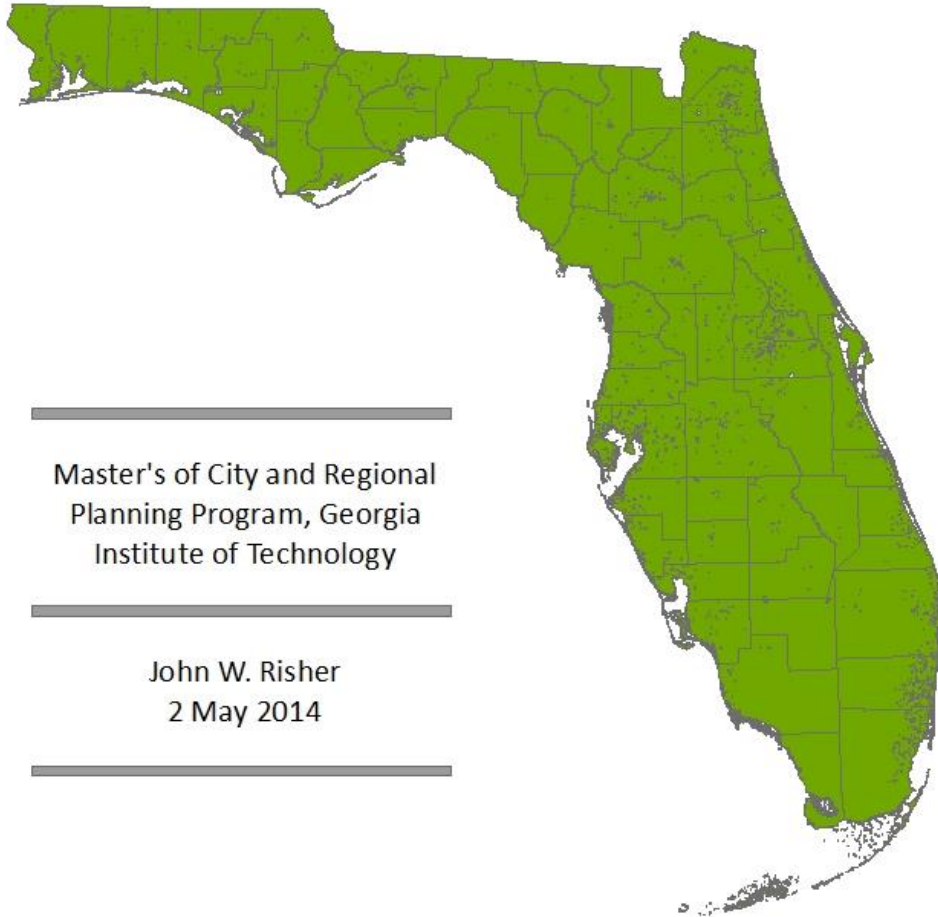


Committing Planning Suicide

Economic Competitiveness, Political Wranglings,
and the Demise of Growth Management
in Twenty First Century Florida



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Table of Contents

Section 1: Introduction and Literature Review	3
Introduction	3
The History of Growth Management in Florida	9
Literature Review	17
Section 2: Growth Management Outcomes	24
Population Change in Florida	24
Farm Land and Environmentally Sensitive Conversion	29
Planning Expenditures in Florida.....	35
Section 3: Economic Competitiveness in Florida	39
Employment Growth in Florida.....	39
Housing in Florida	43
Per Capita Income	46
Section 4: Regression Analysis	50
Methodology.....	50
Results.....	52
Population Growth.....	52
Per Capita Income.....	53
Unemployment	54
Median Home Value	55
Section 5: Discussion and Conclusions	57
Discussion of Results.....	57
Conclusion.....	64

Introduction and Literature Review

Introduction

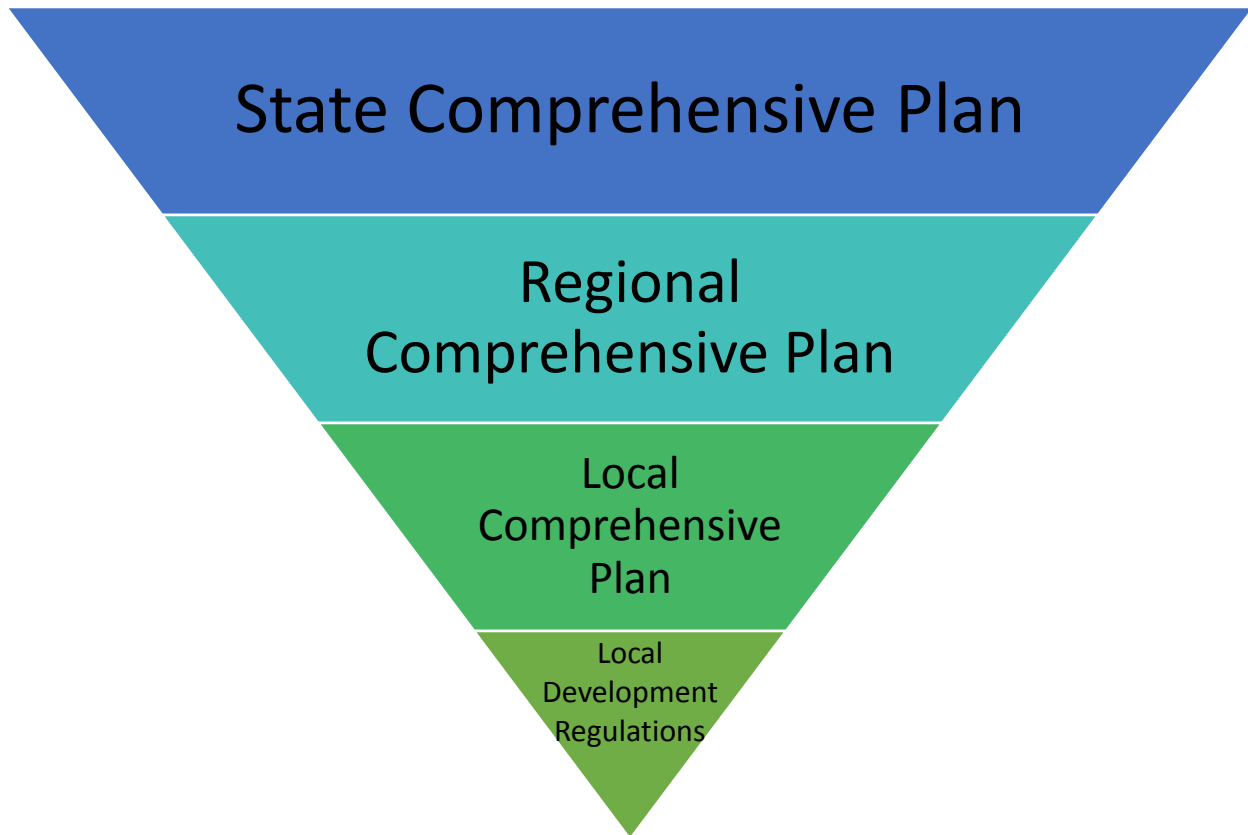
In June of 2011, Florida Governor Rick Scott signed into law a piece of legislation, HB7207, that severely curtailed the landmark Growth Management Act of 1985 (GMA), which through a policy combining consistency, concurrency, and compact development, had aimed to ensure the proper balancing of development and growth controls to promote socially responsible growth in the state for years to come (Pittman 2011). With his signature, Gov. Scott rendered toothless a piece of growth management legislation which had pioneered state growth efforts (along with the Oregon Land Use Act of 1973) and served as a model for numerous other states seeking to limit the deleterious environmental and social impacts of urban sprawl and wasteful land consumption and eliminated the agency, the Department of Community Affairs (DCA), that oversaw its implementation (Pittman 2011; Ben-Zadok 2005, 2167).

While much has been written debating the GMA's effectiveness in managing growth, its potential impact on housing affordability, and its broader impacts of Florida's economic competitiveness, at this critical juncture in Florida's history, it is appropriate to reflect upon the preceding four decades of planning for growth in the state. The act broadly sought to protect agricultural lands, environmentally sensitive lands, and natural areas from the pressures of development, instead directing growth to locations of higher density, thought more suitable to the long-term objectives of the public welfare. An added benefit of these efforts, of course, was the protection of taxpayers from financial strains of sprawling infrastructure.

Through growth management, state and local governments aim to "influence the characteristics of growth – its rate, amount, type, location, and quality – in order to enhance the positive impacts and

limit the negative ones” (Godschalk et al. 1979, x). Ultimately, such actions seek to acknowledge private property rights, while promoting public goals, such as minimizing the fiscal impacts of new growth, protecting the natural environment, and encouraging the continuation of the current standard of living of the community. Measures have been adopted at the state, regional, and local level around the nation to this end. Nelson and Peterman have argued that such programs offer advantages taxpayers (in the form of more efficient delivery of public facilities and services, thus lower costs per unit of delivery), to developers (in the form of greater certainty in permitting decisions related to location and scale), and to citizen activists (in the form of proactive resolution of development problems) (Nelson & Peterman 2000, 280).

The Florida Growth Management Act drew upon policies of consistency, concurrency, and compact development in order to balance growth pressures with environmental and natural resource protection. Ben-Zadok proposes that each policy dominated the implementation of the GMA for a period of time (Ben-Zadok 2005). The regulation of consistency served to organize the planning structure of the act. It required local plans to be consistent with local zoning, regional initiatives, and state level policy and granted the Department of Community Affairs with enforcement powers over these local plans. This top down approach was largely prescriptive and, despite tensions with local governments and developers, generally regarded as successful in reaching compliance (Ben-Zadok 2005). Concurrency, which required adequate public facilities be available concurrently with the impacts of new development, aimed to control growth and development by mandating the construction and funding of sanitary sewer, solid waste, drainage, potable water, transport, and parks and recreation to accommodate a minimum level-of-service. These concurrency requirements were later expanded to include schools. Finally, the GMA encouraged compact development to direct growth into urban areas of mixed land uses, primarily through the construction of transportation infrastructure, in an attempt to limit urban and suburban sprawl.



In removing the transportation and schools concurrency requirement of the GMA and dismantling the DCA, ending its influence over consistency in land use decisions across the state, Scott argued that the agency and act were a “job killer” (Dunkelberg 2011). Over a chorus of objections from former Governor Bob Graham and environmental groups, state legislators and Scott acquiesced to the demands of anti-regulation and business lobbying interests, including the Florida Chamber of Commerce and Associated Industries of Florida (Dunelberg 2011; Pelham 2014). Indeed, frequently in the discourse surrounding growth management, opponents hold that regulation “unnecessarily interferes with processes better left to the land market” and fails to produce “a net benefit for the public at large” (Carruthers 2002). For his part, Florida State Senator Mike Bennett, a Bradenton developer who spearheaded HB7207, accused DCA and the GMA of suffering ‘mission creep,’ “as state bureaucrats piled on more rules, hampering developers’ freedom to boost the economy” (Pittman 2011).

The Community Planning Act, as HB7207 commonly called, altered the way that growth management was practiced in several ways. Its stated function was to protect the “traditional economic bases of the state” (including agriculture, tourism, and military presence), to promote workforce development, and to encourage economic diversification (Barsh et al. 2011). The bill sought to shift discretion to local governments, land owners, and developers and eliminate transportation, school, and park concurrency requirements at the state level (Barsh et al. 2011). Further, the bill removed the Department of Community Affairs from the top of the pyramid, cuttings its staff and reorganizing the remnants of the “State Land Planning Agency” into a component (tasked with local government planning assistance) of the newly created Department of Economic Opportunity (Barsh et al. 2011; Pittman 2011). The DEO’s purpose, rather than to direct or control growth, is to provide incentives for new planning initiatives and economic development (Barsh et al. 2011). Among the 349 page documents most important planning provisions were:

- Comprehensive plan amendments are no longer required to be consistent with the State Comprehensive Plan;
- Rule 9J-5 (which provided state guidelines for local comprehensive plans and implementation rules) was repealed and replaced with less prescriptive provisions incorporated into Chapter 163;
- Local governments choosing to continue transportation concurrency must now comply with “new criteria for proportionate-share contributions and construction for development orders (including DRIs), rezonings, and land use development permits”;
- For those items of infrastructure still subject to concurrency requirements, the Level of Service requirements may now be “reasonably met” through capital improvement planning which may extend beyond five years, eliminating the “financial feasibility” requirement;
- Finally, land use “need” as determined through long range planning will now constitute the floor for determining land use allocations, rather than the cap (Barsh et al. 2011).

Reactions within Florida as to the extent of the fallout have been mixed. One local planner in Alachua County was quoted in a local newspaper following the passage of HB7207 as saying: "It's going to put a lot more responsibility as well as discretion on the local governments and their communities to decide how they want to plan to address these issues. How it plays out in the state is going to depend

on how local governments and communities deal with that responsibility" (Dunkelberg 2011). Indeed, some private-industry planners have cast the change as an opportunity. In a piece in the American Planning Association's monthly publication, James A. Sellen, Executive Vice President of Planning and Design at VHB MillerSellen, argued that the GMA at times encouraged the very things it was intended to prevent:

"I have seen, firsthand, how the growth management process actually encouraged the sprawl it was supposed to prevent, by creating a process that failed to distinguish between quality and quantity. That process made it more profitable for large landowners to upzone small parcels of land and to develop them off piecemeal, rather than run the bureaucratic gauntlet of a state review for a larger planned community. The result was the proliferation of small, walled subdivisions pouring hundreds of cars a day onto increasingly dangerous arterial roads" (Sellen 2011).

Many Floridians, however, have acknowledged HB7207 as a ploy to eliminate an agency that once served as "the traffic cop pulling over reckless drivers on the highway to Florida's future" (Pittman 2011). Following the bill's passage, the Tampa Bay Times published an obituary for the "imperfect but noble effort to protect Florida from selfishness and greed" (Tampa Bay Times Editorial Staff 2011). The obituary argued that the GMA's enemies, "developers who did not want to pay their fair share; legislators who railed against government regulation; local officials who were too cozy with builders and land-use lawyers," capitalized on the economic recession and demonized the bill in an effort to remove "virtually all of [DCA's] oversight of development and its authority to require developers to help pay for roads, schools and parks... [turning] the clock back three decades" (Tampa Bay Times Editorial Staff 2011). As evidence, the staff argued that the Department of Community Affairs approved changes to county plans to allow for more than 1 million new residential units and 2.7 billion square feet of commercial development over the agency's final four years, a period characterized by critics as

particularly difficult to work with DCA. With the mortgage crisis and economic recession, much of this additional capacity had yet to be built at the time of DCA's dismantling (Tampa Bay Times Editorial Staff 2011). The anti-growth management lobby had successfully convinced state legislators that the DCA was the bogeyman¹.

Among some elements of the planning community, the response has been equally as condemning. As executive director of 1000 Friends of Florida, Charles Pattison argued, "When you consider adjacent communities with a common road, for example, one may decide concurrency is necessary, while the other opts out. How can such a network possible work, both from a practical and equity standpoint?" (Pittman 2011).

Two-time Secretary of the Department of Community Affairs, Tom Pelham, a frequent target for criticism of both the GMA and DCA, did not mince words: With the passage of HB7207, Florida had effectively "committed planning suicide" (Pelham 2014). By Pelham's appraisal, the Florida Growth Management Act was a forty year experiment which can be credited with prompting nearly 480 local governments to adopt comprehensive plans in compliance with-state endorsed planning principals, shifting land use decision-making processes to be quasi-judicial rather than legislative acts (via judicial interpretation of the law), putting planning before regulation, and making the comprehensive plan "the constitution" of land use law in Florida (Pelham 2014). He did not, however, believe the system to be one without problems. In a talk given in early 2014 to law students at Georgia State University, Pelham acknowledged that the performance of state-level actors in the execution of the GMA had been mixed. The state legislature failed to fund (or even allow local government a means of raising funds) necessary measures to properly implement concurrency requirements (Pelham 2014). The executive branch was inconsistent and, at times, indifferent to providing leadership on the GMA, with governors in a few cases

¹ Bogeyman is a term actually used to describe DCA by the former president of the Associated Industries of Florida, Barney Bishop.

directly acting against the intent of law (Pelham 2014). Even DCA, itself, failed to monitor local plan amendments closely enough during some periods, approving far too many amendments (Pelham 2014).

