

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to rural development; creating
3 the Florida Rural Heritage and Economic
4 Stimulus Act; providing legislative findings;
5 providing definitions; providing for the
6 designation of a Rural Heritage Area; providing
7 for a community-based planning process;
8 specifying guidelines for Rural Heritage Area
9 plans; providing procedure for adoption of a
10 plan; providing for economic incentives,
11 reports, and technical assistance; creating the
12 Rural Heritage Grant Program, to be
13 administered by the Department of Community
14 Affairs, to assist local governments in
15 adopting Rural Heritage Areas; providing for
16 priority of funding; requiring the Department
17 of Community Affairs to adopt rules; providing
18 for development of a micro-loan program for
19 nature-based tourism and heritage tourism
20 businesses; providing for wireless
21 community-based network technology pilot
22 programs to be recommended by the Department of
23 Health; providing for pilot projects to
24 encourage diversification of agricultural
25 products and marketing to be recommended by the
26 Department of Agriculture and Consumer
27 Services; providing for review and evaluation
28 by the Office of Program Policy Analysis and
29 Government Accountability; amending s.
30 163.3187, F.S.; providing conditions for
31 adoption of local comprehensive plan amendments

1 for Rural Heritage Areas or Rural Activity
2 Centers; providing for plan amendment relating
3 to certain roadways in specified counties under
4 certain conditions; designating Whopper Way in
5 Miami-Dade County and directing the Department
6 of Transportation to erect suitable markers;
7 amending s. 163.356, F.S.; authorizing
8 specified municipalities to increase the number
9 of commissioners appointed to the board of
10 commissioners of the community redevelopment
11 agency; amending s. 187.201, F.S.; modifying
12 goals of the State Comprehensive Plan to
13 include housing for specified persons in rural
14 areas and development of nature-based tourism;
15 providing a policy of fostering integrated and
16 coordinated community-based planning efforts;
17 providing support for rural communities in
18 developing nature-based tourism and heritage
19 tourism enterprises; providing support for
20 landowners who wish their lands to remain in
21 agricultural use; amending s. 420.507, F.S.;
22 modifying powers of the Florida Housing Finance
23 Corporation; amending ss. 420.5087 and
24 420.5088, F.S.; correcting cross references;
25 providing that specified provisions are subject
26 to appropriation or the availability of agency
27 funds; providing an effective date.

28
29 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:
30
31

1 Section 1. Florida Rural Heritage and Economic
2 Stimulus Act.--

3 (1) SHORT TITLE.--This section may be cited as the
4 "Florida Rural Heritage and Economic Stimulus Act."

5 (2) FINDINGS.--The Legislature finds that:

6 (a) Fiscally and culturally strong rural communities
7 are beneficial to regional and state economies and resources,
8 are a method for reduction of future urban sprawl, encourage
9 compact, efficient urban growth patterns, and should be
10 promoted by state, regional, and local governments.

11 (b) The health and vibrancy of the state's rural areas
12 benefit their respective regions and the state; conversely,
13 the deterioration of those rural areas negatively impacts the
14 surrounding areas and the state.

15 (c) In recognition of the interwoven nature of the
16 relationships among rural communities, agricultural lands,
17 open space lands, urban centers, regions, and the state, the
18 respective governments should establish a framework and work
19 in partnership with communities and the private sector to
20 revitalize rural areas.

21 (d) A state rural policy should guide the state,
22 regional agencies, local governments, and the private sector
23 in creating economic prosperity and preserving the unique
24 character and heritage of the state's rural areas. The policy
25 should encourage and assist local governments in addressing
26 issues including adequate provision of infrastructure,
27 affordable housing, human services, safe neighborhoods,
28 agricultural profitability, educational facilities, sound land
29 uses, health care, and economic diversification and
30 development to sustain rural communities into the future.

31

1 (e) Successfully revitalizing and sustaining rural
2 areas depends on addressing, through an integrated and
3 coordinated community effort, a range of varied components
4 essential to a healthy rural environment, including cultural,
5 educational, recreational, economic, transportation, land use,
6 information technology, and social service delivery
7 components.

8 (f) Identification of rural activity centers and of
9 strategies to promote economic prosperity while protecting
10 rural character are recognized as important components and
11 useful mechanisms to promote and sustain rural areas. State
12 and regional entities and local governments should provide
13 incentives to promote community-based processes to identify
14 such centers and strategies. Existing programs and incentives
15 should be integrated to the extent possible to promote sound
16 rural development and to achieve the goals of the state rural
17 policy.

18 (g) Full funding for rural transportation and water
19 infrastructure needs, rural schools, health care services, and
20 information technology is an important investment by the state
21 in the overall health of its rural communities and is an
22 integral component of a state rural policy.

23 (h) Many rural local governments are hindered by
24 limited staff and capacity in their efforts to secure
25 available resources. A state rural policy should assist local
26 governments in identifying and accessing needed resources for
27 which they are eligible and should promote creative ways to
28 maximize the efficiency of rural local governments' existing
29 staff and other resources.

30 (i) Agriculture plays an integral role in the economy,
31 ecology, and culture of the state's rural areas and of the

1 state as a whole. At the same time, the state is losing
2 agricultural lands to development at a rapid rate. A state
3 rural policy should assist state agencies and local
4 governments in creating and marketing tools for increasing the
5 profitability of agricultural land uses and other incentives
6 for conserving the state's agricultural lands.

7 (j) In recognition that approximately one-half of all
8 visitors to this state include a nature-based experience in
9 their vacations, a state rural policy should encourage the
10 development of a nature-based tourism and heritage tourism
11 industry that meets this growing public demand, protects the
12 state's natural and cultural resources, and contributes to
13 economic prosperity, especially in the state's rural
14 communities.

15 (3) DEFINITIONS.--As used in this section, the term:

16 (a) "Local government" means any county or
17 municipality.

18 (b) "Rural Activity Center" means an area or areas:

19 1. Designated by a local government or by local
20 governments through interlocal agreement.

21 2. Located within a Rural Heritage Area.

22 3. In which public services, including water services,
23 transportation infrastructure, schools, and recreation, are
24 already available or are scheduled to be provided in an
25 adopted 5-year schedule of capital improvements, and which
26 have historically served as commercial business centers or
27 sites of public buildings for surrounding rural residents.

28
29 The Rural Activity Center may consist of or include state
30 community redevelopment areas, brownfields, enterprise zones,
31 or Mainstreet programs, federal Empowerment Zones, Enterprise

1 Communities, Champion Communities, or Brownfield Showcase
2 Communities. The Rural Activity Center shall serve and be
3 developed as a "town center," promoting compact, efficient
4 development within the area and allowing lower-density
5 development that retains rural character within the remaining
6 portions of the designated Rural Heritage Area.

