

SEMINOLE COUNTY GOVERNMENT  
AGENDA MEMORANDUM

CONTINUED FROM THE 4/25/06 MEETING

SUBJECT: Communities for a Lifetime

DEPARTMENT: Community Services DIVISION: Administration

AUTHORIZED BY: Phillip C. Stalvey <sup>PS</sup> CONTACT: Phillip C. Stalvey EXT. 3100

|             |          |                       |                          |         |                          |                       |                          |          |                                     |
|-------------|----------|-----------------------|--------------------------|---------|--------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|----------|-------------------------------------|
| Agenda Date | 05-23-06 | Regular               | <input type="checkbox"/> | Consent | <input type="checkbox"/> | Work Session          | <input type="checkbox"/> | Briefing | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|             |          | Public Hearing – 1:30 | <input type="checkbox"/> |         |                          | Public Hearing – 7:00 | <input type="checkbox"/> |          |                                     |

MOTION/RECOMMENDATION:

Briefing to the Board of County Commissioners on the Communities for a Lifetime Initiative.

BACKGROUND:

On April 11, 2006, the board requested a briefing on the Communities for a Lifetime Initiative. Communities for a Lifetime is Governor Jeb Bush's statewide initiative to assist Florida cities, towns and counties in planning and implementing improvements benefiting the lives of all residents, youthful or senior. This initiative recognizes the diverse needs of residents and the unique contributions individuals can make to their communities. Participating Communities for a Lifetime use existing resources and state technical assistance to make crucial civic improvements in such areas as housing, health care, transportation, accessibility, business partnerships, community education, efficient use of natural resources and volunteer opportunities to the betterment of their communities.

A Community for a Lifetime values individuals of all ages and engages communities in a process of continuous self-assessment and improvement. Through this process, communities enhance opportunities for people to age in place, or continue living in their own communities for a lifetime, while also benefiting people of all ages.

Tom Reimers, Division Director with the State of Florida, Department of Elder Affairs is presenting a more detailed overview of the program and will be able to provide additional information. A sample resolution is attached.

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|--------------|--------------------|
| Reviewed by: | _____              |
| Co Atty:     | _____              |
| DFS:         | _____              |
| Other:       | _____              |
| DCM:         | 53                 |
| CM:          | <i>[Signature]</i> |
| File No.     | ccs04              |

## Communities for a Lifetime

### Sample Resolution

Whereas, *\_(community's name)\_* supports the Florida Department of Elder Affairs' *Communities for a Lifetime* initiative to make Florida a friendlier place to live for people of all ages, that they may be as independent as long as possible, and remain in their homes and in the communities they love; and

Whereas, the State of Florida has the highest percentage of elders of any state in the nation and our elder population will continue to increase, reaching numbers without precedent in the first part of the XXI Century; and

Whereas, in order to allow all residents to maintain their dignity, security and independence, communities must evaluate, assess and modify their infrastructures to become a *Community for a Lifetime*; and

Whereas, *\_(community's name)\_* and the Florida Department of Elder Affairs share the vision and responsibility to improve the life of all citizens so they can prepare for and enjoy aging in place throughout their life; and

Whereas, in order to achieve our mutual goals, cities and counties should begin to build together a place free of physical, emotional, and social barriers,

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that our community, will make every effort to first evaluate and later remove barriers to become a *Community for a Lifetime*.



·B·L·U·E·P·R·I·N·T·

If you are planning for a year, sow rice;  
If you are planning for a decade, plant trees;  
If you are planning for a lifetime, educate people.

- CHINESE PROVERB

DEPARTMENT OF



ELDER  
AFFAIRS  
STATE OF FLORIDA

JEB BUSH, GOVERNOR  
TERRY WHITE, SECRETARY

## COMMUNITIES FOR A LIFETIME

· B · L · U · E · P · R · I · N · T ·

*Building Communities for the Future*

### **What is the *Communities for a Lifetime* initiative?**

*Communities for a Lifetime* is Governor Jeb Bush's statewide initiative that assists Florida cities, towns and counties in planning and implementing improvements that benefit the lives of all their residents, youthful or senior. This initiative recognizes the diverse needs of residents and the unique contributions individuals can make to their communities. Participating *Communities for a Lifetime* use existing resources and state technical assistance to make crucial civic improvements in such areas as housing, health care, transportation, accessibility, business partnerships, community education, efficient use of natural resources, volunteer opportunities and recreation. Participation in the initiative is strictly voluntary.