According to Pelham, what brought about the dismantling of the Florida Growth Management act was a "perfect political storm" in the 2010 elections (Pelham 2014). The Hometown Democracy movement, prompted by the already loose oversight of DCA, inadvertently eroded public support for the GMA when they succeeded in getting an immensely unpopular measure on the ballot in 2010 to initiate referenda on all changes to DCA-approved growth plans within a community (Pittman 2011). Though the measure was soundly defeated following a well-financed opposition campaign, prior to the election it caused a rush on an understaffed and "overwhelmed" DCA office to amend plans, which ultimately led the plan amendment process to appear "cumbersome" and "contentious" (Pelham 2014). Simultaneously, the Senate President and Speaker of the House, "who proclaimed themselves to be leading the most conservative legislature in the history of Florida" and who were ideologically opposed to planning more generally, dedicated themselves to abolishing the GMA (Pelham 2014). Governor Rick Scott, riding the tide of the Tea Party movement into office and campaigning heavily against the GMA, essentially allowed lobbyists from the Florida Chamber of Commerce to rewrite the GMA and hastily dismantle DCA with no study (as had been the long planning tradition in the state), no transparency, and no bipartisanship (Pelham 2014).

Thus with the arguments for and against HB7207 detailed, we will turn our attention to the Florida Growth Management Act, itself. First the history of growth management in Florida will briefly be reviewed and the literature consulted regarding the GMA's successes and failures in Florida. The remainder of this paper will then explore whether the act (1) created impacts which limited sprawl and contributed to the conservation of valuable agricultural and natural resources and (2) significantly negatively impacted the economic health of the state. Finally, we will draw conclusions from our analysis as to the veracity of the claims of Gov. Rick Scott, State Senator Mike Bennett, and Barney

Bishop that the GMA constituted an obstacle to economic growth in the state and had outlived its usefulness.

The History of Growth Management in Florida²

While Florida's legislative history had several earlier acts which laid a foundation, including the Environmental and Water Management Act of 1972 (credited with creating the Developments of Regional Impact (DRI) review), the Water Resources Act of 1972, and the Land Conservation Act of 1972, a program of growth management in the state of Florida began in earnest with the passage of the Local Government Comprehensive Planning Act of 1975 (LGCPA) (Weitz 1999, 44-46). The LGCPA mandated the adoption of comprehensive plans by all Florida municipalities and counties. After more than a decade of rapid growth, the 1972 Florida legislature had authorized the creation of the Environmental Land Management Study (ELMS), a study group tasked with exploring policy directions for the state's land and water management as well as implementation of the DRI review (Weitz 1999, 44). By 1974, ELMS determined that less than 40 percent of the state's land area was subject to a comprehensive planning program and, therefore, proposed a law requiring every city and county to adopt a comprehensive plan within three years (Weitz 1999, 45). After rejecting a similar bill the prior year, in 1975 the Florida Legislature voted "overwhelmingly" in favor of the adoption of the LGCPA, "which was at the time probably the most comprehensive piece of local planning legislation ever enacted in this country" (Weitz 1999, 45; Pelham 2007, 8).³ The LGCPA required complete comprehensive plans to contain nine elements (including future land use), to be consistent with local land development regulations, and to be formally adopted by July 1, 1979 (Weitz 1999, 46).

² This history of Florida's Growth Management efforts is not intended to be a comprehensive cataloging of all planning-related legislation, but instead notes the most important pieces of legislation impacting the growth management program over nearly four decades in the state.

³ Unlike the 1974 bill, the 1975 LGCPA removed \$50 million in state aid to local governments to finance local planning efforts.

While the 1975 act gave the Division of State Planning the authority to review and comment on local plans, it did not grant the agency the power to alter or reject local plans that were found to be inconsistent with statutory requirements, nor any enforcement mechanism to guarantee that a plan was adopted or implemented at all (Pelham 2007, 9). Further, while consistency was referenced in the legislation, local plans were not required to be consistent with state or regional plans (Weitz 1999, 46). Consequently, the quality of comprehensive plans developed under the LGCPA varied greatly and some local governments failed to “take the LGCPA very seriously” (Pelham 2007, 9).

By the early 1980s, it became apparent that the LGCPA’s implementation was falling short of its goals and required an overhaul. The Governor’s Resource Management Task Force reported to Governor Bob Graham that the weaknesses in the 1970s legislation were resulting in weak local planning (Weitz 1999, 65). Similarly, a 1981 study conducted by DCA found that most local plans were still inadequate to address problems related to growth (Weitz 1999, 67). The Florida legislature responded by reorganizing and strengthening the state’s regional planning councils (RPCs) through the Regional Planning Council Act. Governor Graham followed the tradition set a decade earlier by appointing the second Environmental Land Management Study Committee (ELMS II) in 1982 (Pelham 2007, 9). Finding an absence of strong state and regional plans, inadequate funding, a lack consistency requirements or minimum quality standards, ELMSII recommended the creation of “an integrated statewide planning framework that would include a legislatively adopted state plan to be implemented through state agency functional plans, regional plans, and greatly strengthened local government comprehensive plans” (Weitz 1999, 68; Pelham 2007, 9). Finally, in 1984, Florida passed the State and Regional Planning Act, which required the governor’s office to complete a state comprehensive plan (composed of goals and policies) and the RPCs to complete comprehensive regional plans and review local plans for consistency (Weitz 1999, 68).

What followed in 1985 was a watershed moment in the history of growth management. The Florida legislature approved two major acts that would shape the state growth for the next 25 years: the State Comprehensive Planning Act and the Omnibus Growth Management Act (alternatively called the Local Government Comprehensive Planning and Land Development Regulation Act). The State Comprehensive Planning Act, a fulfillment of the State and Regional Planning Act, adopted by statute the State Comprehensive Plan. The State Comprehensive Plan was a “direction-setting document” that contained some 27 goals for the state’s environmental, economic, and land use policies (Pelham 2007, 9). Florida’s eleven RPCs were further required to adopt comprehensive policy plans that were consistent with the approved state plan (Pelham 2007, 9). The real boost to Florida’s growth management credentials, though, came with the Omnibus Growth Management Act (GMA).

The GMA codified what DCA Secretary John DeGrove called “the three Cs” (Weitz 1999, 70).⁴ First, the act required local governments to adopt revised comprehensive plans that were consistent with regional and state plans. The local governments were further required to implemented land development regulations that were themselves consistent with the local comprehensive plans. For its part, DCA was charged with reviewing and approving these plans for consistency. If local governments failed to comply with the GMA’s directives, including late submission of the local plan, internal inconsistency, or inconsistency with state or regional plans, state funds could be withheld and the RPC would be directed to develop an alternate comprehensive plan (Weitz 1999, 71).

The GMA also stipulated an additional requirement that local governments prepare a capital improvements element to ensure adequate public facilities were available for all new development. Adequate public facilities, referred to as concurrency in Florida, obligated local governments to ensure

⁴ The third “C” – Compact Development – was not meaningfully implemented until the 1990s. The 1989 DCA amendment to Rule 9J-5 loosely defined urban sprawl, providing local communities little guidance. Plans for Charlotte and Citrus counties, however, “were rejected by DCA secretary Thomas Pelham for promoting urban and rural sprawl” (Ben-Zadok 2005, 2180).

that specified types of infrastructure were provided at a minimum level-of-service (LOS) standard appropriate to accommodate projected growth. Local governments were prohibited from issuing development permits that would reduce LOS below these minimum standards. The GMA, further clarified under the 1986 Glitch Bill, assigned to the DCA the task of developing state-wide concurrency requirements, which were adopted under an amendment to Rule 9J-5 in 1989, creating the Concurrency Management System (CMS), an enforcement tool monitored by DCA (Ben-Zadok 2005, 2175).

Capital improvement programs identified six types of public facilities that were subject to concurrency requirements: transport, sanitary sewer, solid waste, drainage, potable water, and parks and recreation (Ben-Zadok 2005, 2176). With no state funding dedicated to ensuring concurrency, the burden of implementing these requirements fell to local governments, who relied upon a number of funding mechanisms (including impact fees, local option sales taxes, and fuel taxes) in attempting to generate the necessary revenue to pay for improvement projects (Ben-Zadok 2005, 2176). As developers could be denied building permits in instances where facilities were inadequate, the cost of improvements were capitalized in land values or passed along to developers through requirements to pay concurrency fees “as a prerequisite for permits”(Ben-Zadok 2005, 2176). Though the consistency requirements are generally regarded as top-down and prescriptive, DCA signaled a greater willingness to negotiate on the timing and locations of adequate public facilities:

“When the DCA adopted Rule 9J-5 in 1989, it provided a two-step answer that practically invited state-local level negotiation over timing periods. The first step was classification of three categories for facilities complying with concurrency requirements. Category I included four facilities closely linked to public health and safety: water, sewer, waste and drainage. Category II was reserved for less critical facilities: recreation and open space. Category III contained the most costly and complex facility: roads. The second step was the provision of multiple timing-points for the availability of facilities...The timing-points for availability of facilities in Category I were: when a development permit is issued; or guaranteed in the permit to be in place when the impact of development will occur; or must be under construction when the permit is issued; or must be guaranteed in a developer’s agreement including one or more of the above provisions. Category II required a commencement of construction within one year from the date of issuance of a development permit. Category III could be satisfied by meeting the timing-points for either the first or second category, or by adopting a financially feasible five-year

capital improvement program that provides for the construction of facilities by the third year” (Ben-Zadok 2005, 2177, 2186).

In 1991, Florida’s then Governor Lawton Chiles commissioned ELMS III to review the progress in growth management and particularly “whether the state’s land use laws were working, and more specifically, Florida’s record with respect to containing urban sprawl, protecting farm and forest lands, and promoting affordable housing” (Weitz 1999, 93). Out of this study came a number of provisions which were incorporated into the Growth Management Act of 1993.⁵ Among these new provisions were mandatory biennial review and revision of the act, the addition of a growth management provision to the state plan, the further redefinition of the RPCs role in “cross-acceptance” processes to resolve conflicts between local and regional plans that was to phase out DRIs, and stricter requirements for the implementation of intergovernmental coordination, called Intergovernmental Coordination Elements (ICE), aimed at replacing DRIs (Weitz 1999, 96). The changes calling for the elimination of DRIs, however, proved controversial and were repealed just two years later (Pelham 2007, 11). In 1995, an additional step was taken to strengthen the GMA in 1995, when a voluntary version of school concurrency was established by the legislature (Ben-Zadok 2005, 2176).

In 1997, Florida took a more discretionary approach to compact development. The Governor’s Commission for Sustainable South Florida set out to determine a method for the restoration of ecosystems and promotion of sustainable economies (Weitz 1999, 98). Upon the commission’s recommendations, the Florida legislature enacted the Florida Sustainable Communities Demonstration Project, which designated Boca Raton, Martin County, Ocala, Orlando, and Tampa/Hillsborough County as pilot projects (Weitz 1999, 99). In order to promote sustainable communities and encourage compact development, the communities were directed to adhere to six principles: “limited urban sprawl, healthy and clean environment, restoration of ecosystems, protection of wildlife and natural areas, efficient use

⁵ The act included 130 of 174 of ELMS III recommendations.

of land and other resources, and creation of quality communities and jobs” (Ben-Zadok 2005, 2181). Functionally, these directives manifest themselves in the institution of an urban development boundary (Weitz 1999, 99). As an incentive to these communities, the local governments were then exempted from all state and regional reviews (Ben-Zadock 2005, 2182). Building in this tradition, the Local Government Comprehensive Planning Certificate Program enabled communities showing a strong commitment to good planning practices to operate with less state and regional oversight of their comprehensive plans (Ben-Zadock 2003, 32).

Following the well-worn path of the previous three ELMS commissions, in 2000, Governor Jeb Bush created the Growth Management Study Commission, whose results were to be delivered in early 2001⁶ (Pelham 2007, 11). The GMSC proposed deep cuts in the oversight authority over local comprehensive plans, but these politically unpopular recommendations were never enacted. Proposals for expanded coordination of land use policies with school facilities and potable water supply, however, did pass through the legislature (Pelham 2007, 11).

Finally, in 2005 the Florida Legislature undertook one last major revision to the GMA. According to the Tom Pelham, “the need to address Florida’s long neglected, overburdened, and underfunded infrastructure system resonated with some legislative leaders who demanded that the state face up to this responsibility” (Pelham 2007, 11). The act allocated nearly \$1.5 billion dollars in infrastructure funding and \$750 million in recurring funding, by far the largest allocation of funding in the GMA’s history (Pelham 2007, 11). This allotment, however, was primarily slated for investment in the state road system and did little to offset the \$30 to \$50 billion dollar infrastructure investment backlog (Pelham 2007, 11). In a nod to the development community, the legislature also ordered a shift in concurrency requirements to a proportionate fair share (or “pay as you grow”) (Pelham 2007, 11). The proportionate

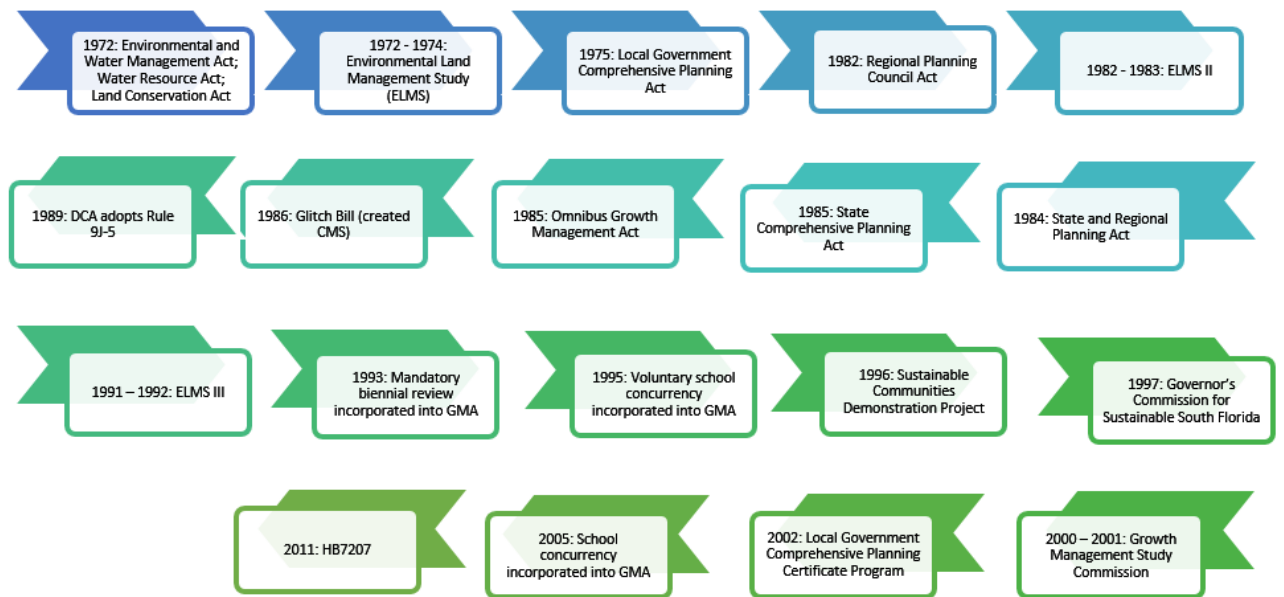
⁶ It is interesting to note that Governor Bush, a Republican, opted not to call the commission ELMS IV in the style of his Democratic predecessors, but did carry on the tradition of conducting a study every ten years.

fair share system allowed developers to receive development permits by paying a proportionate share of costs needed for transportation and school improvements relative to their development, rather than ensuring that the total revenue to construct the improvement was in place (Pelham 2007, 11). Simultaneously, the law brought both schools and water supply facilities under the umbrella of concurrency requirements and established financial feasibility requirements for local comprehensive plans (Pelham 2007, 12). While such an expansion would ordinarily be viewed as a victory by growth management advocates, these new requirements were again enacted without the identification of a new funding source. In fact, an effort to loosen referendum requirements on existing local taxing sources was flatly rejected by the Governor and Legislature (Pelham 2007, 12).