7 (c) "Rural Heritage Area" means an area or areas:

8 1. Designated by a local government or by local
9 governments through interlocal agreement.

10 2. Within which more than 50 percent of the land is in
11 agricultural, open space, recreational, or other nondeveloped
12 use.

13 3. That fit the definition of, or fall within an area
14 that fits the definition of, a rural county, rural
15 municipality, or rural community as defined in s. 288.106,
16 Florida Statutes.

17
18 A Rural Heritage Area may comprise a single rural county as
19 defined in s. 288.106, Florida Statutes, a multicounty area,
20 or a subcounty area that is rural in nature and meets the
21 land-use, demographic, economic, and definitional criteria set
22 forth in this paragraph. If a subcounty area, a Rural Heritage
23 Area may comprise one or more rural municipalities, as defined
24 in s. 288.106, Florida Statutes, and may include
25 unincorporated areas between or surrounding the rural
26 municipalities, provided that all parts of the designated area
27 meet the criteria set forth in this paragraph.

28 (4) DESIGNATION OF A RURAL HERITAGE AREA.--

29 (a) A local government, or local governments through
30 interlocal agreement, may designate a geographic area or areas
31 within the applicable jurisdiction as a Rural Heritage Area

1 for the purpose of convening a community-based holistic
2 planning process to identify community problems and assets,
3 create a vision for the area's future, and formulate a
4 strategic plan for implementing asset-based solutions to the
5 problems identified.

6 (b) A local government, or local governments through
7 interlocal agreement, may designate a geographic area or areas
8 within the applicable jurisdiction and within a designated
9 Rural Heritage Area as a Rural Activity Center for the purpose
10 of targeting economic development, job creation, housing,
11 transportation and other infrastructure, neighborhood
12 revitalization and preservation, the promotion of rural land
13 preservation, and the employment of land-use incentives to
14 encourage mixed-use development that will revitalize the Rural
15 Activity Center area as a functioning downtown that can serve
16 residents of surrounding rural areas.

17 (c) Designation of a Rural Heritage Area or Rural
18 Activity Center does not exempt the local government from the
19 process required under chapter 163, Florida Statutes, for
20 amending the comprehensive plan within the designated area.

21 (5) COMMUNITY-BASED PLANNING PROCESS.--

22 (a) As part of the designation of the Rural Heritage
23 Area and the preparation of a Rural Heritage Area plan, a
24 community-based planning process must be implemented in each
25 proposed Rural Heritage Area. The process must involve
26 stakeholders including, but not limited to, community-based
27 organizations; neighborhood associations; educational, health
28 care, and religious organizations; area residents, including
29 low-income residents; appropriate local government
30 representatives; local school boards; and, when appropriate,
31 institutions of higher education.

1 (b) The objective of the community-based planning
2 process is to produce an integrated plan that benefits the
3 community as a whole and to encourage residents within the
4 designated area to participate in the design and
5 implementation of the Rural Heritage Area plan, including the
6 visioning of the area's future, before prioritizing and
7 optimizing scarce resources. The planning process must be
8 collaborative and holistic and must address, at a minimum,
9 economic development including the nature-based tourism and
10 heritage tourism industry, land use, affordable housing,
11 infrastructure, education, health care, public safety, public
12 and private financial capacity, information technology,
13 workforce development, ecological conservation, social equity,
14 the role of agriculture in the local economy if applicable,
15 and the role of local government.

16 (c) In lieu of preparing a new plan, the local
17 government may demonstrate that an existing plan or
18 combination of plans includes the factors listed in paragraph
19 (d), or amend such existing plans to include the factors
20 listed in paragraph (d), including the community-based
21 planning process. If the area constitutes or contains a
22 federally designated Empowerment Zone, Enterprise Community,
23 or Champion Community, the plan and planning process done in
24 application for that designation shall serve to meet the
25 requirements of the community-based planning process and shall
26 allow the community to apply for implementation grants under
27 the Rural Heritage Grant program that are based on such plan.

28 (d) A local government seeking to designate a
29 geographic area as a Rural Heritage Area shall propose a plan
30 that describes means of promoting economic prosperity and
31 preserving the unique rural character of the area. The plan

1 must demonstrate the local government's and community's
2 commitment to comprehensively addressing the problems within
3 the Rural Heritage Area and identify activities, programs, and
4 resources that can help accomplish locally identified goals
5 such as improved educational opportunities; economic
6 diversification and development; the future of agricultural
7 land uses in the planning area; provision of infrastructure
8 needs, including information technology infrastructure;
9 prioritizing, pooling, and leveraging scarce resources; and
10 mixed-use planning for Rural Activity Centers to improve both
11 the residential and commercial quality of life in the area.

12 The plan must also:

13 1. Contain a map depicting the Rural Heritage Area or
14 areas, and Rural Activity Center if applicable, to be included
15 within the designation.

16 2. Contain interlocal agreements, as appropriate,
17 among participating local governments and any regional or
18 nonprofit organizations which express the entities' commitment
19 to collectively designating the area and to coordinated
20 implementation efforts based on the plan.

21 3. Identify any existing enterprise zones, community
22 redevelopment areas, community development districts,
23 brownfield areas, downtown redevelopment districts, safe
24 neighborhood improvement districts, historic preservation
25 districts, and empowerment zones located within the area
26 proposed for designation.

27 4. Identify a memorandum of understanding between the
28 district school board and the local government jurisdiction
29 regarding public school facilities located within the Rural
30 Heritage Area to identify how the school board will enhance
31 public school facilities and programs in the designated area.

1 5. Explain how projects identified in the plan advance
2 the goals of creating economic prosperity for area residents
3 and of preserving the rural character and heritage of the
4 planning area. Projects may include land acquisition;
5 demolition, construction, or renovation of structures;
6 purchase of conservation easements or development rights on
7 agricultural, conservation, or recreational lands;
8 job-training programs; investments in educational
9 technologies; capacity building through existing or new
10 nonprofit organizations; creation, enhancement, or marketing
11 of nature-based, agricultural, or heritage tourism or
12 recreational facilities; or improvement of the delivery of
13 health care services to rural residents.

14 6. Identify the geographic locations for projects
15 identified through the community-based planning process and
16 explain how such projects will be implemented.

17 7. Identify how the local government intends to
18 implement and enhance affordable housing programs as defined
19 in s. 420.602, Florida Statutes, including economic and
20 community development programs administered by the Department
21 of Community Affairs and the Florida Housing Finance
22 Corporation within the Rural Heritage Area.

23 8. If applicable, provide guidelines for the adoption
24 of land development regulations specific to the Rural Heritage
25 Area which provide for the use or purchase of conservation
26 easements, purchase or transfer of development rights, or the
27 use of other means available to local governments under s.
28 704.06, Florida Statutes, for the purpose of preserving
29 agricultural lands.

