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TERRA FIRMA

YOUR GUIDE FOR SOLID LAND USE PLANNING
AUGUST 2008

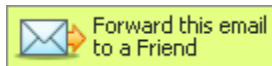
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LAND PLANNING & OBESITY

Are our children at risk?

Many of you have probably never thought about there be a relationship between childhood obesity and land use planning. Consider this: when you were a child, did you walk or ride your bike to school or to the movies? Were there parks in your neighborhood where you would go on your own with your friends for a game of baseball or hoops? Could you get where you wanted to go on your own without the help of your parents or a bus?



Now think about this, how many of us live in the sprawling suburban neighborhood or ranchettes that have no goods or services within 10 or 15 miles? What about the monoculture created in gated communities? Can our kids walk to school? No, there are no schools in our "neighborhoods." Can they ride their bikes to their friends' houses? No, most of them don't even know their neighbors because they spend all of their time in a car being driven to soccer practice, being driven to school or going with mom to the gas station (the closest commercial venue) to pick up a few convenience groceries.

Increased density, neighborhood parks, walkable pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods, and a functional mix of land uses within a short radius could all contribute to allowing our children to get outside and get the much-needed exercise to reduce childhood obesity. We need to go back to designing neighborhoods with schools as the central feature and focus, instead of placing schools where the land was cheapest regardless of the residential development pattern nearby. Bike paths to parks and schools need to be interwoven throughout the neighborhood. Locally-scaled commercial uses need to make their way into



neighborhoods again. Single-use land use districts need to be a culture of the past. Mixed use developments must be how we plan in the future.

Sprawl and the use of the automobile clearly foster sedentary behavior. Land use planning and health are undoubtedly linked. As planners, we need to give more thought to how design dictates how people go about their daily lives, especially the effects it has on our children.



A.I.C.P. - What does it mean?

The A.I.C.P. designation found behind many land use planners' names is a credential given by the American Institute of Certified Planners (A.I.C.P.) to individuals who have successfully passed an examination based on their experience, knowledge and understanding of the profession.

The American Institute of Certified Planners recently started requiring that certified planners have to accumulate credit hours for certification maintenance (CM) to keep abreast of current planning issues. This effort is to further legitimize the practices of planners who have been certified.

While many planners do not put much weight in the designation, you should. You should consider whether your planning consultant or planners are your governmental or private sector staff are certified planners and more importantly, whether they conduct themselves accordingly. Once authorized to use the A.I.C.P. initials, certified planners are required to abide by and comply with a specific and detailed Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct. These are obligations much bigger than the simple passing of a test.

Pursuant to the AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct, we as certified planners we aspire to the following principles:

1. Overall Responsibility to the Public
2. Our Responsibility to our Clients and Employers
3. Our Responsibility to our Profession and Colleagues

The Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct outlines the process by which AICP credentials can be questioned, challenged, suspended and stripped due to behavior unbecoming a certified planner, against the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct.

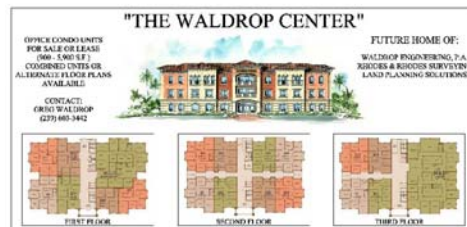
For more information about the American Institute of

Certified Planners' Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct and a certified planner's responsibilities, please visit www.planning.org/ethics/conduct.html.

To keep behavior in check and to be reminded of the AICP Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct, a certified planner should always ask themselves **"Am I Consistently Professional?"** (A.I.C.P.).

- Allison D. Megrath, AICP

LPS NEW OFFICE



In a few short weeks Land Planning Solutions will be opening a new office in Bonita Springs Florida.

Located at **28100 Bonita Grande Drive** the newly constructed Waldrop Center offers

Land Planning Solutions an accessible and convenient location from which to service our clients.

To get there, head east off Exit 116 from I-75 to Bonita Grande Drive, turn right and go beyond the Publix in the Bernwood Park of Commerce. The Waldrop Center will be your right.

Visit us in **Suite 302** beginning October 1st. We look forward to showing you our new space!

A special thanks to Ron Waldrop, PE, President of Waldrop Engineering and to Greg Waldrop for making this opportunity possible for Land Planning Solutions.

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