Most recently, a new model of growth management has emerged in the state through the Optional Sector Planning (OSP) approach, which operates under the premise that “new development is desirable and should be accommodated, but only after first considering the region’s goals of land conservation, efficient infrastructure provision, energy use, affordable housing, and neighborhood design” (Chapin 2012, 13). The OSP approach targets large tracts of land, typically 15,000 acres or more, and through a process of stakeholder engagement, hashes out a conceptual long-term buildout overlay with the intention of creating a more sustainable outcome than would be achieved through incremental development (Chapin 2012, 13). Utilizing transect planning, a long-range vision is established for the tract, including the demarcating of conservation areas and identification of needs for infrastructure investment and green infrastructure systems (Chapin 2012, 13). The land use vision is then used to create a detailed specific area plan (DSAP) describing the property’s development program (Chapin 2012, 13).

As this section has demonstrated, Florida’s growth management program has developed through a process of evaluation and refinement over a thirty year period. Both Weitz and Ben-Zadock additionally noted that that this development has been characterized by a shift from top-down,

prescriptive approach, heavily controlled by state-level interests typical of Second Wave growth management efforts, to a more decentralized and discretionary system where a greater degree of deference was granted to local governments and developers in decision making, as was the practice in planning in the Third Wave (Weitz 1999; Ben-Zadock, 2005). The GMA thus reflected a combination of top-down and discretionary approaches when HB7207 was introduced to remove many of the last vestiges of state control.



Literature Review

As a pioneering piece of legislation, the Florida Growth Management Act has been watched with a great degree of interest by both planning practitioners and researchers across the country. Consequently, a significant body of literature has emerged to evaluate the effectiveness of its initiatives and outcomes. In what follows, the most pertinent of these studies are highlighted.

Sanchez and Mandle explored the Florida GMA's success in encouraging compact development. The study drew upon historical trends in residential development densities to proxy for types of land use attributed to population growth: dense, contiguous, urban, or in-fill type (Sanchez & Mandle 2007, 86). The authors isolated residential development due to its strong influence on urban form, particularly along the urban fringe (Sanchez & Mandle 2007, 86). Drawing on census tract level data from the previous four censuses (1970, 1980, 1990, and 2000), population densities were classified as urban, suburban, exurban, and rural development and used to track changes over time (Sanchez & Mandle 2007, 86). The analysis demonstrated that the land area of urban, suburban, and exurban development expanded significantly during the period for 1970 to 2000, at 119 percent, 165 percent, and 80 percent, respectively (Sanchez & Mandle 2007, 90). Over that same period the quantity of rural lands declined by over 5,400 square miles. Interestingly, while the study reported that low density area population growth fell from 3.6 percent annually in the "pre-growth management urban containment state" (1970 to 1990) to 2.0 percent in the "post-growth management stage" (1990 to 2000), high density land use population growth fell more dramatically from 4.1 percent annually to 2.0 percent (Sanchez & Mandle 2007, 90). The research also revealed the only 18 counties in the post-GM era added high-density development more rapidly than low-density development as opposed to 15 counties in the pre-GM era (Sanchez & Mandle 2007, 91). "It appears," Sanchez and Mandle reasoned, "that growth management has not encourage Florida's metropolitan areas to increase the rate of development at densities of

greater than 3,000 persons per square miles, but that growth management may have been the cause of the decline in the rate of development densities between 300 and 3,000 persons per square mile” (Sanchez & Mandle 2007, 98). The act’s result appears to have been the slowing, rather than prevention of sprawl.

Boarnet et al assessed the GMA’s impact of altering patterns of urban growth. The study carried out a bidirectional growth model to explore equilibrium densities in Florida during three periods of the Growth Management Act (1982-87, 87-92, and 92-97). Boarnet and his team found that the policy led to lower population densities at equilibrium, but adjustment to these lower densities occurred at a gradual pace. The casual observes, thus, may notice the change in adjustment speed, but not the ultimately lower equilibrium densities. The results suggested spillover effect with early-adopting communities forcing development to those municipalities with more lax regulations. As developers are reluctant to provide adequate infrastructure for new development in new cities to meet concurrency requirements, they instead push into areas of excess capacity, typically on the urban fringe. Further, the study noted lower employment densities at equilibrium. The authors contended that “land use conducive to employment, such as commercial and industrial developments, require less supporting infrastructure and therefore are less affected by concurrency requirements, and because developers might also have refocused their projects from residential to commercial and industrial land uses” (Boarnet et al. 2011, 249). The study’s authors postulate that Florida’s GMA may have contributed to residential urban sprawl, rather than discourage it.

A 2003 study by Jerry Anthony examined the effects of Florida’s Growth Management Act on housing affordability. The GMA required governments to complete comprehensive plans that met certain measures of consistency, concurrency, and comprehensiveness. If local governments failed to comply with the act, the Florida state government could withhold funding and impose its own development plan. As such, growth management can reduce affordability in four ways: 1) it can restrict

the conversion of non-urban land; 2) it can require the payment of development/impact fees, which are absorbed into land prices; 3) it can require higher development standard; and 4) it can slow the permitting process (Anthony 2003). The literature indicates that growth management regulations in California, Missouri, New Jersey, and across a number of MSAs have led to increases in housing prices (Anthony 2003). Using both a simple and composite housing affordability index, the study found a statistically significant and negative effect of the GMA on reduced housing affordability (Anthony 2003). Population increases also had a strong negative effect on housing affordability, but house size did not (Anthony 2003). The GMA anticipated these impacts on housing and required housing for low- and moderate-income families as components of the comprehensive plan (Anthony 2003). Anthony concluded that the GMA fails both efficiency (modified Pareto optimality) and equity tests, but can still be credited with bringing about shifts in development practices across the state, which were once entirely insensitive to the quality of natural and urban environments (Anthony 2003). While the GMA has led to increased social inequity, this could be rectified with modification or addition of policies, including minimum zoning densities (Anthony 2003).

Noting that growth management has ceased to generate the same level of attention in the academic and professional literature that it once demanded, but still remain “extremely popular, especially in California,” John Landis examined the efficacy and effects of growth management (or as he titles them, local growth control and management (LGC&M) programs) across California local government. By comparing census data on municipalities engaged in growth management through a number of different programs, he concluded that certain types of programs, including residential caps, annexation controls, and voter-enacted supermajority approval requirement, do limit population growth in cities that adopt them (Landis 2008, 420). While annexation limits and super-majority requirements lead to a decrease in housing construction, urban growth boundaries instead redistribute growth within the boundary (Landis 2008, 420). Further analysis indicated that by limiting new housing construction,

local governments negatively impact housing affordability (Landis 2008, 424). Supply constraints were found to be one of a number of determinants of local housing price levels and not necessarily the most important (Landis 2008, 424). Looking at changes in spatial patterns of urban development between 1990 and 1998, Landis constructed a statistical model to predict subsequent development of undeveloped one-hectare grid cells. His model revealed that 1) sites within incorporated areas were “much more likely to be developed” than those in unincorporated areas, 2) sites in cities with urban growth boundaries and housing caps were more likely to have been developed, and 3) sites located adjacent to cities with housing caps or urban growth boundaries were more likely to be developed indicating a displacement effect that is “not particularly large...but is both noticeable and significant” (Landis 2008, 426). Taken together his findings indicate that growth management programs have a modest impact on local growth rates and growth patterns as well as housing prices (Landis 2008, 427).

Arthur ‘Chris’ Nelson and David Peterman proposed that growth management could, in fact, improve a local communities economic performance and , therefore, be more competitive than communities that do not engage in such policies. To test this hypothesis they compared the shift in market share of economic activity (defined as personal income) across 182 mid-sized metropolitan statistical areas ranging in population from 100,000 to 500,000⁷ from 1972 to 1992 (Nelson & Peterson 2000, 281). The study identified 26 of those MSAs as participating in “reasonably rigorous growth-management programs,” using location in Oregon, having had growth management practices in place since 1982, and those identified through a national survey of MPOs as criteria (Nelson & Peterson 2000, 281). Ordinary least squares regression analysis was performed to identify the amount of variation attributable to the presence of growth management programs, controlling for a number of additional variables, including region of the country, personal income share in 1972 (relative to other MSAs in the

⁷ As measured in 1990.

study), the share of the local income from the manufacturing of durable goods, proximity to major metropolitan areas, if the state was a Right-to-Work state, the length of time since the MSA was designated as such, and the central cities share of the MSA's urbanized land area (Nelson & Peterson 2000). The adjusted R-squared for the model had a value of .628, indicating a "moderately high level of explanation over the overall model" (Nelson & Peterson 2000, 283). The model showed that growth management was statistically significant and accounted for a 1.0 point improvement in market share of personal income (Nelson & Peterson 2000, 283). These results suggest that growth management "may account for about one percent or more of the change in an MSA's share of aggregate MSA personal income" and have a beneficial impact on the economy of a community (Nelson & Peterson 2000, 283-284).

Assessing the impact of the GMA on economic development outcomes in the state, Tim Chapin looked at how Florida's economy and largest cities fared during the GMA's initial implementation. Questions have been raised about the impacts of state-mandated growth management on economic development and particularly whether concurrency requirements would hinder the state's economy and central city revitalization (Chapin 2007, 119). Chapin's analysis revealed that Florida's population grew 23.5% (3 million people) during the 1990s or about 178% of the national growth rate (Chapin 2007, 119). Simultaneously, Florida's added 1.6 million new jobs and employment climbed 34.9%, a rate that is 159% of the national average over that same period (Chapin 2007, 119). "Even after the onset of growth management," Chapin argued, "the growth machine that is Florida continued to add people and jobs at rates the envy of most states" (Chapin 2007, 123). While Florida job creation and payroll increases continued to outpace the national average, median household income increased less rapidly and poverty rates declined less significantly than other states in the nation (Chapin 2007, 125).⁸ The study

⁸ Chapin attributes this fact to Florida's economic reliance on tourism and entertainment, which "pay less and offer fewer benefits than other industries" (Chapin 2007, 125).

also found that Florida's largest cities were experiencing lower rates of population growth and performed more poorly on key economic health indicators than the rest of the state and nation (Chapin 2007, 129). These trends, however, showed improvement in the period from 1990 to 2000 over the pre-growth management era. Despite the GMA's impacts on managing growth, its effect was not limiting, with both population and employment growth continuing "unabated" during the post-growth management era of appraisal (Chapin 2007, 137).

Investigating whether attitudes regarding growth management change over time, Chapin and Robert Connerly assessed Floridians' sentiments about the GMA at two points in time, 1985 and 2001. The analysis found that in 2001, Florida residents continued to support for growth management efforts (67.7 percent), but at a lower level than in 1985 (71.8 Percent) (Chapin & Connerly 2004, 444). The broad base of support that once existed for growth management in Florida, however, had eroded by 2001, with support varying greatly between population groups (Chapin & Connerly 2004, 443). Support among white Floridians grew slightly to 74.3 percent (previously 71.8 percent), while support among black Floridians declined sharply to 57.5 percent (71.9 percent) (Chapin & Connerly 2004, 445). People under 30 years of age were found to be decreasingly supportive (55.7 percent) as opposed to older age brackets (66.8 - 72.3 percent), a discrepancy that was not nearly as pronounced in 1985 (Chapin & Connerly 2004, 446). Support among high-income households climbed to 76.4 percent in in 2001, while falling to 59.4 percent in low-income households, a 10.2 percent decrease from 1985 (Chapin & Connerly 2004, 446). In 2001, support was actually higher among Republicans (71.1 percent) than Democrats (67.0 percent) (Chapin & Connerly 2004, 446). Public support for government intervention in growth management had also declined across all population subgroups over the period of assessment (Chapin & Connerly 2004, 443). Remarkably, over two-thirds of Florida residents reported a lack of familiarity with the state's growth management system in 2001 (Chapin & Connerly 2004, 450). Chapin and Connerly concluded "while changing conditions have contributed to a decline in support

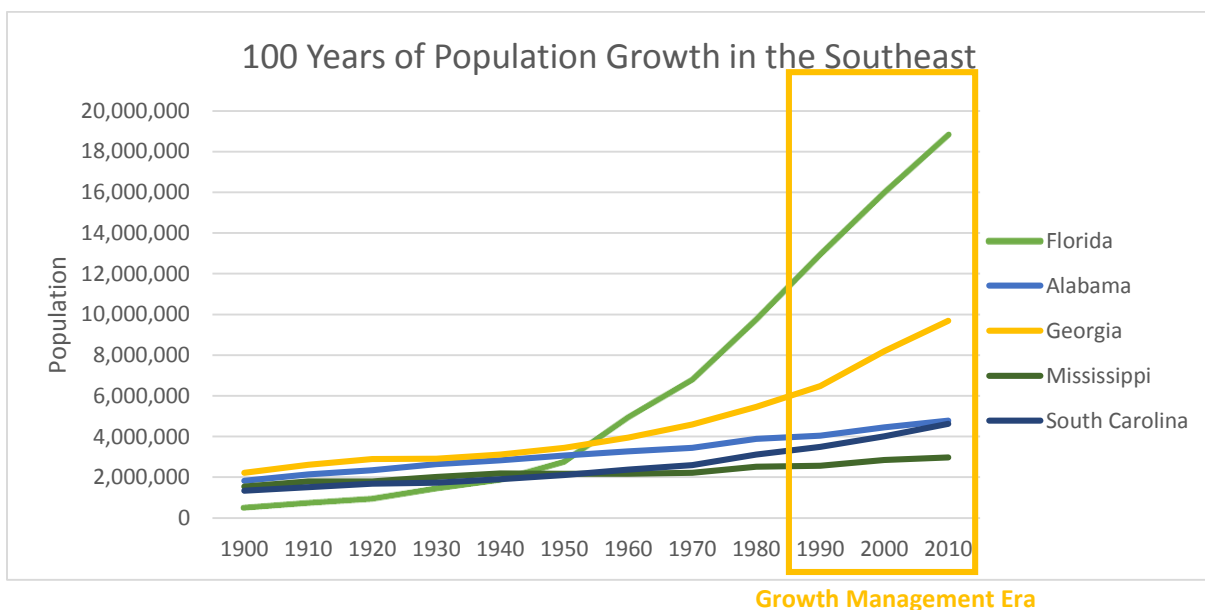
government intervention and a narrowing of the constituency of growth management to one that is less representative of the state's residents, growth issues remain of great importance to citizens in the state" (Chapin & Connerly 2004, 452).

In a special edition of the Journal of the American Planning Association, Chapin reviewed the literature to assess major trends shaping local and state growth management efforts. Drawing from the work of Weitz and former Florida DCA secretary John DeGrove, Chapin defined four eras of growth management: Era of Growth Controls (1950 – 1975), Era of Comprehensive Planning (1975-2000), Era of Smart Growth (1999 – Present), and Era of Sustainable Growth (emerging now) (Chapin 2012). During the Era of Growth Controls, environmental degradation and loss of pristine land caused planners to view growth as a problem to be solved by limitations on the amount of growth, including boundaries for growth (Chapin 2012). In the Era of Comprehensive Planning, the scope of concerns expanded to the provision of infrastructure and its costs and was prepared for through comprehensive planning, regulation of development, and infrastructure planning (Chapin 2012). Place-making and urban economic development became additional defining issues during the Smart Growth Era, as economic incentives and infrastructure investments reflected the growing sentiment that growth is an opportunity to strengthen communities (Chapin 2012). With an increasing emphasis on climate change, energy demand, and recovery from the most recent recession, Chapin identifies an emerging new wave of growth management planning which views growth as inevitable and essential, but in need of balancing against the long-term goal of sustainability (Chapin 2012). While the basic approach appears to be a mixture of incentives and regulations, the actual policies are still emerging. Chapin identifies Florida's Optional Sector Planning as one possible model.

Growth Management Outcomes

Having reviewed the Growth Management Act’s history and the key research literature surrounding Florida’s effort and growth management more generally, the remainder of this paper will analyze the latest data on population, land use, and economic trends in the state to assess the program’s outcomes. While much has been written up to this point on the GMA’s effectiveness, the 2010 U.S. Census and additional data pulled from the most recent years of the Florida Statistical Abstract and American Communities Survey provide added clarity to the existing analysis.