30 9. If applicable, identify and adopt a package of
31 financial and local government incentives which the local

1 government will offer for new development, expansion or
2 renovation of existing development, and redevelopment within
3 any designated Rural Activity Center. Examples of such
4 incentives include:

5 a. Waiver of license and permit fees.

6 b. Waiver of delinquent taxes or fees to promote the
7 return of property to productive use.

8 c. Expedited permitting.

9 d. Prioritization of infrastructure spending within
10 the Rural Heritage Area and Rural Activity Center.

11 10. Identify how activities and incentives within the
12 Rural Heritage Area or Rural Activity Center will be
13 coordinated and what administrative mechanism the local
14 government will use for the coordination and monitoring of
15 Rural Heritage Area plan implementation.

16 11. Provide a list of stakeholders participating in
17 the community-based planning process, pursuant to paragraph
18 (a).

19 12. Identify goals, objectives, performance measures,
20 and baseline data on conditions for evaluating the success of
21 the local government, community-based organizations, and other
22 stakeholders in implementing the Rural Heritage Area plan and
23 in improving economic prosperity and preserving rural
24 character.

25 (e) The regional planning council covering the
26 geographic location of the Rural Heritage Area, or other
27 appropriate nonprofit, university-based, or for-profit
28 organizations, may assist the local government in convening
29 the community-based planning process and in preparing the
30 Rural Heritage Area plan, provided that the process and
31

1 resulting plan meet all other requirements as described in
2 this section.

3 (f) After the preparation of a Rural Heritage Area
4 plan or the designation of an existing plan, the local
5 government must adopt the plan by ordinance. Notice for the
6 public hearing on the ordinance must be in the form
7 established in s. 166.041(3)(c)2., Florida Statutes, for
8 municipalities and s. 125.66(4)(b)2., Florida Statutes, for
9 counties.

10 (g) For a local government to designate a Rural
11 Heritage Area or Rural Activity Center, it must amend its
12 comprehensive land-use plan under s. 163.3187, Florida
13 Statutes, to delineate the Rural Heritage Area within the
14 future land-use element of its comprehensive plan. An
15 amendment to the local comprehensive plan to designate a Rural
16 Heritage Area or Rural Activity Center is exempt from the
17 twice-a-year amendment limitation of s. 163.3187, Florida
18 Statutes.

19 (6) ECONOMIC INCENTIVES; REPORTS; TECHNICAL
20 ASSISTANCE.--

21 (a) A local government with an adopted Rural Heritage
22 Area plan or a plan employed in lieu thereof may issue revenue
23 bonds under s. 163.385, Florida Statutes, and employ tax
24 increment financing under s. 163.387, Florida Statutes, for
25 the purpose of financing the implementation of the plan as
26 appropriate, particularly within designated Rural Activity
27 Centers.

28 (b) A local government with an adopted Rural Heritage
29 Area plan or a plan employed in lieu thereof may exercise the
30 powers granted under s. 163.514, Florida Statutes, for
31 community redevelopment neighborhood improvement districts,

1 including the authority to levy special assessments as
2 appropriate, particularly within designated Rural Activity
3 Centers.

4 (c) State agencies that provide funding for
5 infrastructure, cost reimbursement, grants, or loans to local
6 governments, including the Department of Environmental
7 Protection (Clean Water State Revolving Fund, Drinking Water
8 Revolving Loan Trust Fund, and the State of Florida Pollution
9 Control Bond Program), the Department of Community Affairs
10 (Economic Development and Housing Program and Florida
11 Communities Trust), the Florida Housing Finance Corporation,
12 and the Department of Transportation, shall report to the
13 President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of
14 Representatives by January 1, 2003, regarding statutory and
15 rule changes necessary to give Rural Heritage Areas identified
16 by local governments that have completed the community-based
17 planning process an elevated priority in infrastructure
18 funding, loan, and grant programs.

19 (d) State agencies that provide funding to local
20 governments shall identify grant programs for which local
21 government cash match requirements will be waived or replaced
22 by in-kind match, which can include the creation of a
23 permanent resource development staff position within the local
24 government to work on accessing a variety of grants, and loan
25 programs for which repayment will be forgiven, for rural local
26 government applicants that have successfully completed the
27 Rural Heritage Area grant program community-based planning
28 process. Agencies shall report to the President of the Senate
29 and the Speaker of the House of Representatives by September
30 1, 2002, on programs identified, statutory or rule changes
31 needed, and cost of implementation.

1 (e) The Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI),
2 as described in s. 288.0656, Florida Statutes, shall work with
3 state agencies and other organizations that provide loans,
4 grants, or technical assistance of any kind to the state's
5 rural communities to update, maintain, and distribute
6 semiannually to every rural county and city government as
7 defined in s. 288.106, Florida Statutes, the Rural Resource
8 Directory, which describes resources, including federal
9 resources, that are available to rural local governments and
10 how to access them. The publication must include statutory
11 provisions that enable local governments to raise or direct
12 revenues toward the goals of promoting economic prosperity
13 while preserving rural character. To the extent possible, REDI
14 shall provide, or shall work through the regional planning
15 councils, the Small County Technical Assistance Program, the
16 Local Government Financial Technical Assistance Program, the
17 State University System, or other relevant organizations to
18 provide, technical assistance to all rural local governments
19 to access these resources.

20 (f) Provision by REDI or other organizations
21 identified in paragraph (e) of technical assistance in
22 accessing available resources as described in paragraph (e) is
23 an automatic result of successful completion of the Rural
24 Heritage Area community-based planning process.

25 (g) REDI shall work with the Florida State Rural
26 Development Council and state agencies to develop a simple,
27 uniform grant application form for use by local government
28 grant applicants. To the extent feasible, such a uniform
29 application process should incorporate the sharing of known
30 information about local governments among state government
31 agencies in order to maximize the efficiency of local

1 governments' efforts to secure available resources. The
2 uniform grant application must be adopted for use by state
3 agencies by July 1, 2003.

4 (7) GRANT PROGRAM.--

5 (a) A Rural Heritage Grant Program is created to
6 assist local governments in adopting Rural Heritage Areas,
7 completing the community-based planning process, and
8 implementing elements of the resulting Rural Heritage Area
9 plan.

