at several steps along the way including attending the information and input meetings you have held across the state. The members of the Iowa Geographic Information Council were extremely pleased that the council was suggested to serve as the GIS Technical Advisory Committee on page nine of the report. As the chairman of the council I am happy to report that a unanimous vote was taken by our board of directors at the October 20th council meeting asking me to inform the Iowa Smart Planning Task Force that the council is ready and able to assume the GIS Technical Advisory Committee role if called upon.

As you may know, The Iowa Geographic Information Council's mission is to foster an efficient GIS environment through cooperation and coordination with public and private entities that access, collect, provide, and share data, metadata, applications and educational opportunities. As the state-wide professional GIS coordinating organization we represent government (city, county, regional, state, and federal), education (K-12, community college, college and university) and private organization GIS users. We feel our broad representation and work with both technical and coordination GIS issues over the past 20 years make us well suited to serve as the GIS Technical Advisory Committee as you have proposed.

Thank you on behalf of our board of directors and all our members. Please let me know how the Iowa Geographic Information Council can help during the remainder of your efforts.

Brad Cutler
Chair,
Iowa Geographic Information Council



October 27, 2010

2010 - 2012 Board of Directors

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- **Christopher Seeger** - University & College Sector - Iowa State University



Iowa Association of Water Agencies

October 22, 2010

Iowa Smart Planning Task Force
Rebuild Iowa Office
502 East 9th Street
Des Moines, IA 50319

RE: Draft Iowa Smart Planning Task Force – Draft Recommendations for Public Comment

Located throughout Iowa, the Iowa Association of Water Agencies (IAWA) member utilities provide drinking water to more than 1.5 million business and residential customers. The primary responsibility of IAWA member utilities is protecting public health by providing safe drinking water. Sustainably managing drinking water infrastructure and surface and groundwater resources is one of the biggest challenges facing the water industry. Through investment, policies, and actions supporting efficient, cost effective, and sustainable drinking water will support Iowa communities, enhance economic competitiveness, and promote healthy lifestyles.

IAWA strongly supports Recommendations 1 and 2, to establish a collaborative and cooperative, integrated planning process for Iowa, including state level investment. The last comprehensive state water plan was completed in 1979 (updated in 1985). Iowa's landscape and business environment have changed dramatically since that time. While Iowa is blessed with an abundance of water resources today, management and planning is critical to ensuring that same abundance is there for future generations. Iowans want a vision of what the state will look like in 20, 30, 50 years and IAWA believes this planning process could provide that glimpse into the future.

IAWA strongly supports Recommendation 3 and 4, which creates financial incentives and technical assistance to motivate cities, regions, and watersheds to plan for the future. The Department of Natural Resources is in the process of evaluating Iowa's groundwater resources. Groundwater is utilized as drinking water sources by many communities. These studies indicate there are places in Iowa where the availability of groundwater may be at risk in the not to distant future. Larger communities may utilize surface water as a drinking water source. Trends show the quality of surface water continues to decline in many areas. Flooding events are increasing in frequency and volume, threatening both public and private property. Land use can greatly impact the quality and quantity of groundwater and surface water. There are reports indicating Iowa is losing its valuable soil at an alarming rate. For these reasons planning and management of water and land resources is critical to Iowa's future economic viability.

IAWA supports Recommendation 5, which requests a single definition of, "local comprehensive plan." The definition should also provide direction as to how each of the community and regional plans compliment neighboring plans and ultimately the state as a whole.

We appreciate the Task Force members commitment in developing the Smart Planning Draft Recommendations. Thank you also for the opportunity to comment on the Iowa Smart Planning Task Force, Draft Recommendations.

Sincerely,

Linda Kinman, Executive Director

On behalf of:
Jerald Lukensmeyer, President

Iowa Association of Water Agencies
2201 George Flagg Parkway, Des Moines, Iowa 50321
515-283-8706 kinman@dmww.com

From: City of Osceola

6413424005

10/08/2010 10:13

#054 P.002/004

October 8, 2010

Aaron Todd
Rebuild Iowa Office
Wallace Building
502 E. Ninth St., 2nd Floor
Des Moines, IA 50319

Dear Mr. Todd:

I had the opportunity to attend the Iowa Smart Planning Public Input Session held in Boone yesterday afternoon. I sincerely appreciate the public out reach effort made by the task force.

I would like to make the following comments on the task force's recommendations. I have numbered my comments to correspond with the relevant recommendation.

- 1.1 The Office of Planning and Geographic Information Systems would have two "bosses", an 18 member GIS & Data Systems Council and a 19 member Planning Coordination Council. Both councils would be, "defining the mission and establish priorities and responsibilities for the OPGIS.

Both councils are quite large. It has been my experience that the larger the board the more cumbersome decision making becomes. Having two separate councils overseeing the same office or agency would not seem to be the most efficient way of providing the necessary oversight. Two councils with different priorities could wind up competing for scarce operational resources thus compromising the efficiency of the OPGIS.

Both councils would draw their membership from the same pool of agencies. There is no specific recommendation for seats reserved for private sector, business or industry representatives. I believe that this formulation does not address the need for diversity on such a potentially important board. Not everyone in Iowa works for a government.

I think one smaller and more diverse council would be more effective in setting consistent and complementary missions, priorities and responsibilities for the OPGIS.

From: City of Osceola

6413424005

10/08/2010 10:13

#054 P.003/004

1.4 I believe that the recommendations for determining if a plan is a "Smart Plan" or not should be revisited by the task force. I am in complete agreement with the idea that communities that have large rivers, lakes or other flood prone areas within their jurisdictions should address the prevention and mitigation, the response to and recovery from catastrophic flooding as an over riding priority.

There are no rivers that flow through Clarke County, Iowa or the City of Osceola, Iowa. Under a literal interpretation of the task forces recommendation the City of Osceola might not be able to receive a smart plan designation because it has not addressed a physical hazard (catastrophic flooding) that could not be realistically expected to ever happen.

This is an example of the dangers and inefficiencies that can attach to efforts to implement a one size fits all solution. I do not blame the task force for this. This very well intentioned mandate is the legislature's responsibility.

I take very strong objection to the recommendation for local plans to "consider and *meaningfully* address the 10 Smart Planning Principles" I believe that this is clearly beyond the language and intent of SF 2389. Meaningfully is, in my opinion, vague and entirely too subjective in this context. This recommendation should be stricken. The law already requires that cities consider these principles.

I also object to the recurring suggestion in this and other recommendations that access to state technical and financial assistance be tied to a voluntary, or optional local plan review process. Attaching these kinds of strings can quickly blur the difference between voluntary and mandatory.

3. Authorizing COGs to levy property taxes is just a very bad idea. I believe there is a zero per cent chance of the legislature approving such a measure. I think the task force's other recommendation would be strengthened by the removal of this suggestion. It is really immaterial if other states allow this practice or not.
- 3.3 Cities and counties already have the ability to levy for planning purposes within the general fund levy provided by law. I believe this recommendation means to create another optional levy for special or restricted use. The task force should probably clarify its position as to whether this levy would require voter approval or whether it could be approved by vote of a city council.
- 3.4 Once again I object to the idea of tying future grant or financial assistance decisions to a supposedly voluntary process of review and certification.
- 3.5 Remove the word "meaningful" from the justification for this recommendation for the same reasons as mentioned under recommendation 1.4 I think this recommendation blithely ignores the political realities of duly elected representative governments. I doubt the legislature or the governor would be

From: City of Osceola

6413424005

10/08/2010 10:13

#054 P.004/004

willing to voluntarily surrender so much discretion to even the smartest, best intentioned committees or administrators.

4. The DNR's role in this process should be purely advisory. The DNR already wields considerable influence in the planning of water, wastewater and solid waste disposal operations. Its authority and influence does not need to be further expanded.

Thank you in advance for your thoughtful consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,



William A. Kelly
City Administrator
City of Osceola, Iowa



IOWA CHAPTER

October 10, 2010

Aaron Todd
Rebuild Iowa Office
502 E. Ninth St, 2nd Floor
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

Re: Iowa Smart Planning Task Force Draft Recommendations

Dear Sir:

On behalf of the Iowa Chapter of the Sierra Club, which has over 5000 members in Iowa, we offer the following comments.

We support the use of smart planning principles at the state, county, and city levels in the state.

We support establishing an office of planning and programming, that is not a part of the Department of Economic Development.

This office would store the comprehensive plans, provide GIS services, and would provide training and information on smart planning. It would pull together the planning efforts of lots of entities in state government.

This office would be responsible for administering incentives to local jurisdictions to pursue smart planning.

For smart planning to work, local governments need to make sure that projects being placed in a community are placed with adherence to the comprehensive plans and zoning regulations. Only in rare cases should a comprehensive plan be changed or a zoning regulation be changed to accommodate a development project.

When a comprehensive plan and zoning map are created, the community as a whole knows what is expected and planned for an area. Citizens make plans for their residences based on how a neighborhood is zoned. Companies make decisions for their businesses based on the zoning of an area.

3839 Merle Hay Road, Suite 280, Des Moines, Iowa, 50310. Phone: 515-277-8868; E-mail: iowa.chapter@sierraclub.org

However today, if a developer decides to develop some land and the zoning does not match, jurisdictions regularly fall over backward to do whatever it takes to get the development, including changing comprehensive plans, changing zoning regulations, and changing zoning maps. The same happens if a new business wants to locate in a community.

The planning process, comprehensive plans, zoning maps, and zoning regulations should not discourage a development or new business from locating in a community. However when a jurisdiction does whatever it can for a new project, the existing neighboring land owners can find their existing uses of the land to be incompatible with what the new development is proposing; the new projects can be very detrimental to their own uses of their property. Often the neighbors find their voices are unheard by the authorizing boards and government decision makers and the neighbors feel discriminated against.