Population Change in Florida



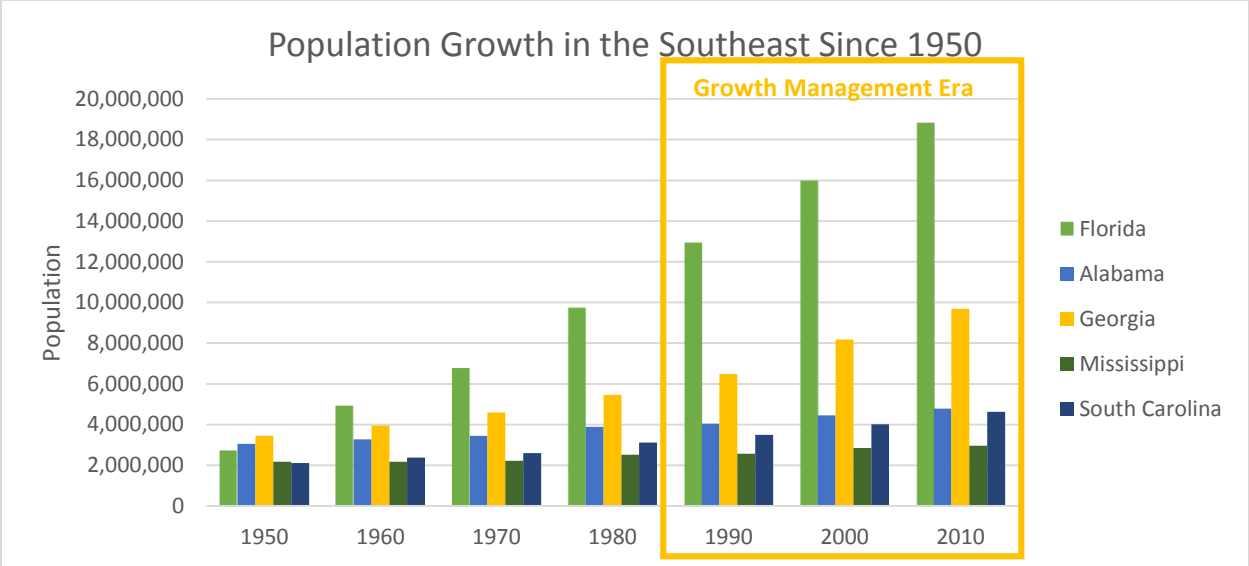
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The past century in the state of Florida has been characterized by exponential growth. At the turn of the twentieth century, Florida was one of the smaller states by population east of the Mississippi and the smallest among states in the southeast with a total population 528,542 according to the 1900 U.S. Census.⁹ Nearly two-thirds of the state’s population resided in the northern region, while another

⁹ Delaware (184,735), New Hampshire (411,588), and Vermont (343,641) all had smaller populations than Florida in 1900, but combined account for less than a third of the land area of the state with a population of almost twice the size.

quarter lived in the central region, leaving south Florida sparsely populated (Smith 2005, 3). These conditions changed rapidly over the next century, however, as several conditions fueled a transformation from a “remote outpost of the nation” to being “in the midst of international trade” (Nicholas & Chapin 2007, 53).

One important consideration in “over[coming] the climate disadvantages of subtropic summers” was the widespread adoption of economical air conditioning, which was first introduced into residential buildings during the 1920s (Nicholas & Chapin 2007, 53). Like much of the southeast, once Florida’s indoor air temperature became pleasant year round, a wave of tourists and snowbirds poured in from across the nation. In fact, by 1980, some 84% of Florida homes were air-conditioned, the highest percentage in the country at that time (Smith 2005, 9). Rapid agricultural and industrial growth, spurred by aggressive programs to drain and develop wetlands for agricultural use in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, contributed to the growing population (Walker & Salt 2006). After a series of devastating hurricanes caused flooding of agricultural land and thousands of fatalities in the late 1920s, the federal and state government undertook a number of dike/canal building and flood control projects, including the Herbert Hoover Dike and the Central and South Florida Flood Control Project, resulting in further development and untold environmental damage (Walker & Salt 2006). Finally, in the 1950s, Florida received an equally important boost in the form of federal investment in the interstate highway system. Simultaneously the development of the long-range jet aircraft made a once distant Florida easily accessible to the vacationers and retirees (Nicholas & Chapin 2007, 53).



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Taken in sum, these factors caused Florida to become one of the fastest growing states in the nation over the second half of the twentieth century. In every decade between 1920 and 2000, Florida ranked in the seven fastest growing states and most often in the top four (Smith 2005, 2).¹⁰ For the purpose of this paper, I will compare Florida against its four nearest neighbors: Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi and South Carolina. In every census period from 1900 to 1990, Florida posted a higher growth rate than its regional neighbors. In fact, in each decade until the 1980s, Florida’s rate of growth was more than twice than that of other states in the region. In the period from 1950 to 1960, Florida’s population was growing at an astounding annualized rate of 5.98%. This is over two and a half times the rate experienced by any other state in the region during any period in the past one hundred years.

¹⁰ In the period from 2000 to 2010, Florida reported the eighth highest growth rate in the nation.

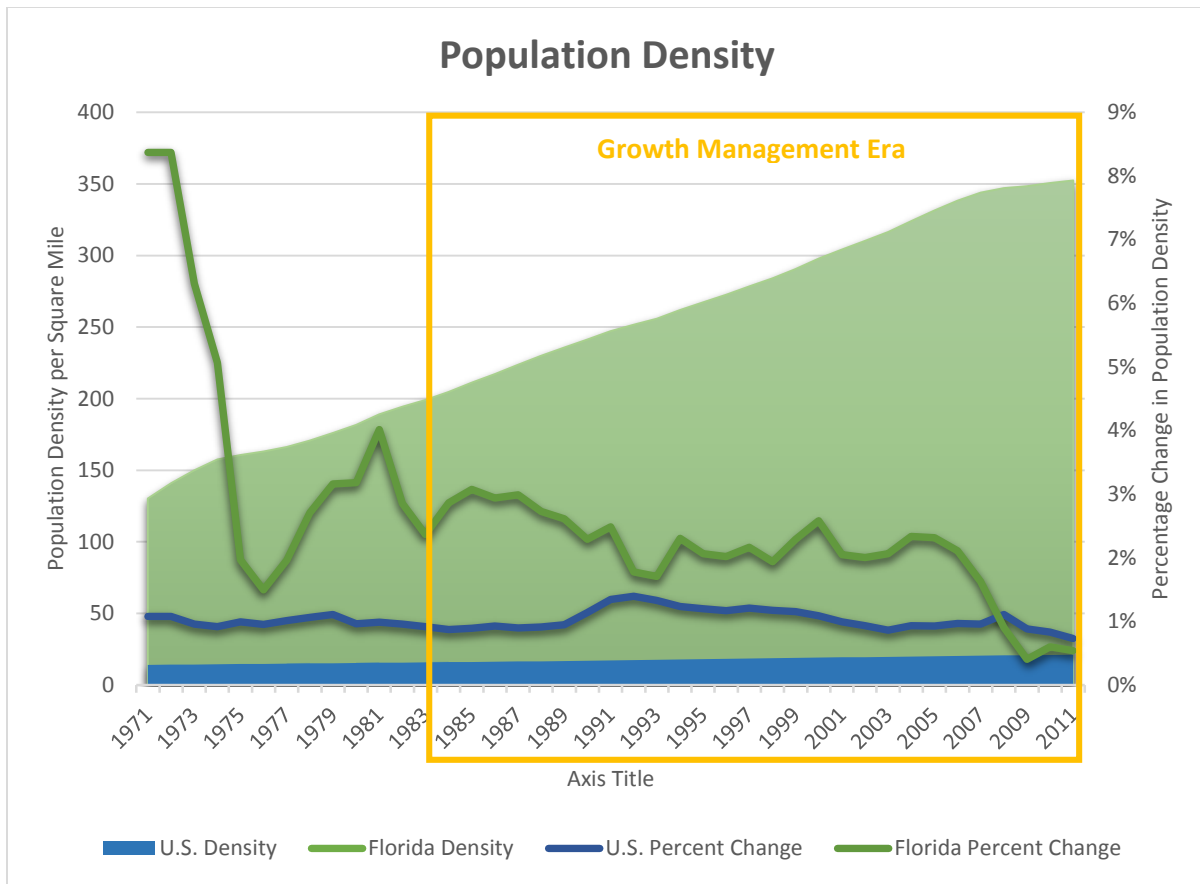
Population Growth of Southeast Region States By Decade¹¹

	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Florida	528,542	752,619	968,470	1,468,211	1,897,414	2,771,305	4,951,560	6,789,443	9,746,324	12,937,926	15,982,378	18,801,310
Annual % Growth		3.60%	2.55%	4.25%	2.60%	3.86%	5.98%	3.21%	3.68%	2.87%	2.14%	1.64%
Alabama	1,828,697	2,138,093	2,348,174	2,646,248	2,832,961	3,061,743	3,266,740	3,444,165	3,893,888	4,040,587	4,447,100	4,779,736
Annual % Growth		1.58%	0.94%	1.20%	0.68%	0.78%	0.65%	0.53%	1.23%	0.37%	0.96%	0.72%
Georgia	2,216,331	2,609,121	2,895,832	2,908,506	3,123,723	3,444,578	3,943,116	4,589,575	5,463,105	6,478,216	8,186,453	9,687,653
Annual % Growth		1.64%	1.05%	0.04%	0.72%	0.98%	1.36%	1.53%	1.76%	1.72%	2.37%	1.70%
Mississippi	1,551,270	1,797,114	1,790,618	2,009,821	2,183,796	2,178,914	2,178,141	2,216,912	2,520,638	2,573,216	2,844,658	2,967,297
Annual % Growth		1.48%	-0.04%	1.16%	0.83%	-0.02%	0.00%	0.18%	1.29%	0.21%	1.01%	0.42%
South Carolina	1,340,316	1,515,400	1,683,724	1,738,765	1,899,804	2,117,027	2,382,594	2,590,516	3,121,820	3,486,703	4,012,012	4,625,364
Annual % Growth		1.24%	1.06%	0.32%	0.89%	1.09%	1.19%	0.84%	1.88%	1.11%	1.41%	1.43%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

With the passage of Florida’s Growth Management Act in 1985, a concurrent shift can be observed in the state’s annualized growth percentages and program implementation in the 1990s and 2000s. Conveniently, implementation of the act did not occur to any significant degree until about 1990, when some 60% of Florida counties had comprehensive plans approved by DCA (Weitz 1999). Two years later, that number rose to 100% (Weitz 1999). While in the period from 1980 to 1990 Florida’s population grew on average about 2.87% per year, one decade later that number declined to 2.14% and again fell to 1.64% between 2000 and 2010. In both of the previous two decades, Georgia’s growth rate had outpaced Florida’s rate (2.37% during the 1990s and 1.70% during the 2000s). Thus, it is clear from the above figure that even though Florida’s overall population growth numbers continue to be the highest in the region, Georgia has overtaken Florida’s slowing growth rate.

¹¹ Annual % Growth represents the annualized growth rate of the previous decade.



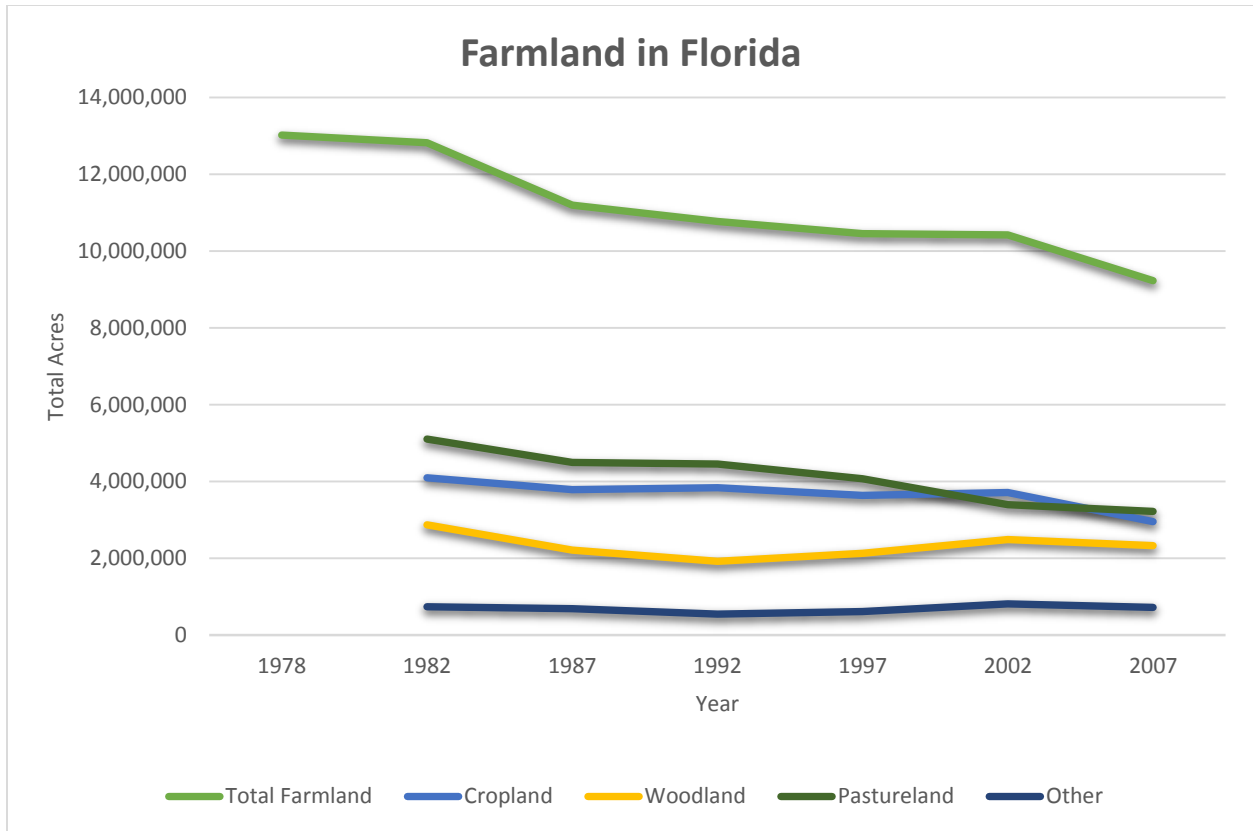
Source: Florida Statistical Abstract, The World Bank

Florida’s population density has long been much greater than the national average. In 1971, the year before the Florida legislature began passing a series of bills which would form the basis for the Florida Growth Management Act, Florida had an average density of 130 people per square mile. By contrast, the national average was just over thirty-six people per square mile. While extremely high rates of growth were experienced during the early 1970s, since the late 1970s, population density has typically increased at between two and four percent annually, with a slightly decreasing slope trajectory over that time. Beginning in 2008, Florida, which as particularly hard hit economically by a combination of the mortgage crisis and recession, posted growth rates below the national average. In 2011, the population density in Florida had reached 352 people per square mile, while the national average still stood at just fifty-five.

From this preliminary review of population statistics in Florida, two things have become clear. First, Florida's population continued to grow at a rapid rate in line with other states in the region following the passage of the Growth Management Act. While this rate was less than what was experienced, during the 1950s, 60s, and 70s, much of the inexpensive land and "federal largess that was so important to Florida's rise has ended" (Nicholas & Chapin 2007, 53). By any calculation of total population increase, however, Florida remains a regional and national leader in population growth. In order to gain a better understanding of Florida's growth relative to the region, a more detailed regression analysis will be necessary.

Farm and Environmentally Sensitive Land Conversion

One of the primary objectives in the passage of the Florida Growth Management Act was the preservation of agricultural and environmentally sensitive lands in the state. In the period from 1982 to 1987, Florida lost over 1.6 million acres of farmland. This represented a 12.6% reduction in the amount of farmland in the state. Particularly vulnerable to this conversion were woodlands and pastureland. With the passage of the GMA, the rate of farmland conversion decreased dramatically and over the fifteen years following its implementation, with less than half of the total agriculture loss over that period as occurred in the five-year period leading up to the bill's passage. The amount of agriculturally productive woodland actually increased during that era. In 2002, however, the rate of farmland loss again began to accelerate. Between 2002 and 2007, Florida saw the conversion of 1.2 million acres of agricultural lands, with nearly half of this loss coming from croplands. Though the conversion of farmland has multiple causes beyond just development pressures, including a long-term shift in U.S. economy away from its agrarian past, it is worthy of note that Florida's approach to growth management was significantly more centralized and prescriptive during the period of slower conversion than during the mid-2000s era, when farmland conversion began to again increase.