### **What is the goal of the *Communities for a Lifetime* initiative?**

The goal of the *Communities for a Lifetime* initiative is to help Florida communities become better places for seniors to live, providing all residents the opportunity to achieve their full potential and contribute to the betterment of their communities.

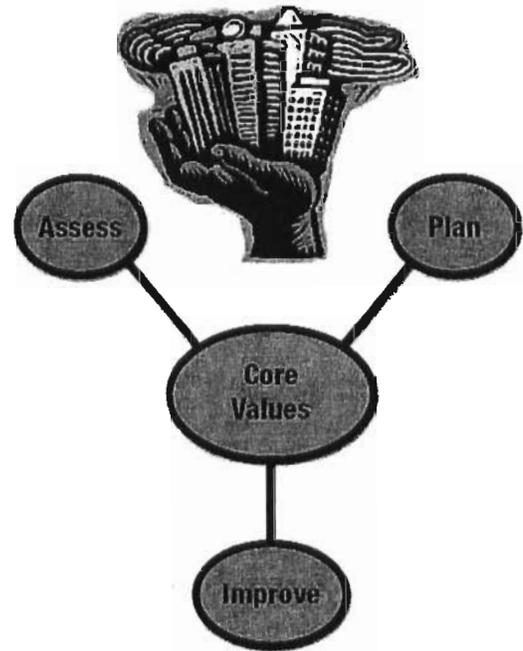
The ongoing process of self-assessment and improvement can help a community achieve the following goals:

- To create an inventory of services and opportunities that encourages independence and quality of life for older adults in your community. This inventory can be used to market the community to current residents as well as potential newcomers.
- To initiate partnerships with a wide variety of sectors in the community (government, business, not-for-profit and education) in order to promote the development of senior friendly community amenities.

### Why is the state of Florida promoting *Communities for a Lifetime*?

*Communities for a Lifetime* is intended to be a resource for Florida communities challenged by:

- New technologies;
- A changing workforce and economy;
- Rapid population growth and the resultant strains on community resources;
- Growth of the elder population as a result of new residents and the aging of baby boomers;
- Inaccessible community facilities and resources;
- A fragile environment; and
- A desire for a community spirit that nurtures families and promotes traditional intergenerational neighborhoods.



The capability of communities to respond to these and other challenges varies greatly. The state of Florida recognizes that many communities are already planning and implementing innovative practices that could serve as models for other communities struggling with these challenges. Therefore, one function of the *Communities for a Lifetime* initiative will be to serve as a clearinghouse of information for purposes of sharing “best practices” with all participating cities, towns and counties. *Communities for a Lifetime* provides individual communities with the ability to draw on the expertise of their state and local partners in planning to meet common challenges.

## What is the *Communities for a Lifetime* initiative going to cost?

Partnerships created during a community evaluation process and strategic alliances initiated afterwards can maximize existing funding and resources. *Communities for a Lifetime* is not intended to impose additional financial burdens on participating Florida communities. The purpose of this initiative is to assist local elected officials, community leaders and residents in working together to plan the most effective use of existing funding to achieve *Communities for a Lifetime* goals and benefits.

## How can residents create a *Community for a Lifetime*?

Creating a *Community for a Lifetime* is a process, taking time and requiring involvement by many stakeholders and partners, including community leaders and interested citizens.

**A brief outline of short-term community goals and suggested steps in the process include:**

- Local government passes a resolution or proclamation in support of the program and notifies the Department of Elder Affairs;
- The community forms a committee to inventory and assess elements important for senior independence and care;
- Upon completion of the self-assessment, the committee identifies areas in need of attention and incorporates them into a community action plan with a timeline for completion;
- The completed inventory is sent to the Department of Elder Affairs for review and recommendations; and
- The community develops strategies to initiate partnerships and collaborations to address identified needs.