This feeling is enhanced in those communities where the Planning and Zoning staff appear before the decision-makers in roles of both presenting the project and selling the project. In some jurisdictions, the project developer himself or herself never appears before the decision-makers to describe the project. For example, in the City of Cedar Rapids, the developer does not make the presentation to the Planning and Zoning Board or to the City Council. On the other hand, in Waterloo the City Planner makes a presentation of what they have found and what their recommendation is while the developer describes the project, presents the maps of the property, and shows the design being planned.

Changes in comprehensive plans, zoning maps, and zoning regulations should be rare in order to protect all members of the community.

Changes to the comprehensive plan, zoning regulations, and zoning maps need to be done through a smart planning process.

Some real-world examples will illustrate this point.

Clayton County, Iowa wanted to accommodate siting and construction of a huge hotel/golf course/water park project. The project would not have complied with the comprehensive plan nor the zoning ordinance. So the county amended the comprehensive plan to make it more flexible to the point that almost anything would have been consistent with the plan. Then the property was rezoned in "compliance" with the comprehensive plan. The result was that good farmland was taken out of production to make room for this development.

A similar incident occurred in Hudson, Iowa. The City of Hudson, some 20 years ago, annexed many acres of farmland between its actual urban area and the City of Cedar Falls. This was done to prevent Cedar Falls from annexing that area. Then recently two families wanted to develop a few acres into a gated residential community on what was agricultural land surrounded by other agricultural land. So the city

changed the comprehensive plan at the request of these landowners so that the rezoning to residential from agricultural would comply with the comprehensive plan.

Also, the City of Waterloo wanted to accommodate the construction of a coal-fired electric power plant that would be owned and operated by a private company. The company bought property for the plant a couple of miles or so east of the Waterloo city boundary. The company sought to annex its site to the city and then rezone it from agricultural to industrial. The first time the city tried to annex the property, they attempted to connect the land to the city by including a county road as the connector (flag pole). When the city realized that the annexation would not be accepted by necessary percentage of adjoining landowners, they next decided to use a railroad right of way as the connector (flag pole). The City Development Board stopped that annexation. However there was a lot of public money involved and wasted before this annexation was denied.

Similarly the City of Cedar Rapids attempted to annex a housing development for McMansions by connecting the city to the development along Indian Creek and the Sac and Fox bike trail. Again the City Development Board denied the application, since it was a flag pole annexation.

In Dubuque County residents of a housing development suddenly found themselves adjacent to a concrete batch plant, with noise, dust, and heavy truck traffic as a result of a zoning change made strictly for the benefit of the cement company.

Planning and zoning administrators, members of the Board of Adjustment, members of the Planning and Zoning Boards, members of the Board of Supervisors, members of City Councils, members of the City Adjustment Board, and members of the metropolitan planning organization should receive training on smart planning before they are allowed to serve, with regular refresher courses offered.

If a community develops smart plans, only to find that the plans are cast aside whenever a developer or business asks for an exception, then the smart planning process is a waste. Having knowledgeable decision makers who understand the principles of smart planning would help protect the interests of all parties.

Laws need to be passed so that houses, garages, and business buildings are not allowed in the 500-year flood plain and 100-year floodplain. Likewise fill should not be allowed in the floodplain.

When someone builds in a floodplain or puts fill in a flood plain, the flood waters are diverted to other properties upstream and downstream. If this is done over significant areas in a floodplain, a landowner who previously was not in the flood plain can suddenly find his property in the flood plain.

As structures are destroyed in floods, funds should be used to remove both the structure and the fill that was brought into the floodplain.

Floodplain maps needs to be kept updated, especially after flooding.

Across the state, wetlands need to be restored.

The wetlands can store tremendous amounts of water, thus helping to avoid flooding.

Many acres of wetlands have been filled in over the years. Tiling has also drained many acres of wetlands.

Municipal areas need to implement methods to retain storm water, rather than rushing the water into a storm sewer and discharging it into a water way, including impermeable paving, rain gardens, retention basins, and restoration of wetlands.

Concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFO's) need to be included in planning and zoning activities. County comprehensive plans need to be allowed to consider and plan for CAFO's. Planning and zoning regulations need to include the siting of CAFO's. County zoning maps need to be able to locate CAFO's to appropriate areas in the county.

In Iowa, one whole industry is currently being excluded from planning and zoning measures - concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFO's) (industrial animal factories). As long as CAFO's are excluded, smart planning will never be successful.

These industrial animal factories clearly are not the idyllic picture you might imagine, where animals are outside grazing on pasture and the farmer gets to know his animals and lovingly cares for them. And these are not the small-scale family farms where a few animals are raised sustainably. These are definitely not the types of farms that one would see in the Iowa country-side in the 1950's or 1960's.

These industrial animal factories are large-scale operations of animals housed in barns or confined in open feedlots. In the case of confinement barns, the animals never go outside and never see sunlight from the time they are put in the barn until the time they are removed from the barn and transported to the slaughter house. In the case of pigs, the babies are born inside of one enclosed barn and later are transferred to another barn, never being outside or seeing sunlight until they are transported to the finishing barns.

Although there are barns in Iowa that house 7,000 pigs, many house 2499 pigs since that number places the confinement structure below a number of regulatory thresholds. In the case of chickens, some barns hold several hundred thousand chickens. Similar barns are used to raise dairy cattle and turkeys.

Given that a pig generates as much manure as three human beings, a structure holding 7,000 pigs generates the equivalent manure as 21,000

people and a barn holding 2499 pigs generates the equivalent manure as 7497 people. The manure is stored in open-air holding tanks or pits under the barns until it can be emptied in the spring or fall, although most of the manure receptacles are emptied only in the fall. In the case of hog manure, it is stored in liquid form until it can be knifed into the ground. Poultry manure is stored in a dry form. None of the manure is treated, as is required for municipal sewage.

The neighbors complain of stench emanating from the production areas (barns, manure receptacles). The neighbors are not able to hang laundry out to dry. They are not able to sit in their yards, have picnics in their yards, or recreate in their own yards because of the stench. Physical symptoms suffered by the neighbors include watery eyes, sore throats, trouble breathing, nausea. These symptoms result from hydrogen sulfide, methane, ammonia, PM 2.5. Once the manure is applied on the spread fields, the neighbors complain that the stench emanating from the fields lasts for weeks.

Once a landowner decides to put a CAFO in a county, there is little that can be done about it, once the set-back distances are met. The Board of Supervisors has little that can be said or done about the placement or size of the CAFO. The Iowa Department of Natural Resources can do little about the placement or size, except to make sure that what regulation is in place is followed. Those regulations are clearly designed to favor the CAFO and not the neighbors. The neighbors are excluded from planning and have little that can be done on their behalf in authorizing the siting.

Yet, once a CAFO is built, it does not matter what the comprehensive plans and zoning maps have in mind for the area and the spread fields. No one wants to build a house next to the spread fields and the CAFO production areas. Most businesses would not want to be located next to a CAFO operation, including hotels, restaurants, office buildings, and recreation facilities.

For those locales that have implemented zoning regulations, no other large-scale factory or industry is exempted from the zoning regulations. CAFO's should be subjected to local zoning regulations.

Local jurisdictions need to take into consideration in-fill, rather than allowing unbridled development on farmland. We need to think of sustainable growth, not just economic development.

One of our greatest resources is our rich farmland and we should do everything we can to protect that land from being overrun with development, especially when land is already available in cities that can be built on or rebuilt.

Over the years there appears to be a significant over-build of commercial property, some due to speculative building while some is due to the loss of businesses. Industries and businesses should be encouraged to move into existing structures rather than building on undeveloped ground.

When new housing is developed, an eye should be given to building housing for all ages of individuals and all income levels.

If undeveloped land (farmland) is used for a building project, the project should not qualify for tax increment financing (TIF). TIF should be reserved for those projects that upgrade existing buildings and structures.

With respect to projects that are granted TIF, all taxing authorities should be given the opportunity to vote its share of tax revenue toward the project and that the school system should not ever give up its tax revenue for a TIF project. Today a city can grant TIF on a project, and all taxing authorities have to give up the tax revenue on the improvement. In the case of money that would be given to the local school system, that money is made up through the state funding of the school. For example, today if a city grants TIF on a project, the county, and community college are also forced to give up their tax revenue on the development.

Protection of natural areas is key in smart planning.

Iowa has already lost a significant amount of its natural areas.

Jurisdictions should be encouraged to protect natural areas, such as wetlands, prairies, and woodlands. If needed to protect natural areas, then jurisdictions should be allowed to relax some set-backs.

Regional transportation plans need to be more attuned to smart planning principles and need to do a better job of protecting natural areas.

The Iowa Legislature said it best in the preamble to the REAP law:

The citizens of Iowa have built and sustained their society on Iowa's air, soils, waters, and rich diversity of life. The well-being and future of Iowa depend on these natural resources.

Many human activities have endangered Iowa's natural resources. The state of Iowa has lost ninety-nine and nine-tenths percent of its prairies, ninety-eight percent of its wetlands, eighty percent of its woodlands, fifty percent of its topsoils, and more than one hundred species of wildlife since settlement in the early 1800's. There has been a significant deterioration in the quality of Iowa's surface and groundwaters.

The long-term effects of Iowa's natural resource losses are not completely known or understood, but detrimental effects are already apparent. Prevention of further loss is therefore imperative.

The air, waters, soils, and biota of Iowa are interdependent and form a complex ecosystem. Iowans have the right to inherit this

ecosystem in a sustainable condition, without severe or irreparable damage caused by human activities.

There can be no better statement of smart planning.

Department of Transportation (DOT) highway planners need to respect natural areas. There have been projects where the DOT has done the right thing -- protecting the Eddyville Dunes, protecting Engledinger Marsh, and moving Highway 20 to protect the Hardin County green belt along the Iowa River. However the DOT still is not respecting and protecting the Rock Island County Preserve in Linn County which is in the path of Highway 100. In each of these projects where there is a natural area, protection of the area has involved a significant fight from members of the public. It is currently not a part of the DOT principles to protect natural areas, especially significant natural areas. As one former DOT official said, "NEPA [National Environmental Policy Act] does not require us to make the right decision, just an informed decision." The DOT needs to do a much better job in this area.