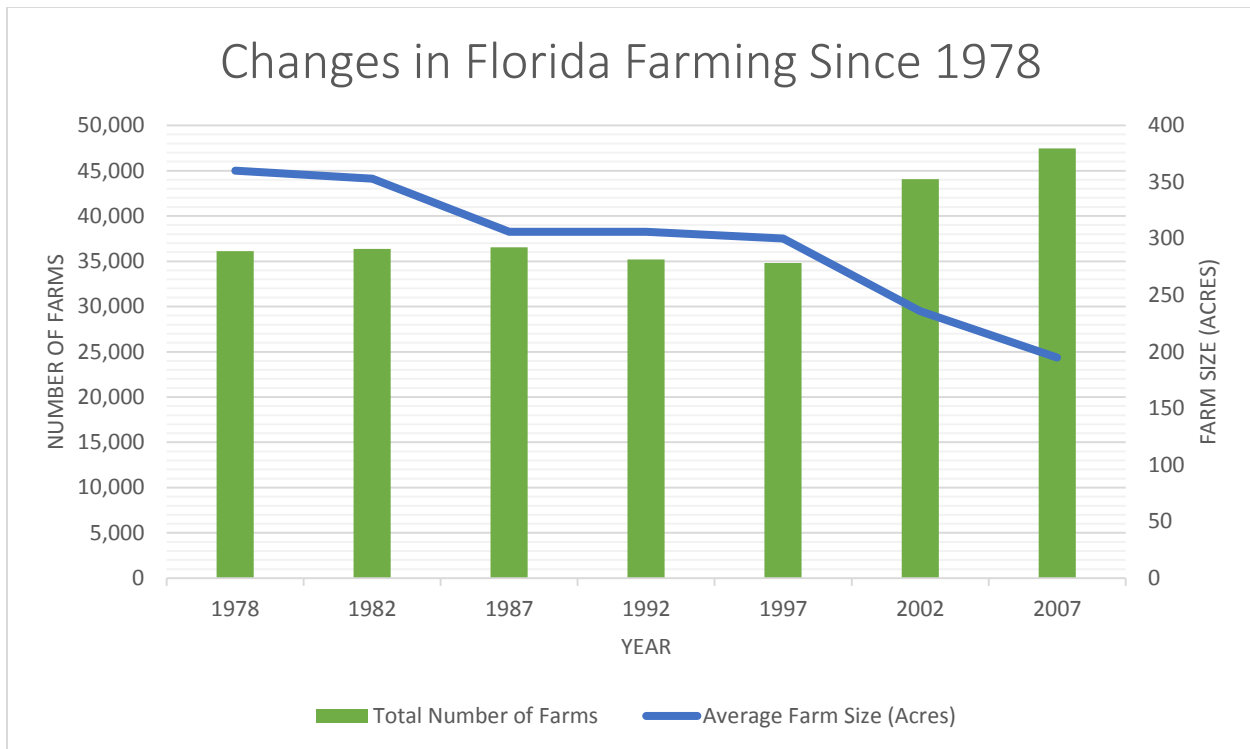


Source: Florida Statistical Abstract¹²

A second important trend has also unfolded in Florida’s farms over the last thirty years. While the aggregate number of farms has grown, from just over 36,000 in 1978 to more than 47,000 in 2007, the average size of farms has, in fact, decreased. In 1978, the average farm size in Florida was 360 acres. By 2007, that number was 155 acres smaller. This stands in contrast to the broader national trend of fewer and larger farms. A 2014 study by the U.S. Department of Agriculture reported that there are nearly 400,000 fewer farms in the United States today than in 1982 and the average farm size had tripled since 1900 to 434 acres.¹³

¹² The Florida Statistical Abstract did not subdivide farmland by type prior to 1982.

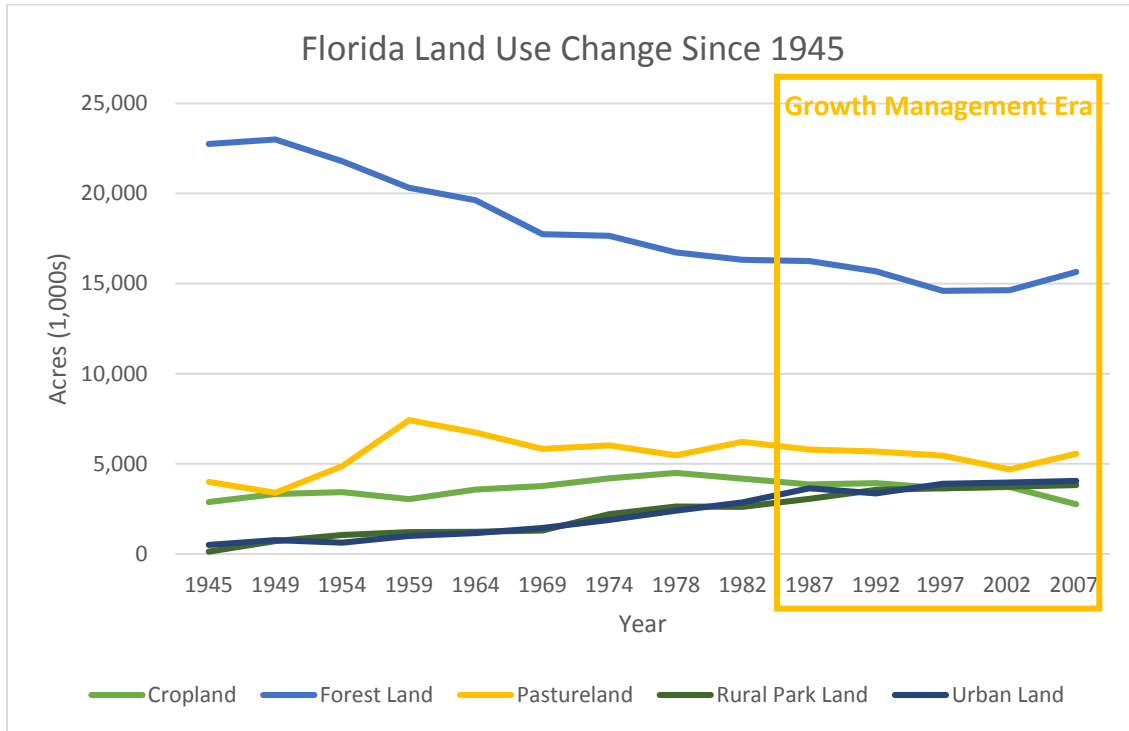
¹³ According to U.S. Department of Agriculture statistics, citrus production has fluctuated significantly during the growth management era from 150 million boxes in 1990 to over 300 million boxes in 1998 to 170 million boxes in 2012. For this reason, these statistics have been excluded from analysis.



Source: Florida Statistical Abstract

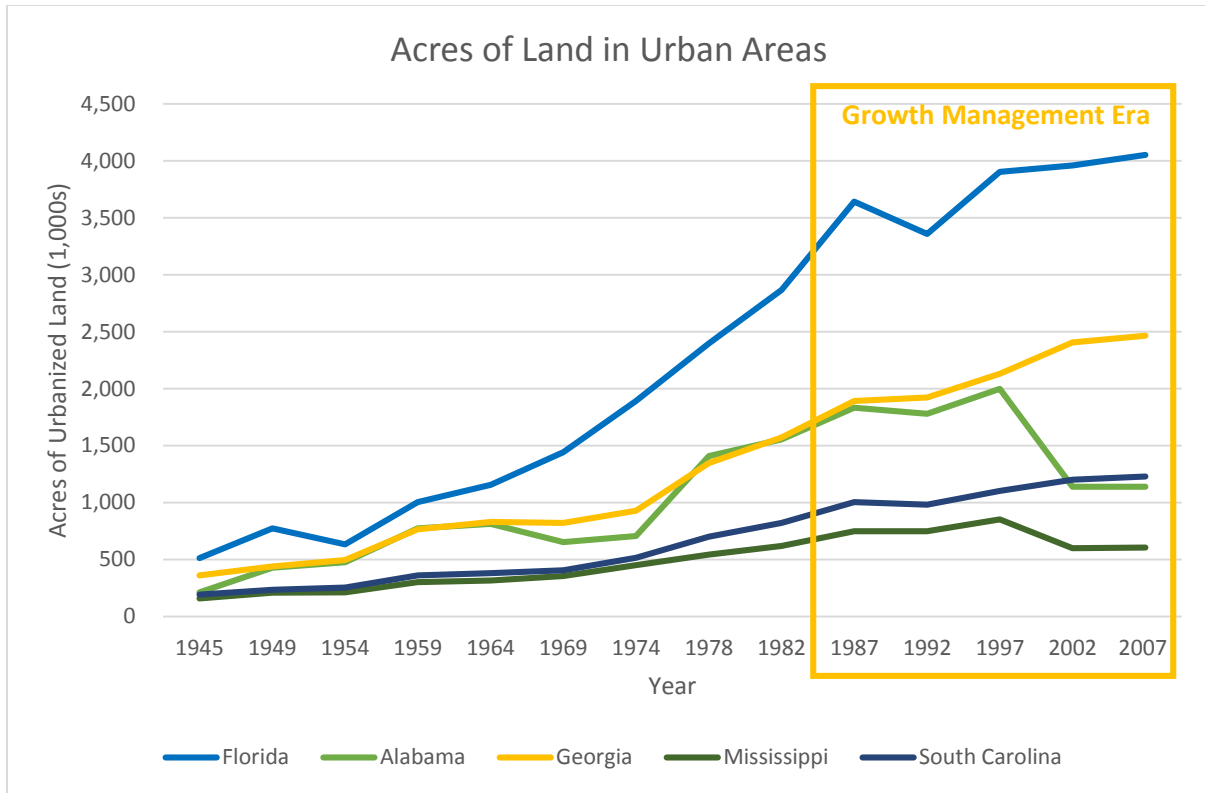
Where the Florida Growth Management Act appears to have been most successful was in curbing the conversion of forestland to urbanized land. After averaging an annual 1% loss in forestland and deforesting over 6.6 million acres of land in the thirty-three years from 1949 to 1982, that rate fell to less than one-fifth of a percent over the next twenty years. At the same time, rate of growth in urbanized acres rapidly and sharply decreased. From 1954 to 1987, number of urbanized acres exploded from 634,000 to more than 3.6 million, an incredible 5.44% annual increase. Though other southeastern states also experienced rapid urban expansion, none of the regional comparison states saw this level of land urbanization: Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, and South Carolina converted land to urban use at 4.18%, 4.15%, 3.90%, and 4.15% annually, respectively. During the growth management era, however, this dynamic fundamentally changed. Florida's rate of urban land conversion fell to about 0.53%, about half the rate of South Carolina (1.02%) and Georgia (1.33%). Further, this slowed rate of land conversion

is particularly noteworthy as it is significantly lower than the annual rate of population growth 2.22% since 1990.¹⁴



Source: United States Department of Agriculture

¹⁴ Florida's household size remained relatively flat from 1990 to 2010, increasing from 2.46 person to 2.48 persons.

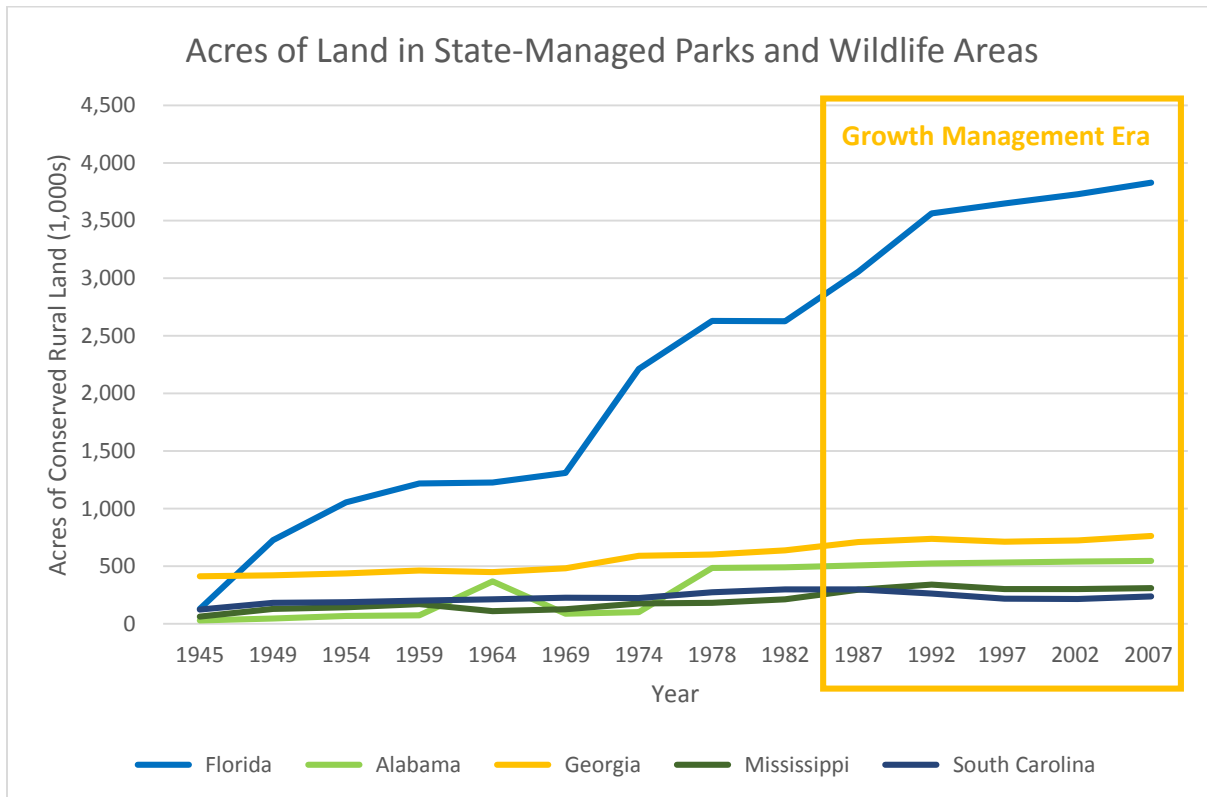


Source: United States Department of Agriculture

An additional measure to be considered is the growth in the quantity of conserved rural lands as parks and wildlife preserves. After an early history of extreme environmental degradation, Florida has emerged as a regional and national leader in the preservation of its natural resources. At the end of World War II, the state of Florida managed a paltry 131,000 acres of conserved lands.¹⁵ Despite its smaller land area, Georgia managed over three times that amount with 414,000 acres. From that point forward, however, Florida engaged in an aggressive policy of fee-simple acquisition that has grown that number to more than 4.8 million acres of state managed property held fee-simple, with an additional 613,000 managed by the state, but held in some form less than fee-simple (Florida Natural Areas Inventory 2014). Between the USDA Forest Service, the USDI Fish and Wildlife Service, the USDI National Park Service, and the US Department of Defense, the Federal government manages another 4 million

¹⁵ This figure does not include federally or privately managed lands.

acres of conserved land (Florida Natural Areas Inventory 2014). Local governments, for their part, manage an additional 493,000 acres (Florida Natural Areas Inventory 2014). In total, that amounts to more than 9.4 million acres of government-owned and managed lands in Florida or just over 29% of Florida’s total land area (Florida Natural Areas Inventory 2014). Both in terms of total aggregate acres and growth percentages, these numbers dwarf Florida’s regional comparison combined.



Source: United States Department of Agriculture

The Growth Management Act’s role in the conservation of these lands, however, has been limited. Much of the conservation occurred prior to the bill’s enactment, including the Everglades National Park in 1947, or is the result of Federal rather than state-level action. In fact, between 1945 and 1987 the state of Florida was adding about 70,000 acres of newly conserved land each year. Since the

passage of the GMA, by contrast, the increase in state-managed parks and wildlife areas fell to about 39,000 new acres annually¹⁶.

Planning Expenditures in Florida

So how has the Florida Growth Management Act influenced planning expenditures in Florida? By adopting the Local Government Comprehensive Planning Act of 1975 and mandating state-level review comprehensive plans through the Growth Management Act, Florida was among the first states in the nation to mandate and regulate local comprehensive planning and created a large demand for city planners in the state. The Florida Chapter of the American Planning Association is the second largest chapter in the nation with more than 2,600 members (APA Florida Chapter 2014). As of January 2014, 1555 of these members hold AICP certification with 40 members elected to the College of Fellows (APA Florida Chapter 2014). Using APA membership as a proxy for the number of planners in jurisdiction, Florida averages about one APA planner per 7,476 residents. The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that there are 38,700 planners in the United States. With a total U.S. population now sitting at about 313.9 million people, this averages out to one planner per 8,111 people in the country. Florida, therefore, is home to more planners per capita than the majority of the nation.