10 (b) Forty-five percent of the general revenue
11 appropriated for the Rural Heritage Grant Program must be
12 available for conducting the community-based planning process
13 and completing the Rural Heritage Area plans. Forty-nine
14 percent of the general revenue appropriated for the Rural
15 Heritage Grant Program must be available for implementing
16 projects that are identified in the local government's adopted
17 Rural Heritage Area plan or a plan employed in lieu thereof. A
18 local government may allocate grant money to special
19 districts, including community redevelopment agencies and
20 nonprofit community development organizations, to implement
21 projects consistent with an adopted Rural Heritage Area plan
22 or a plan employed in lieu thereof. Five percent of the
23 revenue must be made available for "seed money" grants of not
24 more than \$10,000 to assist local governments to begin the
25 process of identifying Rural Heritage Areas, assembling a core
26 group of community-based planning participants, and applying
27 for planning grants. The remaining 1 percent must be made
28 available for administrative costs incurred by the Department
29 of Community Affairs for implementing the Rural Heritage Grant
30 Program and the Urban Infill and Redevelopment Assistance
31 Grant Program. Projects that provide employment opportunities

1 to clients of the WAGES program must be given an elevated
2 priority in the scoring of competing grant applications. To
3 encourage rural-urban partnerships and regional planning,
4 grant applications may be made, and grant moneys may be used,
5 in regional or partnership projects with communities eligible
6 to participate in the Urban Infill and Redevelopment
7 Assistance Grant Program. The Division of Housing and
8 Community Development of the Department of Community Affairs
9 shall administer the grant program.

10 (c) Priority for funding under the Rural Heritage
11 Grant Program shall be given to Rural Heritage Areas in which
12 a majority of the populated portions of the area are
13 characterized by pervasive poverty, unemployment, and general
14 distress, as defined in s. 290.0058, Florida Statutes.

15 (d) The Department of Community Affairs, in
16 consultation with REDI, shall adopt rules establishing grant
17 review criteria consistent with this section. Actions required
18 by this paragraph are contingent upon funds being provided to
19 implement the Rural Heritage Grant Program.

20 (e) If the local government fails to implement
21 sections of the Rural Heritage Area plan funded through a
22 Rural Heritage Area implementation grant pursuant to the
23 deadlines specified in the grant agreement, the Department of
24 Community Affairs, in consultation with REDI, may seek to
25 rescind the economic and regulatory incentives granted to a
26 Rural Heritage Area or Rural Activity Center, subject to the
27 provisions of chapter 120, Florida Statutes. The action to
28 rescind may be initiated 90 days after issuing a written
29 letter of warning to the local government.

30 (8) MICRO-LOAN PROGRAM FOR NATURE-BASED TOURISM AND
31 HERITAGE TOURISM BUSINESSES.--The statewide advisory committee

1 on nature-based tourism and heritage tourism, as established
2 in s. 288.1224, Florida Statutes, shall work with Enterprise
3 Florida, Inc., the Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic
4 Development, VISIT FLORIDA, the Rural Economic Development
5 Initiative, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation
6 Commission, the Division of Recreation and Parks of the
7 Department of Environmental Protection, and other appropriate
8 entities to develop a statewide micro-loan program for the
9 purpose of financing the creation and enhancement of small
10 businesses providing nature-based tourism or heritage tourism
11 experiences. Examples include eco-tour operators and guides
12 and bicycle rentals, canoe outfitters, and bed-and-breakfast
13 facilities in proximity to natural areas. No later than
14 November 1, 2002, this group shall submit a report to the
15 President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of
16 Representatives that provides the mission and structure of the
17 micro-loan program, guidelines for administering the program,
18 and criteria for and any limitations on loan recipient
19 eligibility and use of loan funds.

20 (9) WIRELESS COMMUNITY-BASED NETWORK PILOT PROGRAM.--
21 (a) The Department of Health, in consultation with the
22 State Technology Office, Department of Education, Department
23 of Community Affairs, rural health networks, local
24 governments, the Area Health Education Centers, and medical
25 schools shall develop recommendations regarding the
26 establishment of two pilot projects in rural communities that
27 use wireless or other technologies. The purposes of the
28 projects are to illustrate ways to increase access to quality
29 health care, health education, and other health resources in
30 the state's rural areas; to leverage federal funds available
31 for bridging the "digital divide"; to build on existing

1 applications to create community-based health networks; and to
2 foster opportunities for innovative distribution of existing
3 funds. The pilot projects must include linkages to existing
4 information technology systems in the pilot area, for example,
5 to a public health care facility, local or regional hospital,
6 medical school, library, a university, or a 4-year or
7 community college, or county or municipal government, or
8 private business network.

9 (b) The Department of Health shall, in consultation
10 with the State Technology Office, Department of Education,
11 Department of Community Affairs, Area Health Education
12 Centers, medical schools, and rural health networks, recommend
13 a process for the selection of the pilot participants. The
14 selection process shall consider criteria as follows:

15 1. The extent to which the project increases access of
16 rural residents to health services;

17 2. If the pilot project involves wireless technology,
18 demonstration of the applicant's ability to effectively deploy
19 wireless technology based on existing infrastructure;

20 3. Demonstration of commitment of the applicant to use
21 technology to improve the level of knowledge regarding
22 individual health and health services;

23 4. If the pilot project involves wireless technology,
24 potential cost savings or improved access resulting from the
25 use of wireless rather than traditional connectivity
26 technology;

27 5. The ability to use the technology infrastructure in
28 other applications within the service area;

29 6. Demonstration of willingness and ability of the
30 participants to assume ongoing costs to maintain the pilot
31 project for a minimum 3-year period. Such willingness and

1 ability may be demonstrated through intracommunity agreements
2 or other means; and

3 7. Such other criteria as determined by the agencies.

4 (c) The Department of Health, in consultation with the
5 State Technology Office, Department of Education, Department
6 of Community Affairs, rural health networks, Area Health
7 Education Centers, medical schools, and local governments,
8 shall include recommendations for performance standards and
9 evaluation of pilot projects.

10 (d) The Department of Health shall report its
11 recommendations relative to the structure and funding
12 necessary to implement the pilot programs to the President of
13 the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and
14 the Governor by December 15, 2002. Recommendations will
15 address the implementation and funding of the pilot programs.

16 (10) AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION AND PROFITABILITY.--

17 (a) The Department of Agriculture and Consumer
18 Services, in consultation with the University of Florida and
19 the Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, shall
20 develop recommendations to establish three pilot projects
21 aimed at encouraging the diversification of agricultural
22 production and marketing throughout the state. The purpose of
23 the pilot projects is to demonstrate alternative crops,
24 techniques, and industries that can enhance the profitability
25 and sustainability of agriculture in the state. Each project
26 must do at least one of the following: introduce alternative
27 crops, such as hot peppers, amaranth, or pigeon peas, or
28 alternative growing techniques, for example, greenhouse
29 vegetable production in North Florida or early-season
30 blueberries and peaches; or introduce a value-added activity
31 or industry, such as fruit or vegetable processing or

1 packaging, into a farming community as a means of increasing
2 the profitability of current farm products for local growers.
3 At least one of these projects must include a tobacco farm
4 that is being adversely impacted by reductions in tobacco
5 quotas. In developing the recommendations, the Commissioner of
6 Agriculture, in consultation with the Agricultural Economic
7 Development Project Review Committee as described in s.
8 570.248, Florida Statutes, shall develop selection criteria
9 and evaluation criteria. The evaluation criteria shall be
10 consistent with that for agricultural economic development
11 projects delineated in s. 570.247, Florida Statutes, and
12 include appropriate performance standards.