Also mitigation does not work satisfactorily, which occurs when a project destroys a natural area and the DOT tries to move the species to another location. Mitigation seems to be the DOT's first answer while we believe mitigation should be used sparingly.

Any project funded by DOT money should have an environmental review and should be required to avoid natural areas.

Sincerely,

Pam Mackey Taylor, Energy Co-Chair
Sierra Club, Iowa Chapter

October, 10 2010

Jessica Harder Director of Governmental Affairs, Iowa League of Cities

Iowa League of Cities Comments on Smart Planning Draft Recommendations

The League of Cities would like to make the following comments on the Smart Planning Task Force's (hereinafter Task Force) 9/15/2010 draft recommendations.

1. (Recommendations 3.2, 3.3,3.6) The League supports giving cities more funding options and incentives and grants to cities to help encourage smart planning and aid in its implementation. These recommendations recognize the reality that many Iowa cities may face difficulties in financing smart planning and implementation, especially while struggling to prioritize a myriad of other important budget issues. Incentives could help cities by giving a needed push to get them started with smart planning or to update their existing plans. Funding for actually creating the plan by working with consultants or Councils of Governments (COGs), and executing and enforcing the plan are both important components of funding and incentives suggested in the draft.
2. (Recommendations 1, 1.3 , 1.4 , 1.5) These recommendations suggest establishing a framework to coordinate Smart Planning in the state. The League understands one of the legislative charges to the Task Force was to, "Develop a model for regional comprehensive planning within the state and recommend partnerships between state agencies, local governments, educational institutions, and research facilities." In the draft recommendations, a great deal of focus has been put on regional planning at the COG level. The draft recommends state that the COGs should serve as the "geographic entities" for regional smart planning, and states that smart planning should be **mandatory** at the regional level.

When focus and funding are stressed at the COG level, the reality of limited local and state resources comes to bear. It seems unlikely the legislature would authorize additional funding mechanisms or incentives for all levels of planning suggested in the recommendations (State OPGIS, COGs, Local Governments and DNR-based Watershed Plans). COGs do not currently have funding available to do comprehensive plans. If COGs have mandated planning, but no new funding mechanism, member cities of COGs would have to foot the bill for this unfunded mandate, through increased COG dues. This could be particularly difficult, if cities are expected to do local smart plans and also fund a regional plan. Encouraging cities, especially smaller cities, and or counties to work together to create plans could be another option to lessen costs and encourage a regional look at planning.

It is unclear how COGs would carry out several suggested recommendations that would have an effect on local governments, and how interaction between the COGs and local governments would occur. The level of staffing and expertise varies in COGs across the state, just as cities vary greatly in their own levels of sophistication, from not having a comprehensive plan, to having a city planner on staff. The interaction between different COGs and cities will be dependent upon specific circumstances of each. It is unclear how COGs would implement the integration of watershed plans into the regional planning process. COGs do not have staffing expertise in this area. The recommendation requiring COGs to review city plans and offer non-binding comments, will also depend on staffing levels and expertise. Timing of how and when this process is supposed to occur is unclear and could become burdensome to cities, if not done in a streamlined fashion. Similarly, a clear process for letters of qualification has not been devised. Cities may have to be able to get a timely response from their COG in order to meet grant or program application deadlines.

Finally, some cities have expressed concern at recommendation 1.5, which suggests a new COG be formed in central Iowa, the so called "donut hole" without an existing COG. The cities in the region

have evolved sophisticated ways of accomplishing planning without a COG through Metropolitan Planning Organizations, and some have extensive planning processes underway now. They view their efforts as being far ahead of what a newly formed COG could accomplish or at least duplicative of a COG.

3. (Recommendation 3.7) The League strongly supports Smart Planning educational efforts, which will be important to increase knowledge and understanding of the smart planning principles and how they can benefit communities. The League has already begun taking the lead, with the League Executive Board's support, in educational efforts to create a smart planning education program for local government staff and officials, and has begun to work closely with ISU Extension in developing a curriculum and determining which ways to present the information to the intended audience. A challenge will be for the over 52% of Iowa's cities with populations of 500 or less, to understand the benefits of planning for cities that may not be experiencing high rates of growth. Educational programs for planners and for future planners in the state should also be developed and highlighted.
4. (Recommendation 3.5) While smart investment of public dollars should always be a goal, state agencies implementing recommendation 3.5, that state agencies should "set a threshold or give additional consideration for having a qualified smart plan" should be tempered with the realities cities face in leveraging funds, and meeting requirements at the state and federal levels. For example, some cities are under consent decrees with the EPA to correct water infrastructure issues within a certain timeframe. Cities may have to prioritize funding for these types of projects, and may not have a plan in place. At a minimum, cities should get a timeframe within which to complete a smart plan, even if they do not have one at the time of application. Not every program will lend itself to these types of evaluations, and a one-size fits all approach may not be the best solution. The legislature chose not to make smart planning mandatory, and connecting every state dollar to having a smart plan could be a de facto mandate on some communities.
5. (Recommendations 3.8, 3.9) The League supports the accessible availability of GIS and other data, and the creation of a smart planning toolbox to help cities implement smart planning.

(Recommendation 4) Watershed planning and coordination are an important component of comprehensive planning for cities, but cities cannot affect the watershed alone. Flooding is not created just within the boundaries of cities or counties; It is cross-jurisdictional; It is urban and rural. The watershed as a whole must be evaluated. During the passage of the initial Smart Planning legislation, the legislature was focused on disaster mitigation, particularly flooding and avoiding flood damage through proper planning. Although COGs are one option for regional planning, watersheds could also serve as the "geographic entities" for regional planning. The Iowa Flood Center is producing mapping and tools that within the next few years, will be able to help communities predict flood risk and see how additional flood mitigation measures (such as a new levy) can affect their communities and those downstream. Connecting smart plans to this type of data seems to logically address what the legislature was aiming to accomplish with the Smart Planning legislation; however, there are not currently permanent watershed governmental entities in the State that would easily lend themselves to serving in this capacity. A state-level assessment of where existing watershed resources are invested, what public and private programs are working or could be strengthened, and a serious look at how to achieve stronger cross-jurisdictional watershed planning is needed. The League supports efforts to better coordinate watershed planning and to continue funding for tools and information, and suggests adding a recommendation to continue funding for the Iowa Flood Center and for the DNR, to continue valuable flood plain programs.

Iowa Farm Bureau

Dear Mr. Todd:

The Iowa Farm Bureau Federation (IFBF), the state's largest general farm organization with almost 154,000 members, wishes to share these comments regarding the Iowa Smart Planning Task Force draft recommendations that are intended to provide greater support for local and regional planning.

Farm Bureau appreciates the time and effort of the task force to consider ways to increase community resiliency, proactively foster economic development and improve the state's quality of life. It is important for all levels of government to always be looking for ways to incorporate many of these principles into their daily functions.

General Comments

In general, Farm Bureau submits these comments regarding all the recommendations and encourages the task force to incorporate them into the draft report's principles:

1. Coordination of local, regional and state planning for transportation, flood impact reduction and watershed needs can help reduce government duplication and costs. It is important for agencies and local governments to find ways to better coordinate their efforts and increase efficiencies to balance the budget.
2. Coordination and planning for these purposes is the responsibility of all levels of government. The costs associated with this planning and coordination need to be prioritized by the various state agencies and local governments and paid for with current resources.
3. The legislature should not be giving new authority for state or local governments to levy new property taxes, franchise fees or energy taxes to raise funds for smart planning and coordination. In an effort to be fiscally responsible, the state legislature should be reducing state expenditures and financial impacts on local governments.
4. New state agencies or offices do not need to be created for these purposes, especially in poor economic times.
5. Any local, regional or state plans that force costly state or local regulations on private property owners, or that infringe upon property rights, must be avoided.
6. Local watershed planning should include a coalition of agricultural, conservation and public interests.

Specific Recommendations

Regarding the specific recommendations in the draft report, Farm Bureau offers these comments:

1. Establish a framework to coordinate planning, geographic information and data systems, and state-level investment; 1.1. Establish the GIS & Data Systems and Planning Coordination Councils, and the Office of Planning and Geographic Information Systems (OPGIS); and, 1.2. Integrate the Smart Planning Principles into the State's Enterprise Strategic Planning Process.
 - Coordination of planning and sharing of information seems to be a current responsibility and function of all levels of government. This is not the time to be creating a new government office or adding staff to do this.
- 1.3. Iowa Councils of Government (COGs) should serve as the geographic entities for regional smart plans; and 1.4. A Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) for each region should be established by the COGs for local smart plan review.
 - Aren't the COGs supposed to be doing this already (or at least could be and should be doing this)?

If so, this is not a recommendation but a statement of an ongoing current responsibility.

1.6. Identify “State of Iowa Smart Planning Goals and Benchmarks” as statewide goals for the OPGIS.

- In the Goals and Benchmarks, Strategy 4.2 - The terms “natural resource protection areas” and “agricultural protection areas” need to be further defined. The final report should recognize the need to keep Iowa’s prime farmland open for modern agricultural production. Farm Bureau policy opposes plans that force costly state or local regulations on private property owners, or that infringe upon property rights. Any action by government that significantly diminishes an owner’s right to use his property constitutes a taking of that owner’s property. Any final plan should provide due process and reasonable compensation for the amount the owner’s right has been diminished. We oppose agency regulations which unreasonably encroach on the rights of property owners.

2. Require completion of regional comprehensive smart plans within 5 years after legislation is enacted;

3. Create financial incentives and offer technical assistance to incent smart planning at both the regional and local levels; 3.1. Create a sustainable funding source for regional smart planning conducted by the COGs; and, 3.2. Create a sustainable funding source for a smart planning grant program at the state level for local smart plan development and implementation.