This raises an important question: Does the number of planners in a jurisdiction correlate with expenditures on planning. The data on comprehensive planning expenditures is limited, but by isolating the top twelve cities and counties in Florida by APA membership, we can begin to explore this notion. The Florida Office of Economic and Demographic offers data on planning expenditures by county dating back to 2006 and city level data for 2012. Looking first to cities, the top twelve cities by APA membership average 2421 citizens per planner, well above the state average. 2011 comprehensive planning expenditures, on the other hand, do not indicate an increased level of planning-related

¹⁶ Using an analysis period from 1987 to 2007.

spending in these jurisdictions. While planning can vary significant from year-to-year, these top twelves cities average just \$18.75 in planning expenditures per capita as compared with a state municipal average of \$19.86.

Top 12 Cities By Number of APA Members

City	2012 Population	APA Members	Population Per Planner	2011 Expenditures on Comprehensive Planning	2011 Expenditures on CP Per Capita
Orlando	249,525	196	1,273	\$9,725,037	\$40.19
Tampa	347,650	180	1,931	\$-	\$-
Tallahassee	186,977	175	1,068	\$3,416,000	\$18.72
Gainesville	126,038	117	1,077	\$1,278,345	\$10.27
Jacksonville	836,507	88	9,506	\$8,174,705	\$9.94
West Palm Beach	101,910	75	1,359	\$1,914,590	\$18.99
Fort Lauderdale	170,747	69	2,475	\$3,883,663	\$23.37
Miami	413,864	67	6,177	\$4,848,645	\$11.93
Sarasota	52,811	63	838	\$-	\$-
Fort Myers	65,733	53	1,240	\$-	\$-
Naples	20,115	53	380	\$452,547	\$23.27
Boca Raton	87,848	51	1,723	\$1,024,392	\$12.10
Florida Cities	19,317,568	2,584	7,476	\$187,779,556	\$19.86

Source: American Planning Association, Florida Chapter; ACS 2012 (1-Year), Florida Office of Economic and Demographic Research

Looking to county-level data for a longer time-frame of analysis, the top twelve counties by planner population in the state have also been identified. From 2007 to 2012, Florida counties spent \$52.30 per person on comprehensive planning. In these counties, however, where the number of citizens per planner was 6,676, counties spent just \$40.91 per person. The implications are clear. First, cities and counties with higher numbers of planners per capita, do not spend more on comprehensive planning than do those with lower numbers of planners per capita. Indeed, among the list of the top twelve cities and counties are some of Florida’s most populous. This indicates that Florida is likely spending its planning dollars not on large cities, but rather in more rural locations with fewer planners. Second cities spend more per capita on average than do counties: \$19.86 per capita for cities as

compared with \$7.30 per capita in counties. Whether this trend holds true on a national level requires further analysis.

Top 12 Counties By Number of APA Members

County	2012 Population	APA Members	Population Per Planner	2007-2012 Expenditures on Comprehensive Planning	2007-2012 Expenditures on CP Per Capita
Broward	1,815,137	258	7,035	\$119,097,000	\$67.82
Palm Beach	1,356,545	246	5,514	\$62,960,619	\$48.20
Orange	1,202,234	241	4,989	\$36,131,707	\$31.86
Hillsborough	1,277,746	215	5,943	\$81,759,929	\$67.37
Leon ¹⁷	283,769	175	1,622	\$5,694,061	\$20.69
Miami-Dade	2,591,035	141	18,376	\$35,010,412	\$14.09
Alachua	251,417	123	2,044	\$86,122	\$0.34
Pinellas	921,319	116	7,942	\$38,014,330	\$40.89
Lee	645,293	97	6,653	\$37,729,844	\$60.65
Duval	879,602	96	9,163	\$- ¹⁸	\$- ¹⁹
Sarasota	386,147	76	5,081	\$18,281,151	\$47.35
Seminole	430,838	75	5,745	\$21,570,873	\$50.74
Florida Counties	19,317,568	2,584	7,476	\$946,500,288	\$52.30

Source: American Planning Association, Florida Chapter; ACS 2012 (1-Year), Florida Office of Economic and Demographic Research

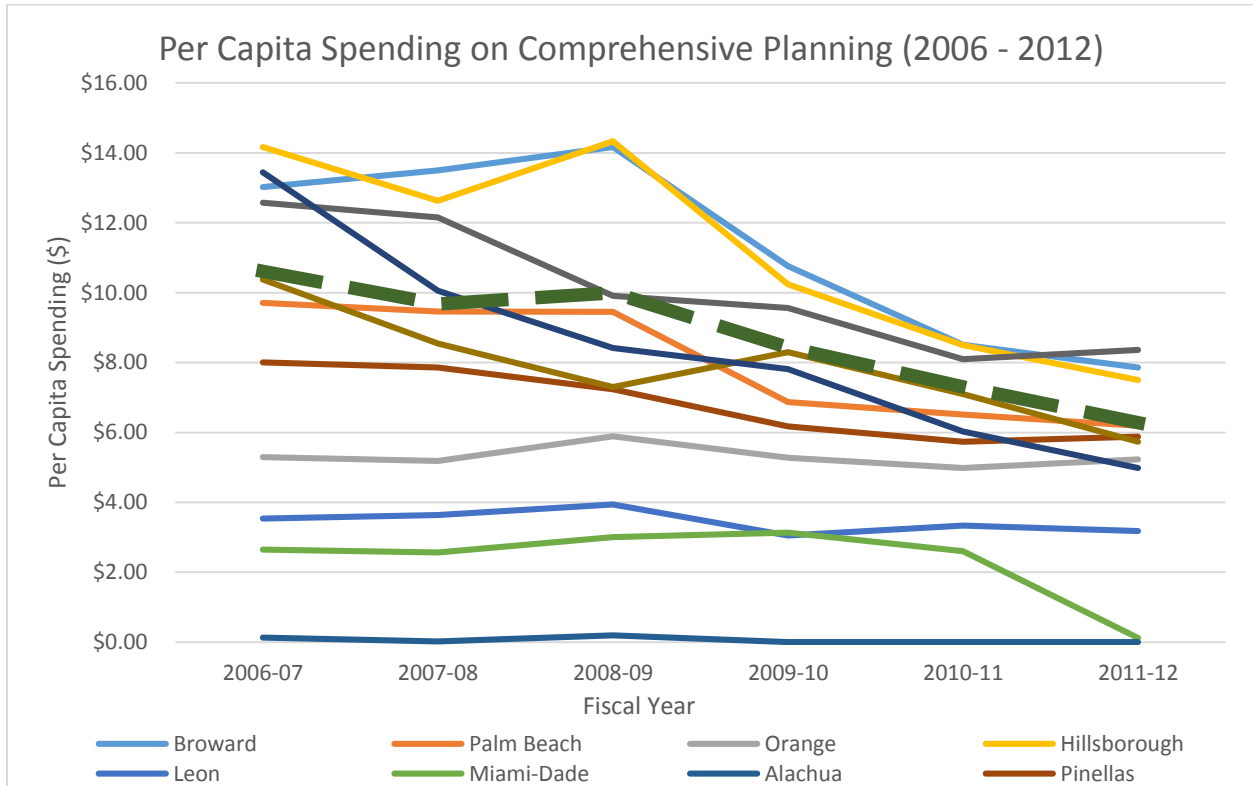
The Florida Office of Economic and Demographic Research data also allows for a review of the comprehensive planning expenditures in Florida over the final six years before the passage of HB7207. As the chart below depicts, spending fell across all counties analyzed in during the period of analysis. The state average for spending by counties fell from \$10.61 in 2006-07 to \$6.28 in 2011-2012 per person. As the next section will show, comprehensive planning expenditures did not recover from the recession in 2010, 2011, and 2012 as did overall employment and employment in the real estate sector. Because Florida does not have income tax and its economy is dependent upon highly cyclical tourism

¹⁷ Tallahassee, Florida's state capital, is located in Leon, accounting for the disproportionately high number of planners per capita.

¹⁸ No comprehensive planning budget numbers were reported for Duval County.

¹⁹ No comprehensive planning budget numbers were reported for Duval County.

and entertainment industries, government revenues are particularly vulnerable to economic recessions and can be slow to recover.



Source: Florida Office of Economic and Demographic Research

In summary, unlike regional comparison states, Florida’s growth over the course of most of this growth management era has been exponential. Florida’s growth rate outpaced all comparison counties until the 2000s, when the rate began to slow, but was still greater than three of the four comparison states. The Growth Management Act slowed the pace of farmland conversion until the mid-2000s, when the farmland conversion again began to accelerate. The act was more successful in conserving forest land and limiting the rate of urbanization of land uses. Planning expenditures do not appear to be correlated with an increase in the number of planners residing in a jurisdiction. Comprehensive planning expenditures declined during the final six years before the passage of HB7207.

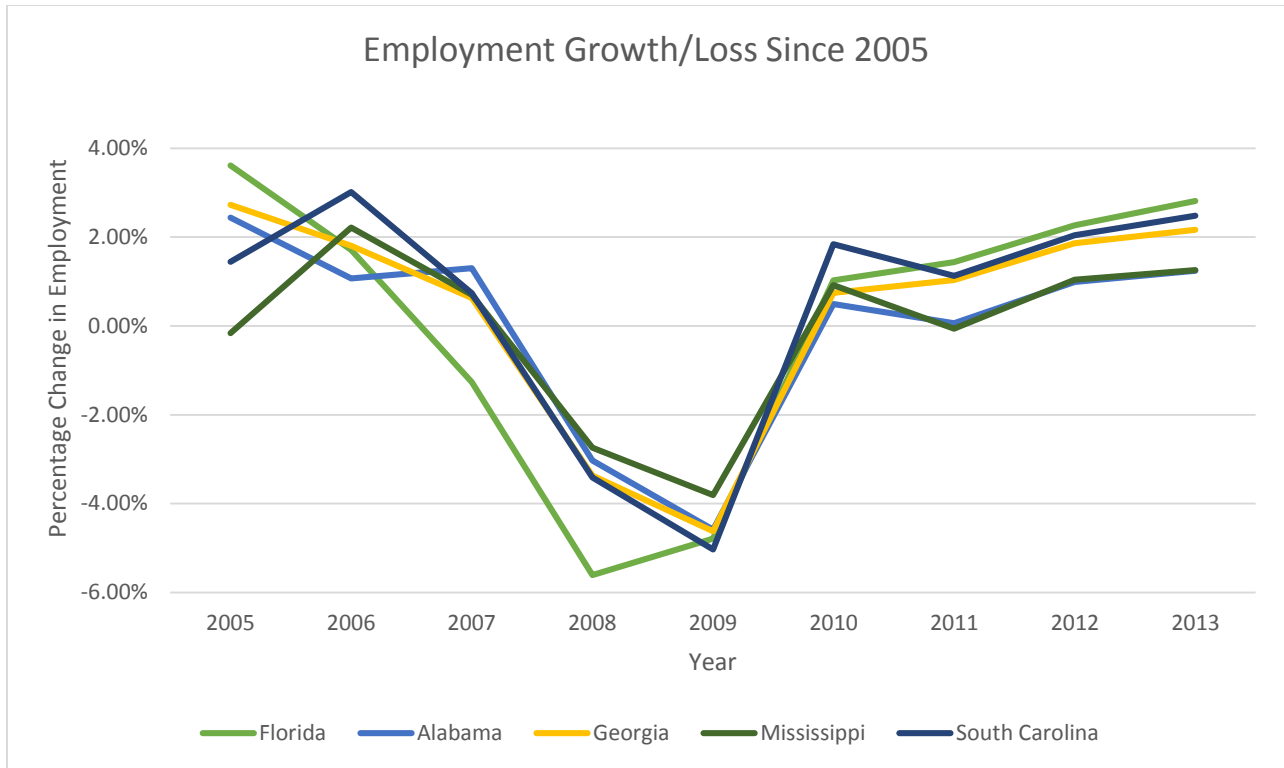
Economic Competitiveness in Florida

Prior to the passage of HB7207, the Florida Growth Management Act's harshest critics were quick to level attacks against the act as an impediment to economic growth and job creation. In this section, I will review the data on employment, building permits, and per capita income to assess the veracity of these claims.

Employment Change in Florida

As mentioned previously, Florida's large tourism and entertainment, lack of income tax, and heavy reliance upon sales tax leaves the state susceptible to large employment swings during economic recessions. During the recession of 2008 and 2009, Florida experienced more rapid and pronounced job loss than the other four regional comparison states. In 2005, Florida was posting job growth of 3.61%, a full 1% higher than three of four other states and 0.88% greater than Georgia. Mississippi, which has no state-level growth management programs, experienced modest job losses that year. In 2006, Florida's growth rate had fallen to 1.71%, fourth among the comparison states. The following year, Florida began to shed jobs, while all other states grew. Once the national economy had fallen in to full-fledged recession in 2008, Florida lost 5.61% of its employment in a single year, more than two percentage points higher than any of the regional comparison states and again posted the second highest job loss rate in 2009.

In 2010, two years before the passage of HB7207, began to add jobs again, outpacing all but one of the regional comparison states. In the final year before the elimination of the Department of Community affairs, Rule 9J5, consistency requirements, and school, park, and transportation concurrency, employment grew 1.44% again significantly outpacing all regional comparison states. Ignoring these developments, state legislators accepted opponents' claims that the GMA led to job loss.



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Total Employment at Year-End (in 1,000s)

	Florida	Alabama	Georgia	Mississippi	South Carolina
2004	7623.3	1921.3	3964.3	1129.0	1847.7
2005	7898.5	1968.1	4072.4	1127.2	1874.4
2006	8033.7	1989.1	4145.9	1152.2	1930.9
2007	7931.8	2014.9	4171.9	1160.3	1945.1
2008	7486.7	1953.8	4031.2	1128.5	1878.7
2009	7128.0	1864.2	3844.7	1085.5	1784.1
2010	7201.0	1873.4	3873.3	1095.5	1817.0
2011	7304.6	1874.5	3913.4	1094.8	1837.5
2012	7470.3	1893.1	3986.3	1106.2	1875.0
2013	7680.6	1916.6	4072.5	1120.1	1921.5

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

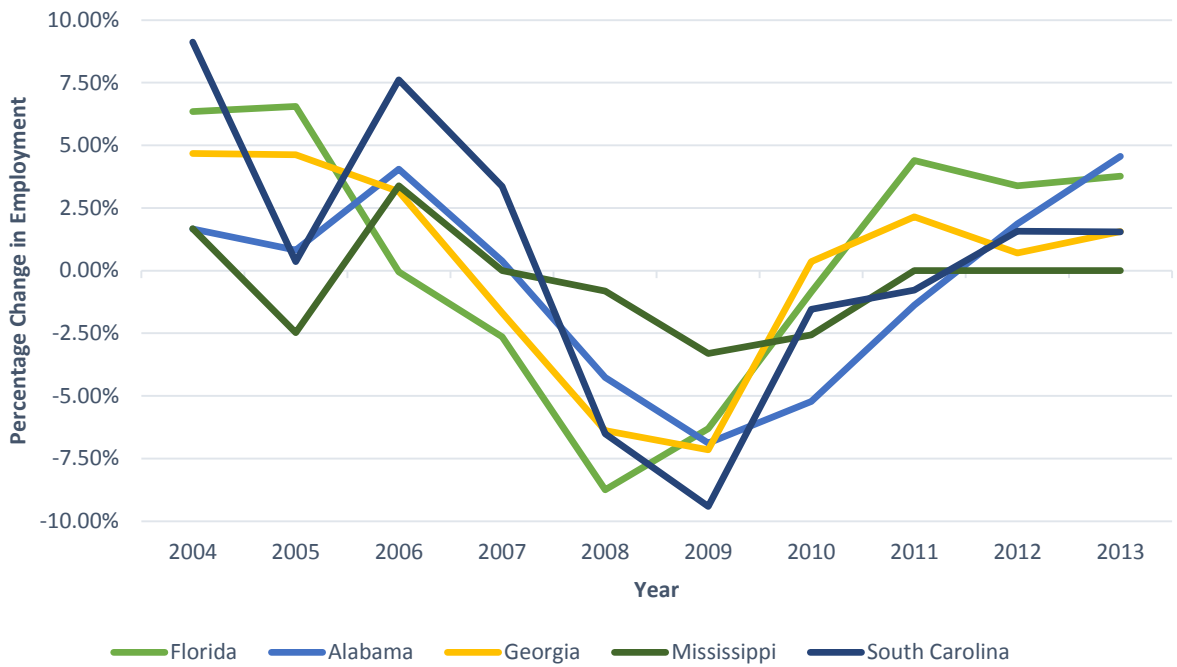
As detailed in the introduction of this paper, the stronghold of the anti-growth management movement was within the real estate development community. But much like the overall employment growth numbers, the facts simply do not support these accusations of the Growth Management Act as

an impediment to job creation. In 2004 and 2005, employment in the industry grew for two consecutive years by more than 6%. None of the four comparison states were able to match this level of job creation over that period.²⁰ In 2006, however, while other regional comparison states continued to experience growth in the industry, real estate employment in Florida remained relatively flat. The reason for this divergence from the four comparison states will be made clearer in the next section, but to put it simply, Florida fell victim early to a problem present in almost all real estate cycles: overbuilding.