## What should be evaluated?

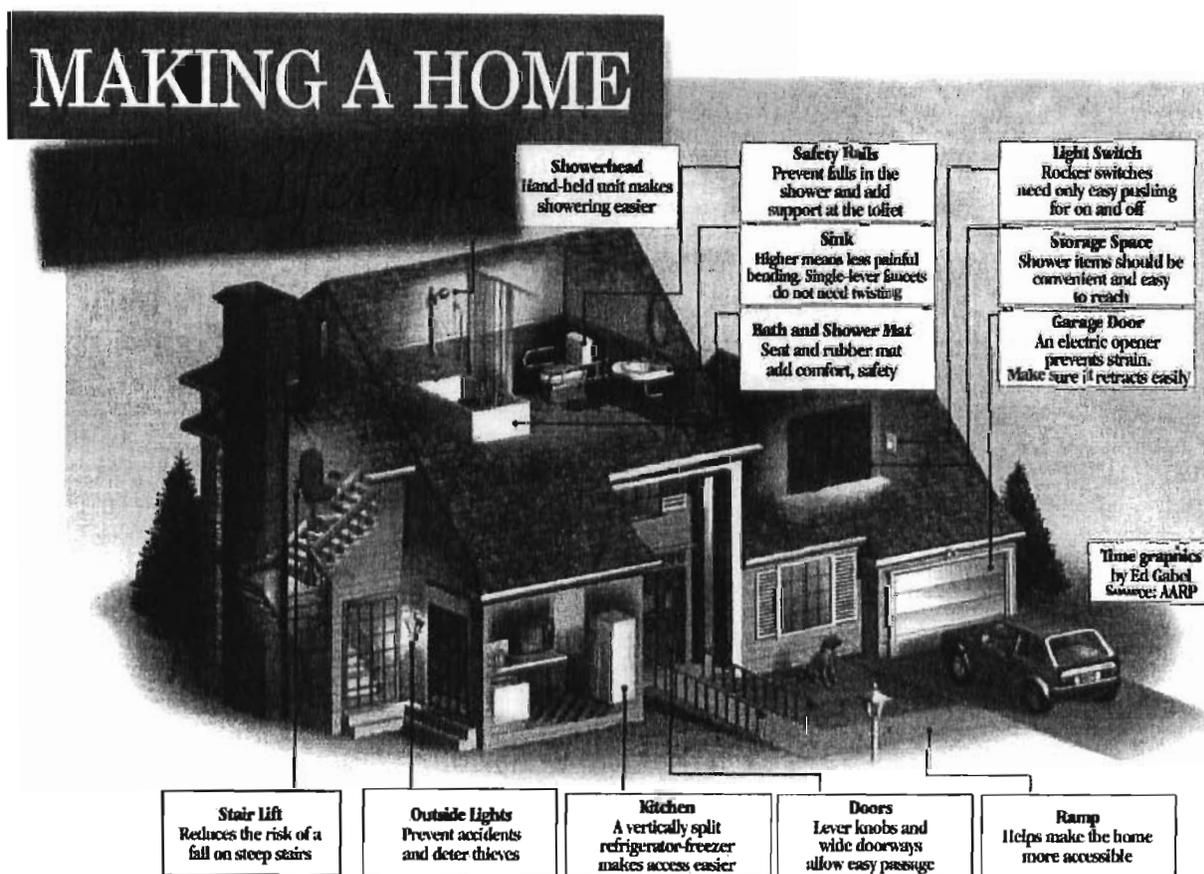
Participating *Communities for a Lifetime* review each area of the seven **Areas of Discovery** listed below in relation to the initiative's vision and values:

### PHYSICAL SPACES

**Accessibility** (Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards) – accommodations have been made to allow for individual mobility, regardless of functional impairments;

**Housing** – universal design – the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design;

- Energy efficiency in heating and cooling systems, appliances and lighting; and
- Use of environment friendly construction materials.



**Shopping** – easily accessible shops, supermarkets and drugstores where employees take into consideration the needs and preferences of older residents.