- Farm Bureau asks for more comprehensive analysis of the budget impact of this recommendation. In an effort to be fiscally responsible, the state legislature should be reducing expenditures and increasing efficiencies to balance the budget. When establishing a budget for state spending for agencies and programs, we feel that it is important that agriculture, conservation, property tax credits, K-12 and higher education, and public safety should be funding priorities.
- The legislature should not be giving new authority for state or local governments to levy new property taxes, franchise fees or energy taxes to raise funds for smart planning and coordination. In an effort to be fiscally responsible, the state legislature should be reducing state expenditures and financial impacts on local governments.

3.3. Expand the menu of financing options available to local governments to develop and implement smart plans.

- Counties already have the authority to assess levies to do this if they prioritize these activities.

3.5. State agencies should set a threshold of or give additional consideration for having a qualified smart plan to receive state funding for infrastructure and public facilities projects that affect land use, transportation, stormwater management, and floodplain protection, where appropriate.

- A qualified plan should not diminish a property’s owner’s right to use his property constitutes a taking of that owner’s property. The government should provide due process and reasonable compensation for the amount the owner’s right has been diminished. We oppose agency regulations which unreasonably encroach on the rights of property owners.

3.6. Create a smart planning education program for local government staff, officials, and the public; and,

3.7. Develop a smart planning toolbox to be housed at OPGIS that will serve as a one-stop-shop for smart planning information and resources.

- Who will design and implement the plan and toolbox? This should be more clearly identified to better understand the total financial impact from these recommendations.

3.8. Develop an accessible statewide GIS and data management system.

- While the system may not exist, the data does. DNR may be the largest repository of currently relevant data. The DNR would be the most likely coordinator for this function.

4. Develop a watershed planning and coordination program, including goals and strategies referencing land use for each of Iowa’s nine major river basins.

- Other agencies involved in watershed planning should be identified in this recommendation, such as the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship. In addition, this recommendation should recognize that the Water Resources Coordinating Council and these respective agencies already have been charged with these functions. Watershed planning should include the prioritization of our watersheds so as to use limited state and federal resources more effectively.
- Local watershed planning should include a coalition of agricultural, conservation and public interests.

Again, these comments are intended to improve the Iowa Smart Planning Task Force draft recommendations to provide greater support for local and regional planning. If you should have any questions about these issues, please contact me at 225-5432. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Rick Robinson
Environmental Policy Advisor



October 4, 2010

Aaron Todd
Iowa Smart Planning Task Force
Wallace Building; 2nd Floor
502 E. 9th Street
Des Moines, Iowa
50319

Smart Planning Task Force Members:

Thank you for your service to the citizens of Iowa. The City of Sioux City has reviewed the Iowa Smart Planning Task Force draft recommendations and would like to express appreciation for the work that has been performed. However, Sioux City, City Council and City staff have several concerns in regard to those recommendations as well as to the public input process.

We greatly appreciate Governor Culver's and the Rebuild Iowa Office's publicly stated commitment to public input and statewide representation. However, we remain concerned over the apparent lack of representation. The letter from the City of Sioux City to the RIO office dated November 5, 2009 expressed concerns regarding lack of input not only from Sioux City but from all of Northwest Iowa. It appears that there still has been no meaningful input from Northwest Iowa on this issue. Considering that the Iowa Smart Planning Bill (SF 2389) contained as primary components: Collaboration, Transparency, and Consistency, the public input process would seem to be an oversight in the preparation of the Iowa Smart Planning Task Force recommendations. We request that additional opportunity be provided to review and to develop recommendations prior to any recommendations being sent to the State Legislature.

We cannot emphasize enough the need for additional opportunities for public input and comments. It appears that notification of the Smart Planning Task Force activities and solicitation of input from all areas of the state impacted by its proposed regulations has been lacking. No one representing the Sioux City was contacted regarding this process, even though the Smart Planning Task Force proposals will have significant impact on the area. In fact, a review of the makeup of the various committees of the Iowa Smart Planning Task Force shows no representation within 200 miles. One representative from Mason City does not adequately represent northwest Iowa.

With regard to the recommendations themselves, the proposed Smart Planning framework appears to give a great deal of authority to develop local comprehensive plans to area COGs. Aside from the fact that a large portion of Iowa is not represented

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by a COG, several of the existing COGs represent areas outside the State of Iowa (SIMPCO represents Dakota County, Nebraska and Union County, South Dakota, Bi-State represents Rock Island and Henry Counties in Illinois and MAPA represents Douglas and Sarpy County Nebraska). It appears illogical to have out of state interests helping drive local comprehensive planning efforts. Local comprehensive planning is best done at the local level rather than the regional level.

It appears that the COGs will be unable to prepare comprehensive plans for metropolitan areas without a significant expansion of their authority and budgets. Further, we don't believe that the justification for this recommendation is accurate; we would not agree that COGs have established relationships with major cities when it comes to land use planning. We believe most of Iowa's major Cities have comprehensive plans that were either prepared in-house or by outside consultants; few have plans prepared by COGs for the simple fact that COGs are not normally involved in urban land use planning.

With regard to Recommendation 1.4, we question why the mitigation of flooding is a major emphasis of statewide planning while mitigation of other disasters is not. This is especially perplexing when Recommendation 4 calls for developing a watershed planning and coordination program for each of Iowa's nine major river basins and these nine river basins do not include the Big Sioux River Basin, the Little Sioux River Basin, or the Missouri River Basin.

We also remain concerned about the apparent perspectives of Cities and Counties in the development process. In calling for plans to promote "Transportation Diversity" (Goal 3.2) rural areas of the State seem to have been forgotten; there is no meaningful way to create "transportation diversity" in rural areas. Similarly with calls to limit annexation (Goal 4.1) the committee appears to overlook that considerable urban growth occurs in unincorporated areas with annexation "chasing" development.

Finally there does not appear to be any mechanism to help, or require, abutting jurisdictions to develop consistent plans that do not conflict with each other. Conflicts between abutting entities may be one of the more significant land use issues facing Iowa in the future.

Again, we ask the Task Force to make an effort to seek input from all parts of Iowa, particularly Sioux City and Northwest Iowa. The City of Sioux City is ready and willing to provide its share of resources and staff to this important issue. To that end, Jeff Hanson, Community Development Operations Manager will be contacting you soon in hopes of arranging a one on one meeting. Jeff can be reached at 712-279-6343. We would very much appreciate the opportunity to discuss our concerns.

Sincerely,


Paul Ekeert
City Manager

Cc: Jeff Hanson





October 19, 2010

Aaron Todd
Iowa Smart Planning Task Force
Wallace Building; 2nd Floor
502 E. 9th Street
Des Moines, Iowa
50319

Smart Planning Task Force Members:

Thank you for taking time on October 12, 2010 to discuss the Iowa Smart Planning Task Force's recommendations with City of Sioux City staff. However, many of Sioux City's concerns regarding the public input process and questions about the role that the various COGs will play in the comprehensive planning process remain unanswered.

It still appears that there was no meaningful input from western Iowa in the development of the recommendations. As with any planning process there must be an attempt to actively solicit public input. The City of Sioux City does not accept the explanation that the Legislature limited participation by setting the makeup of the task force. Input from Cities other than Dubuque and Mason City was absent and to prepare a proper set of recommendations, that input is essential.

This lack of public input now leaves many unanswered questions regarding the role of the COGs in the planning process. The proposed role of the COGs was not made clear in our conversation. I suspect the reason for this is that the Iowa Smart Planning Task Force members themselves are divided in their opinions of how the COGs should function in the planning process. Significant public input from all of Iowa is needed on this issue and the Task Force members must fully think through and vet all aspects of this proposal before it is sent to the Legislature. If this means missing the November 25 deadline while additional input is solicited so be it.

As you are aware, Sioux City's COG (SIMPCO) crosses state boundaries (as does MAPA and Bi-State). The concern about opening the door to having significant out of state influence on Sioux City's comprehensive planning process is a significant and I believe legitimate concern. You noted that if "the group" so chose it could limit representation to Iowa entities only. I am not

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sure what "the group" is but the decision on how much if any COG input there will be into our comprehensive planning process must be the City of Sioux City's alone. We must be clear about this; opening the door to the possibility of giving out of state members influence over Sioux City's Comprehensive planning process is absolutely unacceptable.

As it now stands the COGs do not have the ability to prepare comprehensive regional land use plans. Given the present economic and political climate there are no funding sources available to allow the COGs to increase staff and resources in order to prepare regional comprehensive plans.

I believe the Task Force's goal is to require SMART planning at the local level. There are many more transparent and less cumbersome ways to do this than is proposed. State Code can be amended so that comprehensive plans by definition must include and meaningfully address the SMART Planning Principals. Zoning, subdivision activity, and capital projects must be consistent with the comprehensive plan, as they must be now. Deviations from or ignoring the plan endanger the ability to enforce a zoning ordinance. Local plans, as well as zoning and subdivision activities, are undertaken by a vote of local elected officials who are directly responsible to the electorate. This is much more transparent and an inherently more accountable process than review by staffs at COGs that have multiple layers of bureaucracy between them and the electorate.

City of Sioux City staff will be present at your Wednesday, October 20, 2010 meeting in Des Moines to address the Task Force.

Sincerely,



Michael M. Hobart
Mayor of Sioux City

Iowa Smart Planning Draft Recommendations Comments from Iowa DOT

Recommendation 1: Establish a framework to coordinate smart planning, geographic information and data systems, and state level investment.