13 (b) The Commissioner of Agriculture shall report the
14 department's recommendations to implement the pilot program
15 and necessary funding to the President of the Senate, the
16 Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Governor by
17 December 15, 2002.

18 (c) As authorized in s. 403.0752, Florida Statutes,
19 and based on results of current "whole farm planning" pilot
20 projects, the Department of Environmental Protection shall
21 work with willing partners to streamline the permitting
22 process for agricultural land uses.

23 (11) REVIEW AND EVALUATION.--The Office of Program
24 Policy Analysis and Government Accountability shall perform a
25 review and evaluation of the grant program and financial
26 incentives and the wireless community-based network pilot
27 program. The report must evaluate the effectiveness of the
28 designation of rural planning areas in promoting economic
29 prosperity and preserving character in the state's rural
30 areas. This report may be conducted in conjunction with a
31 review of the Urban Infill and Redevelopment Assistance Grant

1 Program. A report of the findings and recommendations of the
2 Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government
3 Accountability must be submitted to the President of the
4 Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives before
5 the 2006 Regular Session of the Legislature.

6 Section 2. Paragraphs (c) and (i) of subsection (1) of
7 section 163.3187, Florida Statutes, are amended, and paragraph
8 (k) is added to said subsection, to read:

9 163.3187 Amendment of adopted comprehensive plan.--

10 (1) Amendments to comprehensive plans adopted pursuant
11 to this part may be made not more than two times during any
12 calendar year, except:

13 (c) Any local government comprehensive plan amendments
14 directly related to proposed small scale development
15 activities may be approved without regard to statutory limits
16 on the frequency of consideration of amendments to the local
17 comprehensive plan. A small scale development amendment may be
18 adopted only under the following conditions:

19 1. The proposed amendment involves a use of 10 acres
20 or fewer and:

21 a. The cumulative annual effect of the acreage for all
22 small scale development amendments adopted by the local
23 government shall not exceed:

24 (I) A maximum of 120 acres in a local government that
25 contains areas specifically designated in the local
26 comprehensive plan for urban infill, urban redevelopment, or
27 downtown revitalization as defined in s. 163.3164, urban
28 infill and redevelopment areas designated under s. 163.2517,
29 transportation concurrency exception areas approved pursuant
30 to s. 163.3180(5), or regional activity centers and urban
31 central business districts approved pursuant to s.

1 380.06(2)(e); however, amendments under this paragraph may be
2 applied to no more than 60 acres annually of property outside
3 the designated areas listed in this sub-sub-subparagraph.
4 Amendments adopted pursuant to paragraph (k) shall not be
5 counted toward the acreage limitations for small scale
6 amendments under this paragraph.

7 (II) A maximum of 80 acres in a local government that
8 does not contain any of the designated areas set forth in
9 sub-sub-subparagraph (I).

10 (III) A maximum of 120 acres in a county established
11 pursuant to s. 9, Art. VIII of the State Constitution.

12 b. The proposed amendment does not involve the same
13 property granted a change within the prior 12 months.

14 c. The proposed amendment does not involve the same
15 owner's property within 200 feet of property granted a change
16 within the prior 12 months.

17 d. The proposed amendment does not involve a text
18 change to the goals, policies, and objectives of the local
19 government's comprehensive plan, but only proposes a land use
20 change to the future land use map for a site-specific small
21 scale development activity.

22 e. The property that is the subject of the proposed
23 amendment is not located within an area of critical state
24 concern, unless the project subject to the proposed amendment
25 involves the construction of affordable housing units meeting
26 the criteria of s. 420.0004(3), and is located within an area
27 of critical state concern designated by s. 380.0552 or by the
28 Administration Commission pursuant to s. 380.05(1). Such
29 amendment is not subject to the density limitations of
30 sub-subparagraph f., and shall be reviewed by the state land
31 planning agency for consistency with the principles for

1 guiding development applicable to the area of critical state
2 concern where the amendment is located and shall not become
3 effective until a final order is issued under s. 380.05(6).

4 f. If the proposed amendment involves a residential
5 land use, the residential land use has a density of 10 units
6 or less per acre, except that this limitation does not apply
7 to small scale amendments described in sub-sub-subparagraph
8 a.(I) that are designated in the local comprehensive plan for
9 urban infill, urban redevelopment, or downtown revitalization
10 as defined in s. 163.3164, urban infill and redevelopment
11 areas designated under s. 163.2517, transportation concurrency
12 exception areas approved pursuant to s. 163.3180(5), or
13 regional activity centers and urban central business districts
14 approved pursuant to s. 380.06(2)(e).

15 2.a. A local government that proposes to consider a
16 plan amendment pursuant to this paragraph is not required to
17 comply with the procedures and public notice requirements of
18 s. 163.3184(15)(c) for such plan amendments if the local
19 government complies with the provisions in s. 125.66(4)(a) for
20 a county or in s. 166.041(3)(c) for a municipality. If a
21 request for a plan amendment under this paragraph is initiated
22 by other than the local government, public notice is required.

23 b. The local government shall send copies of the
24 notice and amendment to the state land planning agency, the
25 regional planning council, and any other person or entity
26 requesting a copy. This information shall also include a
27 statement identifying any property subject to the amendment
28 that is located within a coastal high hazard area as
29 identified in the local comprehensive plan.

30 3. Small scale development amendments adopted pursuant
31 to this paragraph require only one public hearing before the

1 governing board, which shall be an adoption hearing as
2 described in s. 163.3184(7), and are not subject to the
3 requirements of s. 163.3184(3)-(6) unless the local government
4 elects to have them subject to those requirements.

5 (i) A comprehensive plan amendment for the purpose of
6 designating an urban infill and redevelopment area under s.
7 163.2517 or a Rural Heritage Area or Rural Activity Center
8 under the Florida Rural Heritage and Economic Stimulus Act may
9 be approved without regard to the statutory limits on the
10 frequency of amendments to the comprehensive plan.

11 (k) A local comprehensive plan amendment directly
12 related to providing transportation improvements to enhance
13 life safety on Controlled Access Major Arterial Highways
14 identified in the Florida Intrastate Highway System, in
15 counties as defined in s. 125.011, where such roadways have a
16 high incidence of traffic accidents resulting in serious
17 injury or death. Any such amendment shall not include any
18 amendment modifying the designation on a comprehensive
19 development plan land use map nor any amendment modifying the
20 allowable densities or intensities of any land.