## TRANSPORTATION

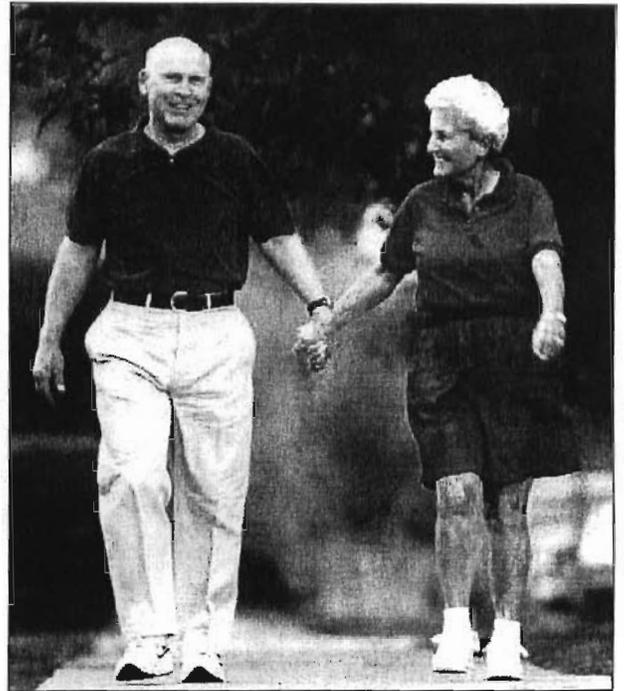
**Accessibility** – to goods and services means having available means of transportation that are convenient and affordable;

- Synchronized traffic signal timing and upgraded crosswalks to improve pedestrian safety and traffic flow patterns;
- Larger, easier to read signs;
- Encourage the use of environment friendly transportation modes, such as bicycles where appropriate;
- Selection of energy-efficient mass-transit;
- Community designs reducing need for individual automobiles; and
- Consideration of older out-of-town travelers at major airports, train stations and bus terminals.

## LAND USE

**Parks, trails, waterways, greenways** – efficiently planned communities to maximize green space and community areas while facilitating easy access to businesses and services;

- Regional planning aiming at accommodating people with varied needs may reduce vehicle miles traveled and could lead to improved air quality, especially important to seniors and children;
- Efficient use of natural resources;
- Parking lot designs that are more aesthetically pleasing and reduce water run-off;
- Energy efficient building and landscaping designs;
- Increased use of native plants in landscaping leading to water conservation and less nutrient runoff into waterways; and
- Walkable communities with improved sidewalk accessibility and better lighting and neighborhood watch organizations.



Walkable communities have many benefits.

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



**Business partnerships** – public/private partnerships to enhance the availability of consumer services;

**Friendly businesses** – enterprises that accommodate the needs of people with special considerations, such as mothers with strollers and people with walkers. Examples include expanding the aisles, wider doorways and easily opened doors;

**Employment** – ample employment opportunities for people of all ages allowing meaningful work to enhance the quality of life. Some people prefer to continue working beyond retirement age, while many others find it is a necessity;

**Volunteerism** – volunteers enhance their own lives as well as the lives of those they serve. With committed volunteers, many agencies and organizations can offer a wider variety of services that would otherwise be unavailable; and

**Safety** – trained fire fighters and law enforcement officers sensitive to the needs of elders and caregivers.

## HEALTH

**Physical** – access to timely health care services – including medical and non-medical services – and opportunities to pursue healthy living through use of community facilities such as walking trails and parks; and

**Mental** – access to timely and age-appropriate mental health services that complement health services to help keep the population active and involved in the community.



## EDUCATION

**Lifelong learning** – living with vitality includes a spirit of continuous learning at all ages. Opportunities to take classes and explore new subjects should be available for all residents.

- Crime prevention education – opportunities to learn about consumer safety and security from advocacy groups and law enforcement personnel; and
- Health and wellness education – senior health fairs and educational events.

## CULTURAL AND SOCIAL OPPORTUNITIES

**Recreation** – opportunities for leisure activities for people of all ages and with a variety of interests including indoor and outdoor pursuits. Parks and other common areas are accessible to individuals with varied disabilities;

**Spiritual** – residents can pursue spiritual growth and nurturing from the faith perspective of their choice with confidence and without fear of reprisal; and

**Intergenerational Activities** – the purposeful bringing together of different generations in ongoing and mutually beneficial activities such as mentoring and volunteerism. Youth and seniors share their talents and resources, supporting each other in relationships, which benefit the individuals and the community.

After self-assessments of the seven **Areas of Discovery** have been conducted, the *Communities for a Lifetime* initiative will enter into its next phase, providing participating cities, towns and counties with information and technical assistance to plan and implement community modifications, services and resources addressing issues identified in the self-assessment.