- The Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) has utilized a robust regional planning process since the early 1990s. This process involves coordinated regional and metropolitan planning with nine Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) and 18 Regional Planning Affiliations (RPA). In most cases, the RPAs are actually staffed by the Council of Government (COG) and the borders are consistent. Some of the MPOs are staffed by COGs as well. However, there are some RPAs and MPOs that are staffed by other organizations and/or have different regional boundaries. This is certainly the situation with other types of regional planning occurring in Iowa as well. From the Iowa DOT perspective, it would have been ideal if the regional Smart Planning framework exactly matched Iowa DOT's regional planning framework; however, we recognize the rationale for the proposed regional Smart Planning structure. In order to accommodate differences that will exist in planning frameworks, the Smart Planning framework needs to acknowledge those differences and discuss how they will all work together in a manner that respects the federal and/or state laws and regulations that may guide those frameworks.
- The draft recommendation would benefit from more detail regarding how they will be expected to review the regional plans. For example, are they going to just assure the 13 smart plan elements are addressed or will they also review and approve specific details of the plan? Might OPGIS object to the level in which other transportation modes are promoted in the plan or would they just assure that transportation diversity is included in the plan?
- The framework would benefit from additional clarity regarding decision-making authority related to smart planning. For example, how much authority will OPGIS have in approving regional smart plans?

Recommendation 1.1: Establish the GIS & Data Systems and Planning Coordination Councils, and the Office of Planning and Geographic Information Systems (OPGIS).

- Further discussion regarding the role of the two councils is warranted. Does having two councils add value or will it serve to fragment and weaken OPGIS? How will competing priorities of the councils be addressed by OPGIS? Should the councils play more of an advisory than strategic role in the process?
- There are a lot of members proposed for the councils (15 for the GIS and Data Systems Council and 19 for the Planning Coordination Council). This may make it challenging for the councils to be effective.

Recommendation 1.2: Integrate the Smart Planning Principles into the State's Enterprise Strategic Planning Process.

Recommendation 1.3: Iowa Councils of Governments (COGs) should serve as the geographic entities for regional smart plans.

- As discussed earlier, no matter what planning framework is recommended and ultimately adopted, there will be differences with other existing regional planning frameworks. We support the recommendation that COGs serve as the geographic entities but they will need to recognize and accommodate the different mechanisms that exist as they develop regional Smart Plans.

Recommendation 1.4: A Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) for each region should be established by the COGs for local smart plan review.

- It may be helpful to define or recommend the preferred composition of the Planning Advisory

- Committees. This would aid consistent application of this recommendation across the COGs.
- The second required element of a “Smart Plan” - *address prevention and mitigation of, response to and recovery from catastrophic flooding*- is pretty broad. Eventually, additional guidance will be helpful for COG’s to review this element in local Smart Plans.

Recommendation 1.5: A COG or COGs should be established in central Iowa for the seven counties (Boone, Dallas, Jasper, Marion, Polk, Story, and Warren Counties) not currently served or served in-part by an existing COG by June 30, 2015.

- While this would be ideal, the creation of a central Iowa COG will be challenging. A backup alternative should be considered, such as utilizing the existing RPA process staffed by the Des Moines MPO.

Recommendation 1.6: Identify “State of Iowa Smart Planning Goals and Benchmarks” as goals for the OPGIS.

- Establishment of benchmarks and goals is necessary and should be developed and agreed upon by all parties. The benchmarks in the document should be considered examples with the final benchmarks developed through a cooperative planning process.
- Guidance for data collection will need to be developed by OPGIS and, to the greatest extent possible, OPGIS should be responsible for collecting the data to assure uniform reporting.
- Regarding benchmark 1.1.1, the number of public input sessions is not nearly as important as the location, timing, and outreach methodology for each.
- Regarding benchmark 3.2.1, a decrease in the number of vehicle miles traveled per capita cannot be addressed through multimodal transportation alone and is not a realistic goal. A more realistic goal might be a reduction in the growth rate of VMT.
- Regarding strategy 4.1, the use of Priority Growth Areas should flow out of local and regional Smart Plans or from legislation.

Recommendation 2: Require completion of regional comprehensive smart plans within 5 years after legislation is enacted.

- As discussed previously, the regional comprehensive smart plan process needs to address and accommodate other regional planning frameworks such as the transportation planning framework currently utilized. From the other perspective, this recommendation should encourage the inclusion of smart planning principles in other planning activities such as the development of the regional/ metropolitan long-range transportation plans. This should also include discussion of how to cooperate regionally in the development of all plans.

Recommendation 3: Create financial incentives and offer technical assistance to incent smart planning at both the regional and local levels.

Recommendation 3.1: Create a sustainable funding source for regional smart planning conducted by COGs.

Recommendation 3.2: Create a sustainable funding source for a smart planning grant program at the state level for local smart plan development and implementation.

This is a good idea but a plan needs to be in place to support local communities, particularly smaller communities, so that they can develop local smart plans with minimal expense. The COGs will need to play a vital role in supporting hundreds of Iowa cities that have no full-time staff and limited funds to undertake local smart plan development.

Recommendation 3.3: Expand the menu of financing options available to local governments to develop and implement smart plans.

Recommendation 3.4: Provide training and technical assistance to state agencies to facilitate integration of the Smart Planning Principles into state investment decision-making processes, particularly grant programs.

Recommendation 3.5: State agencies should set a threshold of or give additional consideration for having a qualified smart plan to receive state funding for infrastructure and public facilities projects that affect land use, transportation, stormwater management, and floodplain protection, where appropriate.

- It seems likely that incentivizing smart plan creation by providing additional consideration on grant applications may leave behind the smaller communities with limited resources. Per the discussion in recommendation 3.2, a simple process needs to be in place so that small communities can develop local smart plans and be able to have access to this additional consideration.

Recommendation 3.6: Create a smart planning education program for local government staff, officials and the public.

- Good recommendation.

Recommendation 3.7: Develop a smart planning toolbox to be housed at OPGIS that will serve as a one-stop shop for smart planning information and resources.

- Good recommendation.

Recommendation 3.8: Develop an accessible statewide GIS and data system.

- This recommendation proposes that the GIS Coordinating Council and OPGIS “work with existing providers to collect, standardize, and house data at a central location.”
- Some regions and municipalities might be hesitant to provide the state (or whatever is the designated entity) with all of their GIS data. Many times it has taken a tremendous amount of work to get the data into a useable GIS form. OPGIS and the GIS Coordinating Council will need to recognize this issue and work to minimize the concerns and effort. The fact that the GIS Coordinating Council represents all levels should be a benefit.
- As referenced in the draft recommendations, the New York State GIS Clearinghouse is a resource that functions as a statewide dataset directory rather than a centralized GIS repository. Users can see what datasets exist, who hosts it, and who to contact to obtain the information. This still reduces duplication of efforts, but communities and regions don’t have to give up their data to the state. We understand that this concept is envisioned in the recommendations and we support its use in Iowa as appropriate.

Recommendation 4: Develop a watershed planning and coordination program by creating goals and strategies referencing land use for each of Iowa’s nine major river basins.

Recommendation 5: Make the definition of “local comprehensive plan” uniform throughout the Iowa Code.

Appendix D: Committee Membership and Consultation

Committee Name: Intergovernmental Coordination and Information Sharing
 Co-Chairs: Emily Shields, Don Temeyer

Scope of Committee Work:

- Evaluate state policies, programs, statutes, and rules to determine whether they should be revised to integrate the Iowa Smart Planning Principles.
- Develop a set of recommendations that is consistent with the Iowa Smart Planning Principles and does all of the following:
 - Coordinates, facilitates, and centralizes the exchange of information related to state and local planning, zoning, and development between state agencies and the General Assembly.
 - Coordinates discussions concerning a proposed geographic information system between the producers and the users of such systems.
 - Allows the efficient production and dissemination of population and other demographic statistical forecasts.
 - Creates a centralized storage location for all comprehensive plans.
 - Facilitates the cooperation of state and local governments with comprehensive planning, educational, and research programs.
 - Provides and administers technical and financial assistance for comprehensive planning.
 - Provides information to local governments related to state, federal, and other resources for comprehensive planning.

Committee Members

1. Heather Hackbarth, IDOM
2. Darrell Hanson, For Rob Berntsen, Dept of Commerce
3. LaDene Bowen, UNI
4. Bill Ehm, DNR
5. Emily Shields, Chair, RIO
6. David Johnston, DOD
7. Jeff Kolb, Gov. Appointee
8. Nancy Richardson, IDOT
9. Nick Wagner, Legislator
10. Joan Conrad, IUB
11. Don Temeyer, Chair, H.R. Green
12. Bruce Greiner, OEI
13. Pam Jochum, Legislator
14. Joe Mowers, IWD
15. Machele Shaffer, IDA
16. Ken Sharp, DPH
17. Dan Smith, School Administrators of Iowa

Staff Members

1. Aaron Todd, RIO
2. Heather Hackbarth, DOM
3. Susan Judkins Josten, RIO
4. Annette Mansheim, RIO

Experts, Interest Groups and Advisors*Land Use*

1. Marie Steenlage, Iowa Department of Economic Development
2. LaVon Griffieon, 1000 Friends of Iowa
3. Dennis Plautz, City of Fort Dodge and City Development Board

Agricultural and Environmental

1. Amy Bouska, Iowa Department of Agriculture & Land Stewardship
2. Bill Ehm, Iowa Department of Natural Resources
3. Duane Sand, Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation
4. Kirk Siegle, Farmer, SE Iowa

Urban and Regional Planning

1. Kevin Blanshan, INRCOG
2. Dan Schlichtmann, INRCOG
3. Gary Taylor, ISU Extension
4. Ron Gaines, City of Cedar Falls
5. Brian W. Ohm, Department of Urban and Regional Planning, University of Wisconsin-Madison
6. LaDene Bowen, Institute for Decision Making, UNI
7. Jerry Anthony, Department of Urban and Regional Planning, U of I
8. Nathan Young, Iowa Flood Center