21 Section 3. Whopper Way designated; Department of
22 Transportation to erect suitable markers.--

23 (1) That portion of N.W. 57 Avenue from N.W. 7 Street
24 to State Highway 836 in Miami-Dade County is hereby designated
25 as "Whopper Way."

26 (2) The Department of Transportation is directed to
27 erect suitable markers designating Whopper Way as described in
28 subsection (1).

29 Section 4. Subsection (2) of section 163.356, Florida
30 Statutes, is amended to read:

31 163.356 Creation of community redevelopment agency.--

1 (2) When the governing body adopts a resolution
2 declaring the need for a community redevelopment agency, that
3 body shall, by ordinance, appoint a board of commissioners of
4 the community redevelopment agency, which shall consist of not
5 fewer than five or more than seven commissioners. The
6 governing body of a municipality with a population of more
7 than 100,000 and an area of more than 100 square miles may
8 appoint up to nine commissioners.The terms of office of the
9 commissioners shall be for 4 years, except that three of the
10 members first appointed shall be designated to serve terms of
11 1, 2, and 3 years, respectively, from the date of their
12 appointments, and all other members shall be designated to
13 serve for terms of 4 years from the date of their
14 appointments. A vacancy occurring during a term shall be
15 filled for the unexpired term.

16 Section 5. Subsections (5), (10), (16), (22), (23),
17 and (24) of section 187.201, Florida Statutes, are amended to
18 read:

19 187.201 State Comprehensive Plan adopted.--The
20 Legislature hereby adopts as the State Comprehensive Plan the
21 following specific goals and policies:

22 (5) HOUSING.--

23 (a) Goal.--The public and private sectors shall
24 increase the affordability and availability of housing for
25 low-income and moderate-income persons, including citizens in
26 rural areas, while at the same time encouraging
27 self-sufficiency of the individual and assuring environmental
28 and structural quality and cost-effective operations.

29 (b) Policies.--
30
31

1 1. Eliminate public policies which result in housing
2 discrimination, and develop policies which encourage housing
3 opportunities for all Florida's citizens.

4 2. Diminish the use of institutions to house persons
5 by promoting deinstitutionalization to the maximum extent
6 possible.

7 3. Increase the supply of safe, affordable, and
8 sanitary housing for low-income and moderate-income persons
9 and elderly persons by alleviating housing shortages,
10 recycling older houses and redeveloping residential
11 neighborhoods, identifying housing needs, providing incentives
12 to the private sector to build affordable housing, encouraging
13 public-private partnerships to maximize the creation of
14 affordable housing, and encouraging research into low-cost
15 housing construction techniques, considering life-cycle
16 operating costs.

17 4. Reduce the cost of housing construction by
18 eliminating unnecessary regulatory practices which add to the
19 cost of housing.

20 5. Provide incentives and encourage research to
21 increase the supply of safe, affordable, and sanitary housing
22 for low-income, very-low-income, and moderate-income residents
23 of rural areas, as defined in s. 420.602. Such incentives and
24 research must take into account the importance of development
25 that preserves the rural character of the area and must seek
26 to mitigate the increased per-unit cost of small housing
27 projects appropriate to rural areas over the per-unit cost for
28 larger developments.

29 (10) NATURAL SYSTEMS AND RECREATIONAL LANDS.--

30 (a) Goal.--Florida shall protect and acquire unique
31 natural habitats and ecological systems, such as wetlands,

1 tropical hardwood hammocks, palm hammocks, and virgin longleaf
2 pine forests, and restore degraded natural systems to a
3 functional condition.

4 (b) Policies.--

5 1. Conserve forests, wetlands, fish, marine life, and
6 wildlife to maintain their environmental, economic, aesthetic,
7 and recreational values.

8 2. Acquire, retain, manage, and inventory public lands
9 to provide recreation, conservation, and related public
10 benefits.

11 3. Prohibit the destruction of endangered species and
12 protect their habitats.

13 4. Establish an integrated regulatory program to
14 assure the survival of endangered and threatened species
15 within the state.

16 5. Promote the use of agricultural practices which are
17 compatible with the protection of wildlife and natural
18 systems.

19 6. Encourage multiple use of forest resources, where
20 appropriate, to provide for timber production, recreation,
21 wildlife habitat, watershed protection, erosion control, and
22 maintenance of water quality.

23 7. Protect and restore the ecological functions of
24 wetlands systems to ensure their long-term environmental,
25 economic, and recreational value.

26 8. Promote restoration of the Everglades system and of
27 the hydrological and ecological functions of degraded or
28 substantially disrupted surface waters.

29 9. Develop and implement a comprehensive planning,
30 management, and acquisition program to ensure the integrity of
31 Florida's river systems.

1 10. Emphasize the acquisition and maintenance of
2 ecologically intact systems in all land and water planning,
3 management, and regulation.

4 11. Expand state and local efforts to provide
5 recreational opportunities to urban areas, including the
6 development of activity-based parks.

7 12. Protect and expand park systems throughout the
8 state.

9 13. Encourage the use of public and private financial
10 and other resources for the development of recreational and
11 nature-based tourism opportunities at the state and local
12 levels when consistent with natural-system conservation
13 principles and practices.

14 (16) LAND USE.--

15 (a) Goal.--In recognition of the importance of
16 preserving the natural resources and enhancing the quality of
17 life of the state, development shall be directed to those
18 areas which have in place, or have agreements to provide, the
19 land and water resources, fiscal abilities, and service
20 capacity to accommodate growth in an environmentally
21 acceptable manner.

22 (b) Policies.--

23 1. Promote state programs, investments, and
24 development and redevelopment activities which encourage
25 efficient development and occur in areas which will have the
26 capacity to service new population and commerce.

27 2. Develop a system of incentives and disincentives
28 which encourages a separation of urban and rural land uses
29 while protecting water supplies, resource development, and
30 fish and wildlife habitats.

31

1 3. Enhance the livability and character of urban areas
2 through the encouragement of an attractive and functional mix
3 of living, working, shopping, and recreational activities.

4 4. Recognize the interwoven nature of the
5 relationships among rural communities, agricultural lands,
6 open space lands, urban centers, regions, and the state, and
7 the importance of fiscally and culturally strong rural
8 communities to state and regional economies and resources;
9 promote state and local programs that foster integrated and
10 coordinated community-based planning efforts; and pursue land
11 use, educational, recreational, economic, transportation,
12 housing, information technology, and social service delivery
13 initiatives in the context of community planning goals.

14 ~~5.4.~~ Develop a system of intergovernmental negotiation
15 for siting locally unpopular public and private land uses
16 which considers the area of population served, the impact on
17 land development patterns or important natural resources, and
18 the cost-effectiveness of service delivery.