In 2007, Florida shed 2.64% of its real estate and leasing jobs, while three of the four regional comparison states remained flat or gained employment. The trend intensified in 2008, with Florida again leading the way in job loss. Just as Florida had been the first of the four states to slide into recession, however, it also was the one to first begin showing signs of improvement as the job-loss rate again flattened in Florida, while Alabama, Mississippi, and South Carolina continued to suffer losses. In the GMA's final year, Florida again led the region by adding 6,500 new real estate jobs. While GMA-opponents have cast the job loss as a result of the act, the reality is the Florida entered the recession earlier, experienced it more acutely, and emerged more rapidly than did the regional comparison states. A review of the more volatile construction industry data over the same period of analysis reveals a similar trend.

²⁰ Though South Carolina grew its real estate industry by 9.13% in 2004, it followed that up by growing a modest 0.36% the following year and posted higher job loss numbers

Real Estate and Leasing Industry Employment

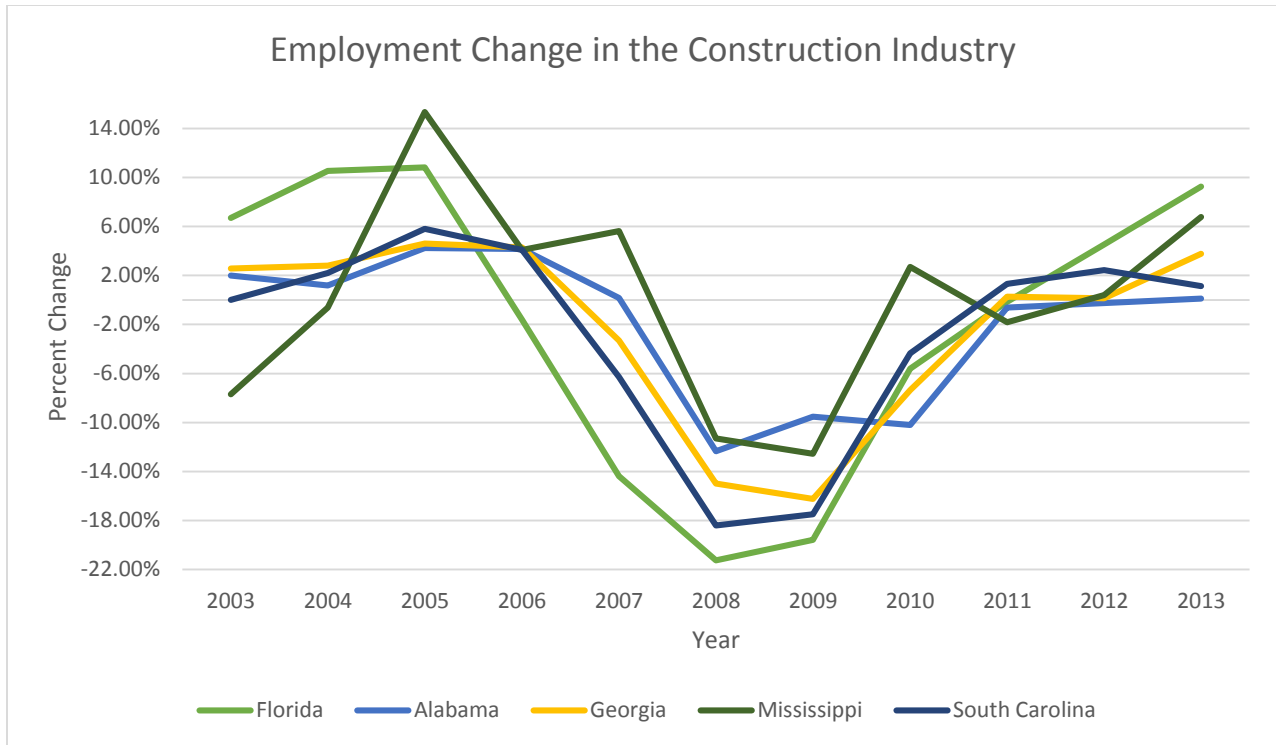


Source: Florida Statistical Abstract

Real Estate and Leasing Industry Employment Change

	Alabama	Florida	Georgia	Mississippi	South Carolina
2004	1.66%	6.35%	4.67%	1.68%	9.13%
2005	0.82%	6.56%	4.63%	-2.48%	0.36%
2006	4.05%	-0.05%	3.16%	3.39%	7.61%
2007	0.39%	-2.64%	-1.68%	0.00%	3.37%
2008	-4.26%	-8.75%	-6.39%	-0.82%	-6.51%
2009	-6.88%	-6.31%	-7.15%	-3.31%	-9.41%
2010	-5.22%	-0.86%	0.36%	-2.56%	-1.54%
2011	-1.38%	4.40%	2.14%	0.00%	-0.78%
2012	1.86%	3.38%	0.70%	0.00%	1.57%
2013	4.57%	3.77%	1.56%	0.00%	1.55%

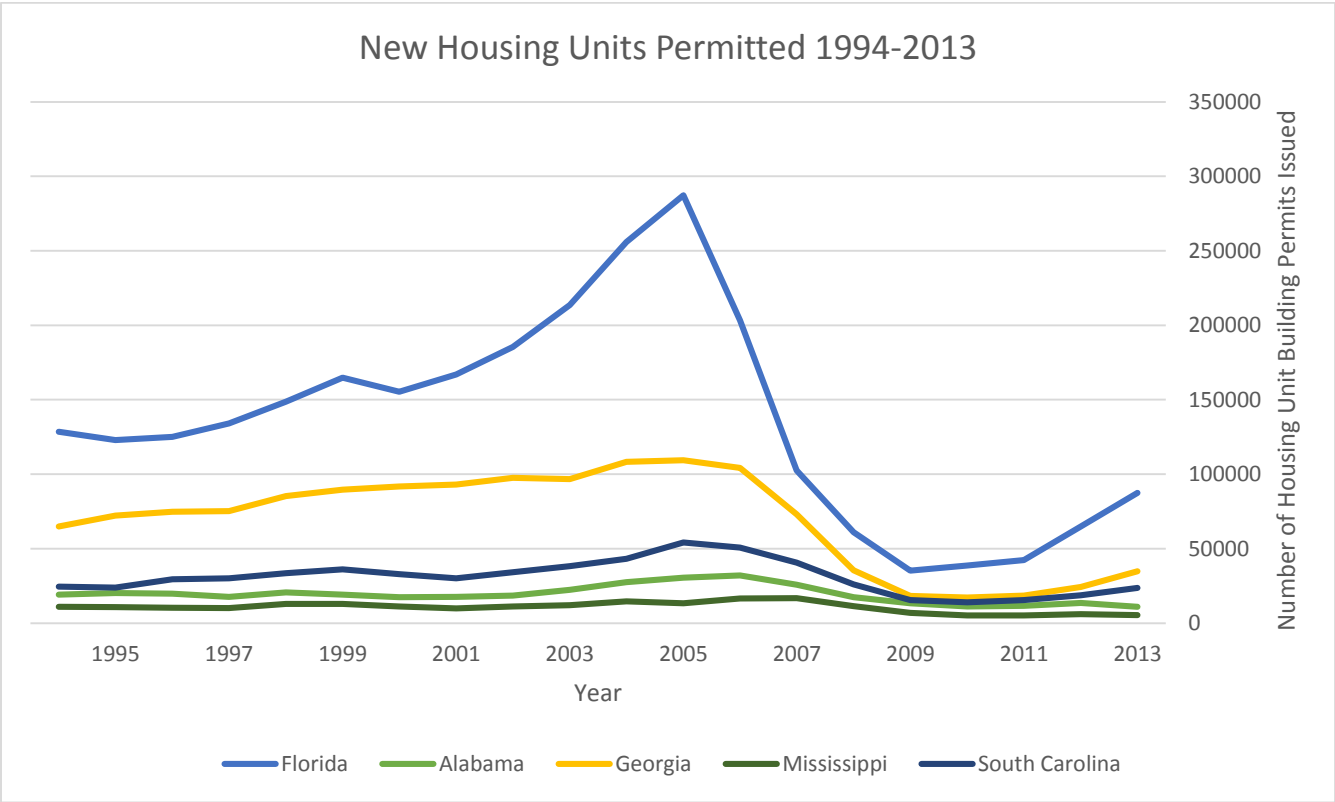
Source: Florida Statistical Abstract



Source: Florida Statistical Abstract

Building Permits in Florida

A review of the building permit data for Florida and the four regional comparison states further elucidates what Tim Chapin has characterized as “growth unabated” (Chapin 2007). From 1994 until 2000, Florida annually issued approximately the same number of residential building permits as the other four regional comparison states combined. Between 1990 and 2000, however, Florida grew by just under 16 million residents, while the other four states (none of which require any serious growth management efforts by local governments) combined to add 19.5 million people. In 2001, Florida’s rate of issuing residential building permits accelerated exponentially, granting 21% more permits in 2003 than in 2002, 23% more in 2004 than 2003, and 12% more in 2005 than in 2006 – well beyond the rate of population growth. As a result, Florida issued 44,406 permits more in 2003, 62,364 more in 2004, and a whopping 79,749 more permit in 2005 than the rest of the region combined. At its peak in 2005, Florida issued 177,914 permits more than Georgia, the next nearest highest permitting state.

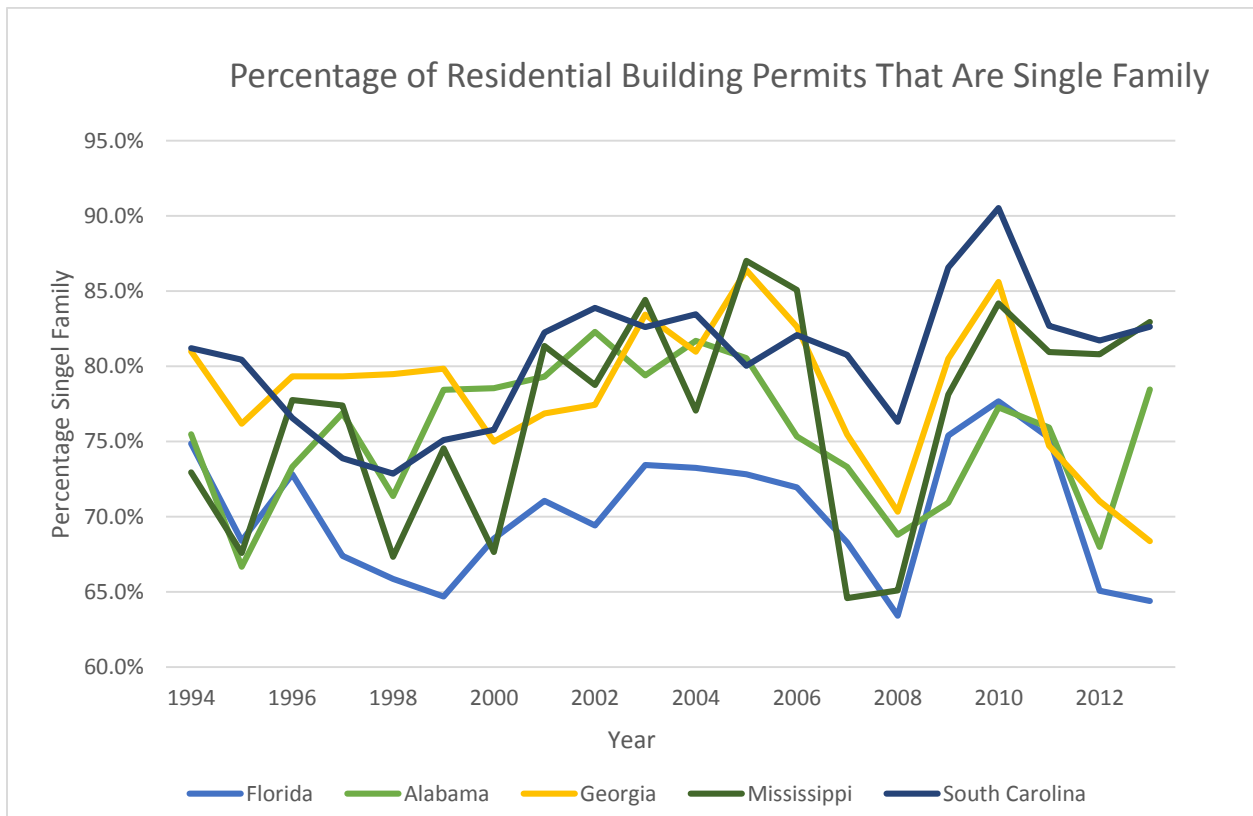


Source: U.S. Census

At a time when lenders were lending too aggressively, borrowers borrowing too freely, and builders building too optimistically, Florida led the pack. It is then little surprise that when the inevitable market correction came, Florida fell first and hardest. Though the Florida Chamber of Commerce and the Associated Industries of Florida held that over-regulation stifled new growth in the state, the evidence indicates that the problem may have in fact been under-regulation. Florida fell victim to its own economic success, out and overbuilding its regional competitors in a race to the bottom.

For Florida’s Growth Management Act, there is a silver lining in this story. In Florida’s quest to control the timing, pace, location, and quality of growth, the final ‘C’ is compact development. In this sense, the Growth Management Act appears to have achieved success. Looking at single family vs. multifamily permitting demonstrates a commitment in Florida to multi-family development not seen in

its peer states. Over the last twenty years, almost 30% of the building permits issued in Florida have been for multifamily dwellings, as compared to 24% in Alabama, 23% in Mississippi, 22% in Georgia, and only 19% in South Carolina. During the surge in building activity between 2001 and 2006, this ratio fell slightly to 28% in Florida and to 20%, 19%, 18%, and 18% for Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, and South Carolina, respectively. Even if the GMA was unsuccessful in curtailing the number of building permits, it does seem to be positively correlated with denser, multifamily development.