Local/State Government

1. Marie Steenlage, Iowa Department of Economic Development
2. Stuart Anderson, Iowa Department of Transportation
3. Mary Beth Mellick, Iowa State Association of Counties
4. Cindy Axne, Iowa Department of Natural Resources
5. Joseph Cassis, Iowa Communications Network
6. Joan Conrad, Iowa Utilities Board
7. Ruth Randleman, Mayor of Carlisle and Task Force Co-Chair
8. Les Beck, Linn County Planning Director
9. Francis Boggus, Great Places/Department of Cultural Affairs
10. Linda Howard, Great Places/Department of Cultural Affairs
11. Witold Krajewski, Iowa Flood Center
12. Linda Leto, Department of Management
13. Heather Nelson, Department of Management
14. Diane Foss, Iowa Department of Economic Development
15. Robert Grayson, Office of Energy Independence
16. Wayne Chizek, Marshall County GIS Coordinator

Built Environment

1. Stuart Anderson, Iowa Department of Transportation
2. Joan Conrad, Iowa Utilities Board
3. Eric Abrams, Department of Transportation
4. Mickey Carlson, TownCraft/Iowa Finance Authority
5. Keith Denner, PPM

Legislative

1. Debra Kozel, Legislative Services Agency
2. Jace Mikels, Iowa Senate Democrats
3. Jason Chapman, Iowa House Republicans
4. Marcia Tannian, Legislative Services Agency
5. Theresa Kehoe, Iowa Senate Democrats

Committee Name: Comprehensive Planning Committee
 Co-Chairs: Les Beck, Rick Hunsaker

Scope of committee work:

1. Develop statewide goals for comprehensive planning that utilize the Iowa Smart Planning Principles and develop recommendations for a process to measure progress toward achieving those goals.
2. Review city and county comprehensive plans to determine the number of such plans that address the hazards as listed in the Hazards Element of the suggested local comprehensive plan guidelines and the adequacy of such plans in addressing those hazards.
3. Evaluate and develop incentives to conduct local and regional comprehensive planning, including but not limited to state financial and technical assistance.
4. Recommend the means by which technical and financial assistance for comprehensive planning can be provided and administered.
5. Develop a model for regional comprehensive planning for Iowa and recommend partnerships between state agencies, local governments, educational institutions, and research facilities.
6. Evaluate and develop incentives to conduct local and regional comprehensive planning, including but not limited to state financial and technical assistance.
7. Recommend the means by which technical and financial assistance for comprehensive planning can be provided and administered.

Committee Members

1. Les Beck, ISAC
2. Rick Hunsaker, IARC
3. Bret Mills, IDED
4. Carey Nagle, AIA
5. Chad Keune, ACB/Ruhl & Ruhl
6. Charles Connerly, University of Iowa
7. David Wilwerding, APA-Iowa
8. Gary Taylor, ISU Extension
9. Jessica Harder, Iowa League of Cities
10. Pamela Myhre, City of Mason City
11. Paula Mohr, DCA
12. Tom Schueller, Legislator
13. Rob Smith, AIA
14. Stuart Crine, DPS
15. Teri Goodman, City of Dubuque
16. Wayne Peterson, IDALS

Staff Members

1. Aaron Todd, RIO
2. Annette Mansheim, RIO
3. Jenna Anderson, RIO
4. Liz Van Zomeren, RIO
5. Nichole Warren, IARC

Experts, Interest Groups and Advisors

Land Use

1. Chad Keune, ACB/ Ruhl & Ruhl
2. Charles Connerly, University of Iowa

3. Jerry Anthony, University of Iowa
4. John McCurdy, Southwest Iowa Planning Council (SWIPCO)
5. Les Beck, Iowa Association of Regional Councils

Agricultural and Environmental

1. Gerry Schnepf, Keep Iowa Beautiful
2. Wayne Petersen, Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS)
3. *Urban and Regional Planning*
4. Brian Ohm, University of Wisconsin- Madison
5. Brian Schoon, Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments (INRCOG)
6. David Wilwerding, American Planning Association
7. Gary Taylor, Iowa State University (ISU) Extension
8. Jeff Hanan, Southeast Iowa Regional Planning Council (SEIRPC)
9. Mary Beth Mellick, Iowa State Association of Counties (ISAC)
10. Mary Rump, East Central Iowa Council of Governments (ECICOG)
11. Michele Warren, Iowa Association of Regional Councils (IARC)
12. Mickey Carlson, Iowa State University Town/Craft
13. Pamela Myhre, City of Mason City
14. Rick Hunsaker, Iowa Association of Regional Councils (IARC)
15. Shirley Helgevold, Mid-Iowa Development Association (MIDAS)
16. Stuart Meck, Rutgers University

Local/State Government

1. Bret Mills, Iowa Department of Economic Development (IDED)
2. Jessica Harder, Iowa League of Cities
3. Marie Steenlage, Iowa Department of Economic Development (IDED)
4. Ruth Randleman, City of Carlisle
5. Teri Goodmann, City of Dubuque

Built Environment

1. Carey Nagle, American Institute of Architects
2. Paula Mohr, Department of Cultural Affairs
3. Rob Smith, American Institute of Architects
4. Stuart Crine, Department of Public Safety (DPS)

Legislative

1. Bill Freeland, Iowa House Democrats
2. Debra Kozel, Legislative Services Agency (LSA)
3. Jace Mikels, Iowa Senate Democrats
4. Jason Chapman, Iowa House Republicans
5. Marcia Tannian, Legislative Services Agency (LSA)
6. Rep. Donovan Olson, State Representative, Democrat
7. Rep. Tom Schueller, State Representative, Democrat
8. Theresa Kehoe, Iowa Senate Democrats

Appendix E. Integrating Hazards Assessment into Comprehensive Planning

Integrating Hazard Assessment into Comprehensive Planning: An Analysis of the Current State of Iowa Comprehensive Plans

Introduction

The Iowa Smart Planning Legislation signed into law by Governor Culver on April 26, 2010, charges the Task Force with analyzing Iowa comprehensive plans to determine if hazards are considered.

Specifically, the Task Force must:

Review municipal comprehensive plans to determine the number of such plans that address the hazards identified in section 18B.2 subsection 2, paragraph “k” (Hazards Element) and the adequacy of such plans in addressing those hazards.

Hazards Elements: Objectives, policies, and programs that identify the natural and other hazards that have the greatest likelihood of impacting the municipality or that pose a risk of catastrophic damage as such hazards relate to land use and development decisions, as well as the steps necessary to mitigate risk after considering the local hazard mitigation plan approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

This report details the process and results of the evaluation of a sample of municipal plans across the State of Iowa. These results will be used to recommend further action with regard to hazard assessment elements in comprehensive plans.

Process

To conduct an evaluation of the adequacy of plans to address the Hazards Element section of the legislative guide, a sampling of nine cities and three counties was taken. The cities and counties fit into the categories described below and were randomly sampled based on the availability of the entity's comprehensive plan.

Table 1: City Sampling by Population Tier


Population Tier	City 1	City 2	City 3
Less than 5000	Adel	Hudson	Lamoni
5000 to 25,000	Waverly	Johnston	Indianola
Greater than 25,000	Marion	Iowa City	Des Moines

Table 2: County Sampling by Population Tier

Population Tier	County
Less than 10,000	Fremont
10,000 to 50,000	Cedar
Greater than 50,000	Dubuque

Evaluation

The following worksheet was used to evaluate the selected plans:



Hazards Element Evaluation

Entity:				
Plan Title:				
Population:				
Last Updated:				
Link:				

	Yes	No	N/A	Information
Does the entity have an approved FEMA Hazard Mitigation Plan?				
Is the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Plan referenced in the comprehensive plan?				
Are hazard mitigation elements incorporated into the comprehensive plan (e.g. Hazard chapter or section)?				
Does the comprehensive plan have a section on flood plains?				
Are there any other references to considering hazards during the planning process in the comprehensive plan?				

Results

- Six of the nine cities sampled have an approved FEMA Hazard Mitigation Plan or is part of the county's plan. Only one of the counties sampled has an approved plan, while a second county is in the process of updating their expired plan.
- None of the sampled comprehensive plans contained a Hazard Mitigation or Hazards Assessment section, although many of the plans referenced considering certain hazards in the planning process. These references were mostly concerning flood plains and flood damage mitigation.
- Half of the plans sampled contained a section specifically on flood plain management with regard to land use. These sections came in the form of both text and maps.

Recommendations

The results show that none of the sampled plans addressed hazards as stated in the Hazards Element of the suggested local comprehensive plan guidelines. This suggests that the inclusion of a hazards section within local comprehensive plans is not a common practice. With this in mind, it is recommended that a Hazards section become standard in approval of comprehensive plans. To aid communities in meeting this goal, the state should develop guidance as to what these sections need to include; whether it should simply reference to an approved FEMA plan or include a full hazards assessment.

resource management should be undertaken to promote clean and renewable energy use and increased energy efficiency.

4. Occupational diversity. Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should promote increased diversity of employment and business opportunities, promote access to education and training, expand entrepreneurial opportunities, and promote the establishment of businesses in locations near existing housing, infrastructure, and transportation.

5. Revitalization. Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should facilitate the revitalization of established town centers and neighborhoods by promoting development that conserves land, protects historic resources, promotes pedestrian accessibility, and integrates different uses of property. Remediation and reuse of existing sites, structures, and infrastructure is preferred over new construction in undeveloped areas.

6. Housing diversity. Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should encourage diversity in the types of available housing, support the rehabilitation of existing housing, and promote the location of housing near public transportation and employment centers.

7. Community character. Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should promote activities and development that are consistent with the character and architectural style of the community and should respond to local values regarding the physical character of the community.

8. Natural resources and agricultural protection. Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should emphasize protection, preservation, and restoration of natural resources, agricultural land, and cultural and historic landscapes, and should increase the availability of open spaces and recreational facilities.

9. Sustainable design. Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should promote developments, buildings, and infrastructure that utilize sustainable design and construction standards and conserve natural resources by reducing waste and pollution through efficient use of land, energy, water, air, and materials.