## Where can we get assistance?

### DEPARTMENT OF ELDER AFFAIRS' ROLE

Department of Elder Affairs staff members are available to help your community organize and facilitate the *Communities for a Lifetime* process. Some of the areas the Department of Elder Affairs may assist communities include:

- Conducting special events with the Governor and/or Secretary of the Department of Elder Affairs participating when possible and appropriate;
- Providing a *Communities for a Lifetime* Blueprint (this document) and a variety of information, materials and resources (local and state) to assist the community in the self-assessment process. Items include the *Communities for a Lifetime* logo, sample proclamation and a facilitator's guide;
- Awarding recognition certificates;
- Hosting conference calls and providing training opportunities for communities involved in the process of assessment;
- Coordinating state level efforts and assistance in setting priorities on specific issues;
- Providing training, recognition and state support of local efforts;
- Identifying strategies and best practices of participating communities that promote senior independence and care; and
- Maintaining *Communities for a Lifetime* Web site with contact and resource information.

## Who are the stakeholders/partners and what are their roles?

Becoming a *Community for a Lifetime* requires teamwork and a partnership that has the commitment of community leaders and residents. Initiating strategic alliances and collaboration of all sectors of the community is critical. Through this partnership the community can identify its strengths and weaknesses and plan for its vision of the future. The establishment of local committees or coalitions is necessary to reach this goal. Local communities must identify and involve the stakeholders, potential partners and organizations that can contribute to the process and are critical for success.

The following is a list of some of the recommended critical partners:

**CHIEF ELECTED OFFICIALS (CEO)** - The CEO is the member of the governing body of a municipality or county or an elected county official chosen by the governing body of the community (i.e., the mayor, city or county manager or other elected official). The commitment to become a *Community for a Lifetime* begins with the support and leadership of local government.

**BUSINESS LEADERS** - Initiatives such as this one cannot succeed without the partnership of business and business leaders who not only are committed to contributing back to the community but who recognize the economic value and business sense of becoming a *Community for a Lifetime*.

**REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCILS AND METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS** - Effective planning and development requires collaboration outside the boundaries of the local community. Local communities and cities must work in conjunction with counties and regions. Services offered by staff include technical planning assistance, grant and loan planning assistance, transportation planning assistance, emergency response planning assistance, economic development activities, community visioning and more.



**PLANNERS** - Because local governments employ the majority of urban and regional planners, they are often referred to as community, regional or city planners. Planners develop long and short-term land use plans to provide for growth and revitalization of urban, suburban and rural communities while helping local officials make decisions concerning social, economic and environmental problems.

**DEVELOPERS, BUILDERS, ARCHITECTS** - These are the professionals most often involved with producing housing and other community facilities. Their involvement can result in creative, cost efficient community and residential designs that meets current and future *Communities for a Lifetime* needs.

Other groups, organizations or community disciplines involved in making a community one that prepares for and values all of its residents include:

- Health care organizations and the medical community;
- Chambers of Commerce and other civic organizations;
- Local citizens/volunteers;
- Growth management and environmental staff;
- Area Agencies on Aging, senior centers and other aging network organizations;
- Faith-based organizations;
- Local parks and recreation;
- Public safety; and
- Education.

Communities can also take advantage of the resource of technical assistance and information available from statewide agencies such as the Department of Elder Affairs, Department of Community Affairs, Department of Transportation, Department of Health, Department of Children and Families, Department of Environmental Protection, Agency for Workforce Innovation and Enterprise Florida.

## **What are the benefits of the Communities for a Lifetime initiative?**

*Communities for a Lifetime* may help children grow and prosper while also providing seniors an opportunity to remain independent in their own communities. Caregivers for those of any age will receive the support they need thereby meeting the needs of children and enabling elders to age in place with dignity, security and purpose.

### **Individuals, communities, governments and businesses may benefit by:**

- Increased safety through improved coordination of transportation, community planning, universal home designs, and neighborhood interaction;
- Improved physical and mental health of residents through better access to social interaction, recreation, increased activity levels and facilitation of other behaviors known to impact quality of life issues; and
- Effective community planning and design encouraging mixed-use development co-locating the places where people live, work, learn, shop and play.



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ELDER AFFAIRS

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