19 ~~6.5.~~ Encourage and assist local governments in
20 establishing comprehensive impact-review procedures to
21 evaluate the effects of significant development activities in
22 their jurisdictions.

23 ~~7.6.~~ Consider, in land use planning and regulation,
24 the impact of land use on water quality and quantity; the
25 availability of land, water, and other natural resources to
26 meet demands; and the potential for flooding.

27 ~~8.7.~~ Provide educational programs and research to meet
28 state, regional, and local planning and growth-management
29 needs.

30 (22) THE ECONOMY.--

31

1 (a) Goal.--Florida shall promote an economic climate
2 which provides economic stability, maximizes job
3 opportunities, and increases per capita income for its
4 residents.

5 (b) Policies.--

6 1. Attract new job-producing industries, corporate
7 headquarters, distribution and service centers, regional
8 offices, and research and development facilities to provide
9 quality employment for the residents of Florida.

10 2. Promote entrepreneurship and small and
11 minority-owned business startup by providing technical and
12 information resources, facilitating capital formation, and
13 removing regulatory restraints which are unnecessary for the
14 protection of consumers and society.

15 3. Maintain, as one of the state's primary economic
16 assets, the environment, including clean air and water,
17 beaches, forests, historic landmarks, and agricultural and
18 natural resources, and support rural communities in developing
19 nature-based tourism and heritage tourism enterprises
20 consistent with conservation of these natural resources in
21 order to provide economic benefit to those living in closest
22 proximity to those assets.

23 4. Strengthen Florida's position in the world economy
24 through attracting foreign investment and promoting
25 international banking and trade.

26 5. Build on the state's attractiveness to make it a
27 leader in the visual and performing arts and in all phases of
28 film, television, and recording production.

29 6. Promote economic development for Florida residents
30 through partnerships among education, business, industry,
31 agriculture, and the arts.

1 7. Provide increased opportunities for training
2 Florida's workforce to provide skilled employees for new and
3 expanding business.

4 8. Promote economic self-sufficiency through training
5 and educational programs which result in productive
6 employment.

7 9. Promote cooperative employment arrangements between
8 private employers and public sector employment efforts to
9 provide productive, permanent employment opportunities for
10 public assistance recipients through provisions of education
11 opportunities, tax incentives, and employment training.

12 10. Provide for nondiscriminatory employment
13 opportunities.

14 11. Provide quality child day care for public
15 assistance families and others who need it in order to work.

16 12. Encourage the development of a business climate
17 that provides opportunities for the growth and expansion of
18 existing state industries, particularly those industries which
19 are compatible with Florida's environment.

20 13. Promote coordination among Florida's ports to
21 increase their utilization.

22 14. Encourage the full utilization by businesses of
23 the economic development enhancement programs implemented by
24 the Legislature for the purpose of extensively involving
25 private businesses in the development and expansion of
26 permanent job opportunities, especially for the economically
27 disadvantaged, through the utilization of enterprise zones,
28 community development corporations, and other programs
29 designed to enhance economic and employment opportunities.

30 (23) AGRICULTURE.--
31

1 (a) Goal.--Florida shall maintain and strive to expand
2 its food, agriculture, ornamental horticulture, aquaculture,
3 forestry, and related industries in order to be a healthy and
4 competitive force in the national and international
5 marketplace.

6 (b) Policies.--

7 1. Ensure that goals and policies contained in state
8 and regional plans are not interpreted to permanently restrict
9 the conversion of agricultural lands to other uses, while
10 creating and providing economically viable options for those
11 landowners who wish their lands to remain in agricultural
12 uses.

13 2. Encourage diversification within the agriculture
14 industry, especially to reduce the vulnerability of
15 communities that are largely reliant upon agriculture for
16 either income or employment.

17 3. Promote and increase international agricultural
18 marketing opportunities for all Florida agricultural
19 producers.

20 4. Stimulate research, development, and application of
21 agricultural technology to promote and enhance the
22 conservation, production, and marketing techniques available
23 to the agriculture industry.

24 5. Encourage conservation, wastewater recycling, and
25 other appropriate measures to assure adequate water resources
26 to meet agricultural and other beneficial needs.

27 6. Promote entrepreneurship in the agricultural sector
28 by providing technical and informational services.

29 7. Stimulate continued productivity through investment
30 in education and research.

31

1 8. Encourage development of biological pest controls
2 to further the reduction in reliance on chemical controls.

3 9. Conserve soil resources to maintain the economic
4 value of land for agricultural pursuits and to prevent
5 sedimentation in state waters.

6 10. Promote the vitality of Florida's agricultural
7 industry through continued funding of basic research,
8 extension, inspection, and analysis services and of programs
9 providing for marketing and technical assistance and the
10 control and eradication of diseases and infestations.

11 11. Continue to promote the use of lands for
12 agricultural purposes by maintaining preferential property tax
13 treatment through the greenbelt law.

14 12. Ensure that coordinated state planning of road,
15 rail, and waterborne transportation systems provides adequate
16 facilities for the economical transport of agricultural
17 products and supplies between producing areas and markets.

18 13. Eliminate the discharge of inadequately treated
19 wastewater and stormwater runoff into waters of the state.

20 (24) TOURISM.--

21 (a) Goal.--Florida will attract at least 55 million
22 tourists annually by 1995 and shall support efforts by all
23 areas of the state wishing to develop or expand
24 tourist-related economies.

25 (b) Policies.--

26 1. Promote statewide tourism and support promotional
27 efforts in those parts of the state that desire to attract
28 visitors.

29 2. Acquire and manage public lands to offer visitors
30 and residents increased outdoor experiences.

31

1 3. Promote awareness of historic places and cultural
2 and historical activities.

3 4. Develop a nature-based tourism and heritage tourism
4 industry that meets growing public demand, protects the
5 state's natural and cultural resources, and contributes to
6 economic prosperity, especially in the state's rural
7 communities.

8 Section 6. Subsections (13) through (39) of section
9 420.507, Florida Statutes, are renumbered as subsections (14)
10 through (40), respectively, and a new subsection (13) is added
11 to said section, to read:

12 420.507 Powers of the corporation.--The corporation
13 shall have all the powers necessary or convenient to carry out
14 and effectuate the purposes and provisions of this part,
15 including the following powers which are in addition to all
16 other powers granted by other provisions of this part:

17 (13) To explore options to improve the availability of
18 affordable housing in rural areas.

19 Section 7. Paragraphs (a) and (f) of subsection (6) of
20 section 420.5087, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

21 420.5087 State Apartment Incentive Loan
22 Program.--There is hereby created the State Apartment
23 Incentive Loan Program for the purpose of providing first,
24 second, or other subordinated mortgage loans or loan
25 guarantees to sponsors, including for-profit, nonprofit, and
26 public entities, to provide housing affordable to
27 very-low-income persons.