10. Transportation diversity. Planning, zoning, development, and resource management should promote expanded transportation options for residents of the community. Consideration should be given to transportation options that maximize mobility, reduce congestion, conserve fuel, and improve air quality.

Sec. 18. NEW SECTION. 18B.2 Local comprehensive planning and development guidelines.

1. For the purposes of this chapter, unless the context otherwise requires:

a.

(1) "Development" means any of the following:

(a) Construction, reconstruction, renovation, mining, extraction, dredging, filling, excavation, or drilling activity or operation.

(b) Man-made changes in the use or appearance of any structure or in the

land itself.

(c) The division or subdivision of land.

(d) Any change in the intensity of use or the use of land.

(2) "Development" does not include any of the following:

(a) Activities on or uses of agricultural land, farm houses, or agricultural buildings or structures, unless such buildings or structures are located in the flood plain of a river or stream.

(b) Installation, operation, and maintenance of soil and water conservation practices.

(c) The choice of crops or a change in the choice of crops on agricultural land.

b. "Land development regulations" means zoning, subdivision, site plan, corridor map, floodplain or storm water ordinances, rules, or regulations, or other governmental controls that affect the use of property.

c. "Municipality" means a city or a county.

2. A municipality shall consider the smart planning principles under section 18B.1 and may include the following information, if applicable, when developing or amending a comprehensive plan under chapter 335 or chapter 414 or when developing or amending other local land development regulations:

a. Information relating to public participation during the creation of the comprehensive plan or land development regulations, including documentation of the public participation process, a compilation of objectives, policies, and goals identified in the public comment received, and identification of the groups or individuals comprising any work groups or committees that were created to assist the planning and zoning commission or other appropriate decision-making body of the municipality.

b. Information relating to the primary characteristics of the municipality and a description of how each of those characteristics impacts future development of the municipality. Such information may include historical information about the municipality, the municipality's geography, natural resources, natural hazards, population, demographics, types of employers and industry, labor force, political and community institutions, housing, transportation, educational resources, and cultural and recreational resources. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may also identify characteristics and community aesthetics that are important to future development of the municipality.

c. Objectives, information, and programs that identify current land uses within the municipality and that guide the future development and redevelopment of property, consistent with the municipality's characteristics identified under paragraph "b". The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may include information on the amount, type, intensity, and density of existing land use, trends in the market price of land used for specific purposes, and plans for future land use throughout the municipality. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may identify and include information on property that has the possibility for redevelopment, a map of existing and potential land use and land use conflicts, information

and maps relating to the current and future provision of utilities within the municipality, information and maps that identify the current and future boundaries for areas reserved for soil conservation, water supply conservation, flood control, and surface water drainage and removal. Information provided under this paragraph may also include an analysis of the current and potential impacts on local watersheds and air quality.

d. Objectives, policies, and programs to further the vitality and character of established residential neighborhoods and new residential neighborhoods and plans to ensure an adequate housing supply that meets both the existing and forecasted housing demand. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may include an inventory and analysis of the local housing stock and may include specific information such as age, condition, type, market value, occupancy, and historical characteristics of all the housing within the municipality. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may identify specific policies and programs that promote the development of new housing and maintenance or rehabilitation of existing housing and that provide a range of housing choices that meet the needs of the residents of the municipality.

e. Objectives, policies, and programs to guide future development of sanitary sewer service, storm water management, water supply, solid waste disposal, wastewater treatment technologies, recycling facilities, and telecommunications facilities. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may include estimates regarding future demand for such utility services.

f. Objectives, policies, and programs to guide the future development of a safe, convenient, efficient, and economical transportation system. Plans for such a transportation system may be coordinated with state and regional transportation plans and take into consideration the need for diverse modes of transportation, accessibility, improved air quality, and interconnectivity of the various modes of transportation.

g. Objectives, policies, and programs to promote the stabilization, retention, or expansion of economic development and employment opportunities. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may include an analysis of current industries and economic activity and identify economic growth goals for the municipality. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may also identify locations for future brownfield or grayfield development.

h. Objectives, policies, and programs addressing preservation and protection of agricultural and natural resources.

i. Objectives, policies, and programs to assist future development of educational facilities, cemeteries, health care facilities, child care facilities, law enforcement and fire protection facilities, libraries, and other governmental facilities that are necessary or desirable to meet the projected needs of the municipality.

j. Objectives, policies, and programs to identify characteristics and

qualities that make the municipality unique and that are important to the municipality's heritage and quality of life.

k. Objectives, policies, and programs that identify the natural and other hazards that have the greatest likelihood of impacting the municipality or that pose a risk of catastrophic damage as such hazards relate to land use and development decisions, as well as the steps necessary to mitigate risk after considering the local hazard mitigation plan approved by the federal emergency management agency.

l. Objectives, policies, and programs for joint planning and joint decision making with other municipalities or governmental entities, including school districts and drainage districts, for siting and constructing public facilities and sharing public services. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may identify existing or potential conflicts between the municipality and other local governments related to future development of the municipality and may include recommendations for resolving such conflicts. The comprehensive plan or land development regulations may also identify opportunities to collaborate and partner with neighboring jurisdictions and other entities in the region for projects of mutual interest.

m. A compilation of programs and specific actions necessary to implement any provision of the comprehensive plan, including changes to any applicable land development regulations, official maps, or subdivision ordinances.

3. A municipality's comprehensive plan developed using the guidelines under this section shall address prevention and mitigation of, response to, and recovery from a catastrophic flood.

Sec. 19. Section 28I.4, Code 2009, is amended to read as follows:

28I.4 Powers and duties.

1. The commission shall have the power and duty to make comprehensive studies and plans for the development of the area it serves which will guide the unified development of the area and which will eliminate planning duplication and promote economy and efficiency in the coordinated development of the area and the general welfare, convenience, safety, and prosperity of its people. The plan or plans collectively shall be known as the regional or metropolitan development plan. The plans for the development of the area may include, but shall not be limited to, recommendations with respect to existing and proposed highways, bridges, airports, streets, parks and recreational areas, schools and public institutions and public utilities, public open spaces, and sites for public buildings and structures; districts for residence, business, industry, recreation, agriculture, and forestry; water supply, sanitation, drainage, protection against floods and other disasters; areas for housing developments, slum clearance and urban renewal and redevelopment; location of private and public utilities, including but not limited to sewerage and water supply systems; and such other recommendations concerning current and impending problems as may affect the area served by the commission. Time and priority schedules and cost estimates for the accomplishment of the

recommendations may also be included in the plans. The plans shall be made with consideration of the smart planning principles under section 18B.1. The plans shall be based upon and include appropriate studies of the location and extent of present and anticipated populations; social, physical, and economic resources, problems and trends; and governmental conditions and trends. The commission is also authorized to make surveys, land-use studies, and urban renewal plans, provide technical services and other planning work for the area it serves and for cities, counties, and other political subdivisions in the area. A plan or plans of the commission may be adopted, added to, and changed from time to time by a majority vote of the planning commission. The plan or plans may in whole or in part be adopted by the governing bodies of the cooperating cities and counties as the general plans of such cities and counties. The commission may also assist the governing bodies and other public authorities or agencies within the area it serves in carrying out any regional plan or plans, and assist any planning commission, board or agency of the cities and counties and political subdivisions in the preparation or effectuation of local plans and planning consistent with the program of the commission. The commission may cooperate and confer, as far as possible, with planning agencies of other states or of regional groups of states adjoining its area.

2. A planning commission formed under the provisions of this chapter shall, upon designation as such by the governor, serve as a district, regional, or metropolitan agency for comprehensive planning for its area for the purpose of carrying out the functions as defined for such an agency by federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

Sec. 20. Section 329.3, Code 2009, is amended to read as follows:
329.3 Zoning regulations == powers granted.

Every municipality having an airport hazard area within its territorial limits may adopt, administer, and enforce in the manner and upon the conditions prescribed by this chapter, zoning regulations for such airport hazard area, which regulations may divide such area into zones and, within such zones, specify the land uses permitted, and regulate and restrict, for the purpose of preventing airport hazards, the height to which structures and trees may be erected or permitted to grow. Regulations adopted under this chapter shall be made with consideration of the smart planning principles under section 18B.1.

Sec. 21. Section 335.5, Code 2009, is amended to read as follows:
335.5 Objectives.

1. The regulations shall be made in accordance with a comprehensive plan and designed to preserve the availability of agricultural land; to consider the protection of soil from wind and water erosion; to encourage efficient urban development patterns; to lessen congestion in the street or highway; to secure safety from fire, flood, panic, and other dangers; to protect health and the general welfare; to provide adequate light and air; to prevent the overcrowding of land; to avoid undue concentration of population; to promote the conservation of energy resources; to promote reasonable access to solar energy; and to facilitate the adequate provision of transportation, water,

sewerage, schools, parks, and other public requirements. However, provisions of this section relating to the objectives of energy conservation and access to solar energy shall not be construed as voiding any zoning regulation existing on July 1, 1981, or to require zoning in a county that did not have zoning prior to July 1, 1981.

2. The regulations shall be made with reasonable consideration, among other things, as to the character of the area of the district and the peculiar suitability of such area for particular uses, and with a view to conserving the value of buildings and encouraging the most appropriate use of land throughout such county.

3. The regulations and comprehensive plan shall be made with consideration of the smart planning principles under section 18B.1 and may include the information specified in section 18B.2, subsection 2.

4. a. A comprehensive plan recommended for adoption by the zoning commission established under section 335.8, may be adopted by the board of supervisors. The board of supervisors may amend a proposed comprehensive plan prior to adoption. The board of supervisors shall publish notice of the meeting at which the comprehensive plan will be considered for adoption. The notice shall be published as provided in section 331.305.

b. Following its adoption, copies of the comprehensive plan shall be sent or made available to neighboring counties, cities within the county, the council of governments or regional planning commission where the county is located, and public libraries within the county.

c. Following its adoption, a comprehensive plan may be amended by the board of supervisors at any time.

Sec. 22. Section 335.8, Code 2009, is amended to read as follows:
335.8 Commission appointed.

1. In order to avail itself of the powers conferred by this chapter, the board of supervisors shall appoint a commission, a majority of whose members shall reside within the county but outside the corporate limits of any city, to be known as the county zoning commission, to recommend the boundaries of the various original districts, and appropriate regulations and restrictions to be enforced therein. Such commission shall, with due diligence, prepare a preliminary report and hold public hearings thereon before submitting its final report; and the board of supervisors shall not hold its public hearings or take action until it has received the final report of such commission. After the adoption of such regulations, restrictions, and boundaries of districts, the zoning commission may, from time to time, recommend to the board of supervisors amendments, supplements, changes or modifications.

2. The zoning commission may recommend to the board of supervisors for adoption a comprehensive plan pursuant to section 335.5, or amendments thereto.

3. The zoning commission, with the approval of the board of supervisors, may contract with professional consultants, regional planning commissions, the Iowa department of economic development, or the federal government, for local planning assistance.

Sec. 23. Section 414.3, Code 2009, is amended to read as follows:

414.3 Basis of regulations.

1. The regulations shall be made in accordance with a comprehensive plan and designed to preserve the availability of agricultural land; to consider the protection of soil from wind and water erosion; to encourage efficient urban development patterns; to lessen congestion in the street; to secure safety from fire, flood, panic, and other dangers; to promote health and the general welfare; to provide adequate light and air; to prevent the overcrowding of land; to avoid undue concentration of population; to promote the conservation of energy resources; to promote reasonable access to solar energy; and to facilitate the adequate provision of transportation, water, sewerage, schools, parks, and other public requirements. However, provisions of this section relating to the objectives of energy conservation and access to solar energy do not void any zoning regulation existing on July 1, 1981, or require zoning in a city that did not have zoning prior to July 1, 1981.

2. The regulations shall be made with reasonable consideration, among other things, as to the character of the area of the district and the peculiar suitability of such area for particular uses, and with a view to conserving the value of buildings and encouraging the most appropriate use of land throughout such city.

3. The regulations and comprehensive plan shall be made with consideration of the smart planning principles under section 18B.1 and may include the information specified in section 18B.2, subsection 2.

4. a. A comprehensive plan recommended for adoption by the zoning commission established under section 414.6, may be adopted by the council. The council may amend the proposed comprehensive plan prior to adoption. The council shall publish notice of the meeting at which the comprehensive plan will be considered for adoption. The notice shall be published as provided in section 362.3.

b. Following its adoption, copies of the comprehensive plan shall be sent or made available to the county in which the city is located, neighboring counties and cities, the council of governments or regional planning commission where the city is located, and public libraries within the city.

c. Following its adoption, a comprehensive plan may be amended by the council at any time.

Sec. 24. Section 414.6, Code 2009, is amended to read as follows:

414.6 Zoning commission.

1. In order to avail itself of the powers conferred by this chapter, the council shall appoint a commission, to be known as the zoning commission, to recommend the boundaries of the various original districts, and appropriate regulations and restrictions to be enforced therein. Where a city plan commission already exists, it may be appointed as the zoning commission. Such commission shall, with due diligence, prepare a preliminary report and hold public hearings thereon before submitting its final report; and such council shall not hold its public hearings or take action until it has received the final report of such commission. After the adoption of such regulations, restrictions, and boundaries of districts, the zoning commission may, from

time to time, recommend to the council amendments, supplements, changes, or modifications.

2. The zoning commission may recommend to the council for adoption a comprehensive plan pursuant to section 414.3, or amendments thereto.

Sec. 25. IOWA SMART PLANNING TASK FORCE.

1. An Iowa smart planning task force is established consisting of twenty-nine voting members and four ex officio, nonvoting members.

2. Members of the task force shall consist of all of the following:

a. Fourteen state agency director or administrator members consisting of all of the following:

- (1) The director of the department on aging or the director's designee.
- (2) The director of the department of economic development or the director's designee.
- (3) The secretary of agriculture and land stewardship or the secretary's designee.
- (4) The director of the department of cultural affairs or the director's designee.
- (5) The director of the department of public health or the director's designee.
- (6) The director of the department of management or the director's designee.
- (7) The director of the department of natural resources or the director's designee.
- (8) The director of the department of workforce development or the director's designee.
- (9) The director of the office of energy independence or the director's designee.
- (10) The director of the department of transportation or the director's designee.
- (11) The administrator of the homeland security and emergency management division of the department of public defense or the administrator's designee.
- (12) The director of the rebuild Iowa office or the director's designee.
- (13) The state building code commissioner or the commissioner's designee.
- (14) The chairperson of the utilities board within the utilities division of the department of commerce or the chairperson's designee.

b. Chairperson of the department of community and regional planning at Iowa state university or the chairperson's designee.

c. Director of the urban and regional planning program at the university of Iowa or the director's designee.

d. Director of the institute for decision making at the university of northern Iowa or the director's designee.

e. President of the Iowa chapter of the American planning association or the president's designee.

f. Executive director of the Iowa association of regional councils or the executive director's designee.

- g. President of the Iowa chapter of the American institute of architects or the president's designee.
- h. Executive director of the Iowa league of cities or the executive director's designee.
- i. Executive director of the Iowa state association of counties or the executive director's designee.
- j. President of the executive committee of the school administrators of Iowa or the president's designee.
- k. A representative appointed by the governor from a city having a population of five thousand or less according to the 2000 certified federal census.
- l. A representative appointed by the governor from a city having a population of more than five thousand and less than twenty-five thousand according to the 2000 certified federal census.
- m. A representative appointed by the governor from a city having a population of twenty-five thousand or more according to the 2000 certified federal census.
- n. A representative appointed by the governor from a county having a population of ten thousand or less according to the 2000 certified federal census.
- o. A representative appointed by the governor from a county having a population of more than ten thousand and less than fifty thousand according to the 2000 certified federal census.
- p. A representative appointed by the governor from a county having a population of fifty thousand or more according to the 2000 certified federal census.

3. The task force shall include four members of the general assembly serving as ex officio, nonvoting members, with not more than one member from each chamber being from the same political party. The two senators shall be appointed one each by the majority leader of the senate after consultation with the president of the senate, and by the minority leader of the senate. The two representatives shall be appointed one each by the speaker of the house of representatives after consultation with the majority leader of the house of representatives, and by the minority leader of the house of representatives.

4. The task force may establish committees and subcommittees comprised of members of the task force.

5. Members of the task force designated in subsection 2, paragraphs "k" through "p" shall serve at the pleasure of the governor. For the members of the task force designated in subsection 2, paragraphs "k" through "p", at least one member shall have experience in real estate, at least one member shall have experience in land development, and at least one member shall have experience in residential construction.

6. A vacancy on the task force shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

7. a. A majority of the members of the task force constitutes a quorum. Any action taken by the task force must be adopted by the affirmative vote of a majority of its membership. A task force member's designee may vote on task

force matters in the absence of the member.

b. The task force shall elect a chairperson and vice chairperson from the membership of the task force.

c. The task force shall meet at least four times before November 15, 2010.

Meetings of the task force may be called by the chairperson or by a majority of the members. However, the first meeting of the task force shall be called by the governor.

d. Members of the task force shall not be compensated for meeting participation or reimbursed for costs associated with meeting attendance. A legislative member is not eligible for per diem and expenses as provided in section 2.10.

8. The director of the department of management, or the director's designee, shall provide staff assistance and administrative support to the task force. The task force may request information or other assistance from the Iowa association of regional councils.

9. The director of the department of management, or the director's designee, shall seek funding to support municipal comprehensive planning in this state.

10. The task force shall comply with the requirements of chapters 21 and 22. The department of management shall be the official repository of task force records.

11. The duties of the task force shall include but are not limited to the following:

a. Consult land use experts, representatives of cities and counties, agricultural and environmental interests, urban and regional planning experts, reports or information from the local government innovation commission, and all other information deemed relevant by task force members.

b. Solicit information from the general public on matters related to comprehensive planning.

c. Evaluate state policies, programs, statutes, and rules to determine whether any state policies, programs, statutes, or rules should be revised to integrate the Iowa smart planning principles under section 18B.1.

d. Develop statewide goals for comprehensive planning that utilize the Iowa smart planning principles under section 18B.1, and develop recommendations for a process to measure progress toward achieving those goals.

e. Evaluate and develop incentives to conduct local and regional comprehensive planning, including but not limited to state financial and technical assistance.

f. Develop a model for regional comprehensive planning within the state and recommend partnerships between state agencies, local governments, educational institutions, and research facilities.

g. Review municipal comprehensive plans to determine the number of such plans that address the hazards identified in section 18B.2, subsection 2, paragraph "k", and the adequacy of such plans in addressing those hazards.

h. Develop a set of recommendations that is consistent with the Iowa smart planning principles under section 18B.1 and that does all of the following:

(1) Coordinates, facilitates, and centralizes the exchange of information related to state and local planning, zoning, and development between state agencies and the general assembly.

- (2) Coordinates discussions concerning a proposed geographic information system between the producers and the users of such systems.
- (3) Allows the efficient production and dissemination of population and other demographic statistical forecasts.
- (4) Creates a centralized electronic storage location for all comprehensive plans adopted under chapter 335 or chapter 414.
- (5) Facilitates the cooperation of state and local governments with comprehensive planning, educational, and research programs.
- (6) Provides and administers technical and financial assistance for state and local comprehensive planning.
- (7) Provides information to local governments relating to state and federal resources and other resources for comprehensive planning.

12. The task force shall prepare a report that includes goals, recommendations, and other information described in subsection 11, to the governor and the general assembly on or before November 15, 2010.

13. The task force is dissolved on December 31, 2012.

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IOWA SMART PLANNING TASK FORCE
NOVEMBER 2010