28 (6) On all state apartment incentive loans, except
29 loans made to housing communities for the elderly to provide
30 for lifesafety, building preservation, health, sanitation, or
31

1 security-related repairs or improvements, the following
2 provisions shall apply:

3 (a) The corporation shall establish two interest rates
4 in accordance with s. 420.507(23)(~~22~~)(a)1. and 2.

5 (f) The review committee established by corporation
6 rule pursuant to this subsection shall make recommendations to
7 the board of directors of the corporation regarding program
8 participation under the State Apartment Incentive Loan
9 Program. The corporation board shall make the final ranking
10 and the decisions regarding which applicants shall become
11 program participants based on the scores received in the
12 competitive ranking, further review of applications, and the
13 recommendations of the review committee. The corporation
14 board shall approve or reject applications for loans and shall
15 determine the tentative loan amount available to each
16 applicant selected for participation in the program. The
17 actual loan amount shall be determined pursuant to rule
18 adopted pursuant to s. 420.507(23)(~~22~~)(f).

19 Section 8. Subsections (1), (2), and (4) of section
20 420.5088, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

21 420.5088 Florida Homeownership Assistance
22 Program.--There is created the Florida Homeownership
23 Assistance Program for the purpose of assisting low-income
24 persons in purchasing a home by reducing the cost of the home
25 with below-market construction financing, by reducing the
26 amount of down payment and closing costs paid by the borrower
27 to a maximum of 5 percent of the purchase price, or by
28 reducing the monthly payment to an affordable amount for the
29 purchaser. Loans shall be made available at an interest rate
30 that does not exceed 3 percent. The balance of any loan is due
31 at closing if the property is sold or transferred.

1 (1) For loans made available pursuant to s.
2 420.507(24)~~(23)~~(a)1. or 2.:

3 (a) The corporation may underwrite and make those
4 mortgage loans through the program to persons or families who
5 have incomes that do not exceed 80 percent of the state or
6 local median income, whichever is greater, adjusted for family
7 size.

8 (b) Loans shall be made available for the term of the
9 first mortgage.

10 (c) Loans are limited to the lesser of 25 percent of
11 the purchase price of the home or the amount necessary to
12 enable the purchaser to meet credit underwriting criteria.

13 (2) For loans made pursuant to s.
14 420.507(24)~~(23)~~(a)3.:

15 (a) Availability is limited to nonprofit sponsors or
16 developers who are selected for program participation pursuant
17 to this subsection.

18 (b) Preference must be given to community development
19 corporations as defined in s. 290.033 and to community-based
20 organizations as defined in s. 420.503.

21 (c) Priority must be given to projects that have
22 received state assistance in funding project predevelopment
23 costs.

24 (d) The benefits of making such loans shall be
25 contractually provided to the persons or families purchasing
26 homes financed under this subsection.

27 (e) At least 30 percent of the units in a project
28 financed pursuant to this subsection must be sold to persons
29 or families who have incomes that do not exceed 80 percent of
30 the state or local median income, whichever amount is greater,
31 adjusted for family size; and at least another 30 percent of

1 the units in a project financed pursuant to this subsection
2 must be sold to persons or families who have incomes that do
3 not exceed 50 percent of the state or local median income,
4 whichever amount is greater, adjusted for family size.

5 (f) The maximum loan amount may not exceed 33 percent
6 of the total project cost.

7 (g) A person who purchases a home in a project
8 financed under this subsection is eligible for a loan
9 authorized by s. 420.507(24)~~(23)~~(a)1. or 2. in an aggregate
10 amount not exceeding the construction loan made pursuant to
11 this subsection. The home purchaser must meet all the
12 requirements for loan recipients established pursuant to the
13 applicable loan program.

14 (h) The corporation shall provide, by rule, for the
15 establishment of a review committee composed of corporation
16 staff and shall establish, by rule, a scoring system for
17 evaluating and ranking applications submitted for construction
18 loans under this subsection, including, but not limited to,
19 the following criteria:

20 1. The affordability of the housing proposed to be
21 built.

22 2. The direct benefits of the assistance to the
23 persons who will reside in the proposed housing.

24 3. The demonstrated capacity of the applicant to carry
25 out the proposal, including the experience of the development
26 team.

27 4. The economic feasibility of the proposal.

28 5. The extent to which the applicant demonstrates
29 potential cost savings by combining the benefits of different
30 governmental programs and private initiatives, including the
31 local government contributions and local government

1 comprehensive planning and activities that promote affordable
2 housing.

3 6. The use of the least amount of program loan funds
4 compared to overall project cost.

5 7. The provision of homeownership counseling.

6 8. The applicant's agreement to exceed the
7 requirements of paragraph (e).

8 9. The commitment of first mortgage financing for the
9 balance of the construction loan and for the permanent loans
10 to the purchasers of the housing.

11 10. The applicant's ability to proceed with
12 construction.

13 11. The targeting objectives of the corporation which
14 will ensure an equitable distribution of loans between rural
15 and urban areas.

16 12. The extent to which the proposal will further the
17 purposes of this program.

18 (i) The corporation may reject any and all
19 applications.

20 (j) The review committee established by corporation
21 rule pursuant to this subsection shall make recommendations to
22 the corporation board regarding program participation under
23 this subsection. The corporation board shall make the final
24 ranking for participation based on the scores received in the
25 ranking, further review of the applications, and the
26 recommendations of the review committee. The corporation board
27 shall approve or reject applicants for loans and shall
28 determine the tentative loan amount available to each program
29 participant. The final loan amount shall be determined
30 pursuant to rule adopted under s. 420.507(24)(~~23~~)(h).

31 (4) During the first 9 months of fund availability:

1 (a) Sixty percent of the program funds shall be
2 reserved for use by borrowers pursuant to s.
3 ~~420.507(24)(23)(a)1.~~;

4 (b) Twenty percent of the program funds shall be
5 reserved for use by borrowers pursuant to s.
6 ~~420.507(24)(23)(a)2.~~; and

7 (c) Twenty percent of the program funds shall be
8 reserved for use by borrowers pursuant to s.
9 ~~420.507(24)(23)(a)3.~~

10
11 If the application of these percentages would cause the
12 reservation of program funds under paragraph (a) to be less
13 than \$1 million, the reservation for paragraph (a) shall be
14 increased to \$1 million or all available funds, whichever
15 amount is less, with the increase to be accomplished by
16 reducing the reservation for paragraph (b) and, if necessary,
17 paragraph (c).

18 Section 9. The implementation of subsection (7) of
19 section 1 of this act is subject to specific appropriation or
20 the availability of funds from the Department of Community
21 Affairs.

22 Section 10. This act shall take effect July 1, 2002.
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31