Source: U.S. Census

Percentage of Permits Issued for Single Family

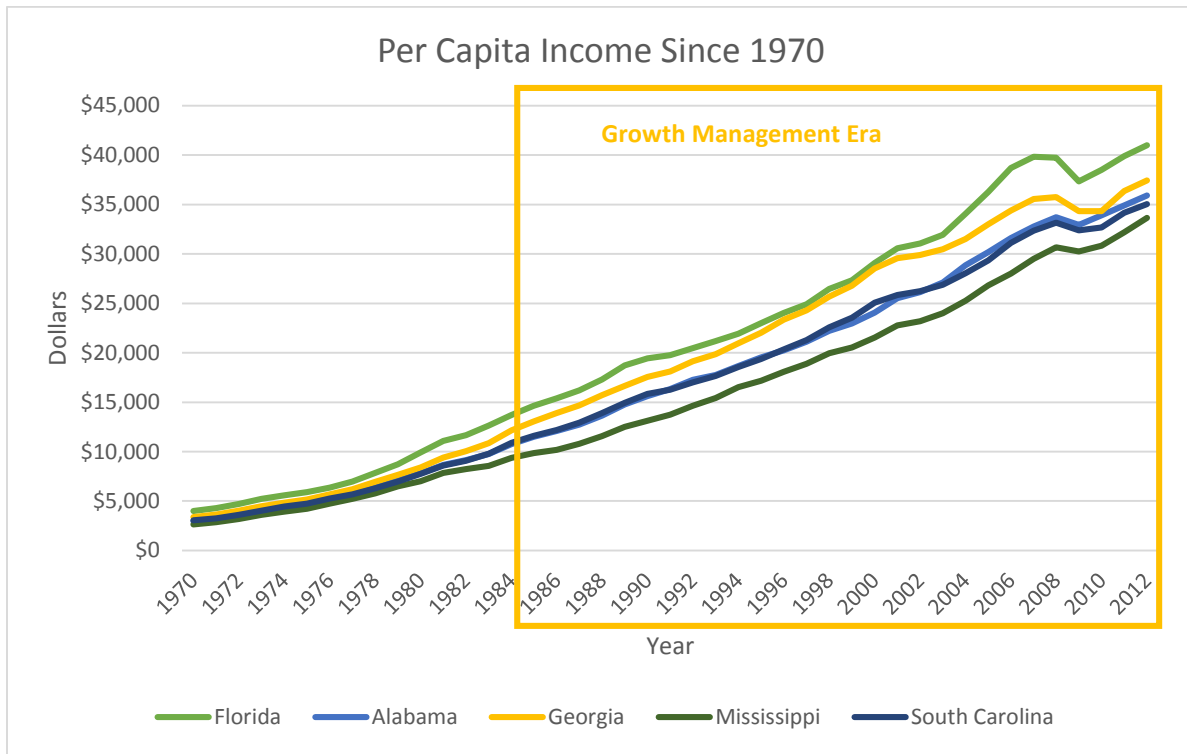
	Alabama	Florida	Georgia	Mississippi	South Carolina
2013	78.5%	64.4%	68.4%	83.0%	82.6%
2012	68.0%	65.1%	71.0%	80.8%	81.7%
2011	75.9%	75.2%	74.7%	81.0%	82.7%
2010	77.3%	77.7%	85.6%	84.2%	90.5%
2009	70.9%	75.4%	80.5%	78.1%	86.6%
2008	68.8%	63.4%	70.3%	65.1%	76.3%
2007	73.3%	68.3%	75.5%	64.6%	80.8%
2006	75.3%	72.0%	82.6%	85.1%	82.1%
2005	80.5%	72.8%	86.4%	87.0%	80.0%
2004	81.7%	73.3%	81.0%	77.1%	83.5%
2003	79.4%	73.4%	83.4%	84.4%	82.6%
2002	82.3%	69.4%	77.4%	78.8%	83.9%
2001	79.3%	71.1%	76.9%	81.4%	82.2%
2000	78.5%	68.6%	75.0%	67.6%	75.8%
1999	78.4%	64.7%	79.8%	74.5%	75.1%
1998	71.4%	65.9%	79.5%	67.3%	72.9%
1997	76.9%	67.4%	79.3%	77.4%	73.9%
1996	73.3%	72.8%	79.3%	77.8%	76.6%
1995	66.7%	68.4%	76.2%	67.6%	80.4%
1994	75.5%	74.9%	81.0%	73.0%	81.2%

Source: U.S. Census

Per Capita Income

A final measure of economic competitiveness worthy of consideration is per capita income. Since the late 1970s, a number of studies conducted across the county have explored the empirical evidence on the impact of growth regulation on housing prices. The majority of these studies have report a negative correlation between these regulations and housing affordability (Connerly 2007, 264). In fact, two thirds of the studies report higher housing costs as a result of growth management efforts (Connerly 2007, 264). In order to offset these higher housing costs, states may institute additional inclusionary zoning policies to ensure affordable housing (such as Portland’s effort to establish minimum densities and encourage multifamily housing, thought more affordable than comparable single family alternatives). Alternatively, higher wages would be necessary to bridge the ensuing financial gap.

Connerly suggests that Florida’s “growth management apparatus, led by the state’s governors and the Florida Department of Community Affairs, has been indifferent to the adoption of inclusionary zoning strongly suggests that Florida’s implementation of growth management has failed to take affording housing seriously” (Connerly 2007, 279).



Source: Florida Statistical Abstract

Wages in Florida have, since the 1970s, consistently outpaced wages in the regional comparison states. When the Growth Management Act was first adopted in 1985, Florida’s per capita income stood at \$14,643, 12.2% higher than the next highest state and a full 49% higher than the lowest state in the region. During the 1990s, rapid economic expansion in Georgia narrowed this gap to within 3%, but Florida still about 32% higher than Mississippi in 1997. By 2006, Florida had again reestablished itself as the clear regional leader in per capita income, with Floridians on average earning 12.6% more than Georgians, 22.5% more than Alabamans, 24.4% more than South Carolinians, and 38.2% more than Mississippians. In 2005, Florida became the only state in the region to require a higher minimum wage

above the federally set minimum of \$7.25 cents (Florida Department of Economic Opportunity 2012).²¹ Georgia has actually set a minimum wage below the federal standard at \$5.15, though most businesses are required to pay the federal rate.

From the above analysis, the following three points can be concluded. 1) Florida's Growth Management Act did not significantly impede job creation as before and after the recession Florida's total employment growth rate and real estate and leasing industry employment growth rate typically outpaced regional comparison states. 2) The GMA did not limit the quantity of building permits issued in the state, but did encourage more multifamily development. 3) The act continued to allow Florida to post region leading per capita income throughout its existence.

²¹ Florida's minimum wage is currently \$7.93.

Per Capita Personal Income By State

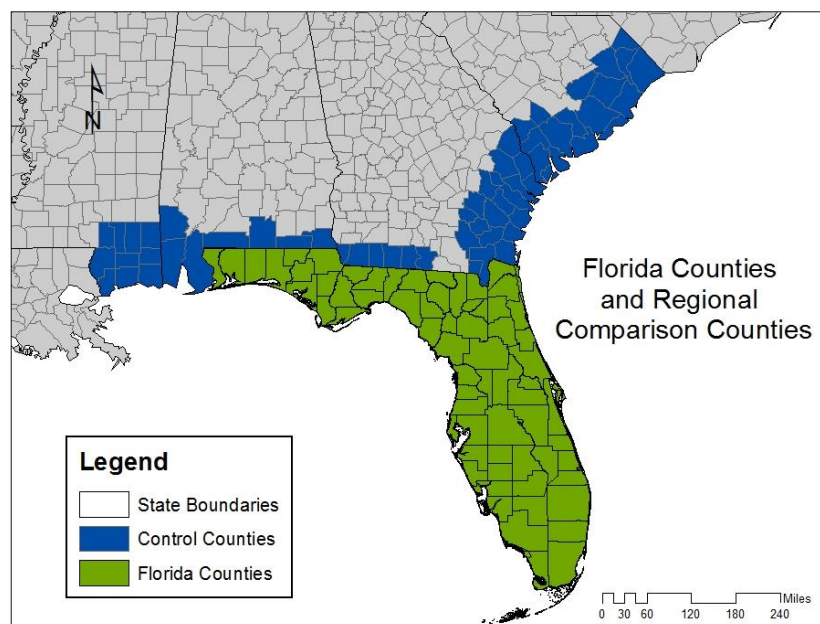
	Alabama	Florida	Georgia	Mississippi	South Carolina
1970	\$2,962	\$3,998	\$3,379	\$2,628	\$3,055
1971	\$3,206	\$4,282	\$3,650	\$2,855	\$3,265
1972	\$3,526	\$4,696	\$4,023	\$3,194	\$3,594
1973	\$3,943	\$5,217	\$4,481	\$3,597	\$4,016
1974	\$4,336	\$5,591	\$4,854	\$3,920	\$4,451
1975	\$4,766	\$5,901	\$5,157	\$4,207	\$4,730
1976	\$5,313	\$6,360	\$5,687	\$4,746	\$5,255
1977	\$5,794	\$6,972	\$6,200	\$5,233	\$5,668
1978	\$6,464	\$7,841	\$6,951	\$5,768	\$6,301
1979	\$7,139	\$8,731	\$7,656	\$6,491	\$6,988
1980	\$7,825	\$9,921	\$8,408	\$7,005	\$7,736
1981	\$8,659	\$11,101	\$9,393	\$7,842	\$8,606
1982	\$9,152	\$11,682	\$10,041	\$8,231	\$9,078
1983	\$9,772	\$12,640	\$10,857	\$8,570	\$9,790
1984	\$10,752	\$13,718	\$12,148	\$9,377	\$10,900
1985	\$11,504	\$14,643	\$13,052	\$9,857	\$11,590
1986	\$12,080	\$15,391	\$13,917	\$10,174	\$12,194
1987	\$12,735	\$16,193	\$14,679	\$10,799	\$12,939
1988	\$13,639	\$17,291	\$15,721	\$11,566	\$13,906
1989	\$14,776	\$18,734	\$16,658	\$12,499	\$14,931
1990	\$15,618	\$19,437	\$17,563	\$13,117	\$15,844
1991	\$16,337	\$19,776	\$18,110	\$13,749	\$16,256
1992	\$17,264	\$20,474	\$19,139	\$14,651	\$17,010
1993	\$17,766	\$21,197	\$19,866	\$15,426	\$17,651
1994	\$18,656	\$21,919	\$20,945	\$16,512	\$18,579
1995	\$19,551	\$23,014	\$22,023	\$17,176	\$19,384
1996	\$20,245	\$24,050	\$23,340	\$18,079	\$20,359
1997	\$21,118	\$24,919	\$24,287	\$18,880	\$21,287
1998	\$22,217	\$26,453	\$25,680	\$19,947	\$22,573
1999	\$22,961	\$27,329	\$26,772	\$20,555	\$23,550
2000	\$24,067	\$29,079	\$28,541	\$21,555	\$25,076
2001	\$25,540	\$30,564	\$29,572	\$22,777	\$25,835
2002	\$26,145	\$31,059	\$29,885	\$23,186	\$26,242
2003	\$27,115	\$31,943	\$30,486	\$24,008	\$26,876
2004	\$28,861	\$34,068	\$31,511	\$25,265	\$28,057
2005	\$30,188	\$36,274	\$33,002	\$26,819	\$29,354
2006	\$31,606	\$38,712	\$34,410	\$28,012	\$31,111
2007	\$32,765	\$39,838	\$35,548	\$29,491	\$32,350
2008	\$33,701	\$39,736	\$35,761	\$30,659	\$33,157
2009	\$32,930	\$37,340	\$34,330	\$30,249	\$32,376
2010	\$33,905	\$38,493	\$34,343	\$30,847	\$32,688
2011	\$34,929	\$39,896	\$36,366	\$32,193	\$34,183
2012	\$35,926	\$41,012	\$37,449	\$33,657	\$35,056

Source: Florida Statistical Abstract

Comparative Regression Analysis

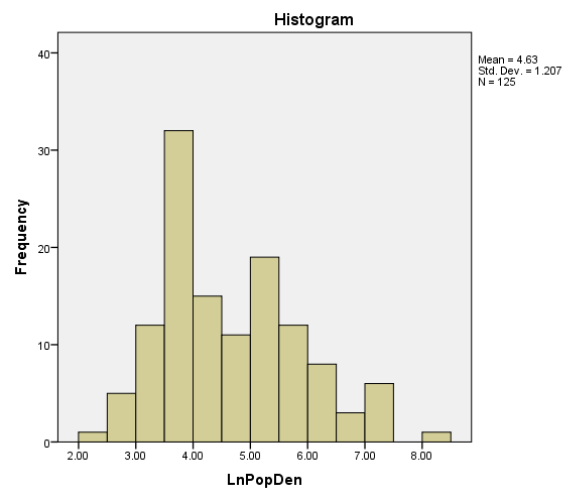
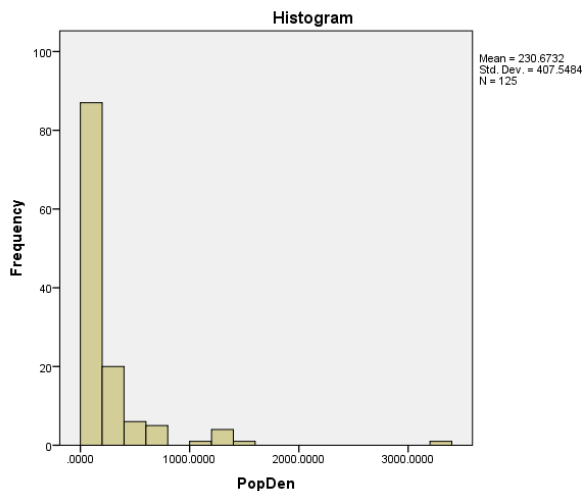
Methodology

In order to determine the effectiveness of the Florida Growth Management Act in shaping growth outcomes and its impact on the economic competitiveness of the state, I conducted ordinary least squares regression analysis on all 67 Florida counties and 58 regional comparison counties. Regional comparison counties were limited to those in Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, and South Carolina within 80 miles of the Atlantic Ocean or Gulf of Mexico. At its widest point – excluding the panhandle – Florida measures approximately 160 miles across or about 80 miles from the coast. These control counties, therefore, are thought to reflect similar physical, climatic, and geographical characteristics (including, soil conditions and average temperature) to many of Florida’s counties. GIS software was used to manually measure the regional control counties’ distances from the coast and those with a majority of their land area within 80 miles were selected for inclusion in the analysis.



I ran the regression model four times for dependent variables of the percentage of population growth between 2000 and 2010 (to test any limiting effects of a mature GMA on population growth), 2011 per capita income (to test impacts on earnings), 2008-2012 unemployment rates (to test the impacts on employment), and 2008-2012 median home value (to test impacts on housing prices). For each dependent variable, all other dependent variables acted as independent variables in addition to controlling for population growth between 1980 and 1990, household size, the average percentage of the population from 2008-2012 that is white, the percentage of the population from 2008-2012 that has a minimum of some college education, and those counties falling under the jurisdiction of the GMA. Data was culled from the 2008-2012 American Communities Survey (5-Year Average), 1980 U.S. Census, 1990 U.S. Census, 2000 U.S. Census, and 2010 U.S. Census. As HB7207 was not signed into law until 2011, the data selected should reflect the cumulative impacts of the previous three decades of growth management efforts.

Checking all variables to ensure normal distribution, population density was determined to be significantly positively skewed and more peaked than a normal distribution. A natural log was taken of population density to normalize the distribution.



Results

Using the ten variables described above, regression analysis was performed on dependent variables of population growth, per capita income, unemployment and median home value. The results of each model are described in this section.

Population Growth

The population growth model demonstrated low level of explanatory power, with an R Square of .298. The growth management variable was not statistically significant with a significance value of .803. This suggests that there is probably no difference in growth rates as a result of being under the jurisdiction of the Growth Management Act from being in one of the control states. Said another way, the GMA probably has little influence on the overall rate of population growth.

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.546 ^a	.298	.243	.138952660564 619

a. Predictors: (Constant), PerUmEmp, 8090Cha, HHSIZE, LnPopDen, PerWhite, GMA, MedHome, PerSomCol, PCI

b. Dependent Variable: 0010Cha

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-.849	.260		-3.269	.001
GMA	.008	.033	.025	.242	.809
8090Cha	.054	.053	.097	1.024	.308
PerWhite	.415	.117	.373	3.538	.001
HHSIZE	.157	.072	.199	2.190	.031
PerSomCol	.553	.272	.375	2.032	.045
MedHome	-1.769E-007	.000	-.059	-.329	.742

LnPopDen	-.004	.017	-.034	-.264	.792
PCI	1.013E-006	.000	.033	.149	.882
PerUmEmp	.356	.514	.065	.692	.490

a. Dependent Variable: 0010Cha

Per Capita Income

The per capita income model reported an R Squared of .875, indicating that it is highly explanatory. The growth management act, percentage white, household size, some college education, median home price, and population density variables all came back as statically significant at a 95% confidence interval. The percentage white, completion of some college, and population density all carried a positive correlation. Surprisingly, the growth management act variable demonstrated negative correlation with per capita income. In fact, being located within the jurisdiction of the GMA, indicated a \$895.42 decrease in wages, all other things held equal.

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.936 ^a	.875	.865	1908.660

a. Predictors: (Constant), LnPopDen, PerWhite, PerUmEmp, HHSIZE, 8090Cha, 0010Cha, GMA, MedHome, PerSomCol

b. Dependent Variable: PCI

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	7294.771	3664.522		1.991	.049
	GMA	-895.418	451.972	-.086	-1.981	.050
	8090Cha	-821.613	723.900	-.045	-1.135	.259
	PerWhite	6115.923	1599.187	.168	3.824	.000
	HHSIZE	-2734.484	970.847	-.106	-2.817	.006
	PerSomCol	15033.649	3538.750	.313	4.248	.000

MedHome	.051	.006	.520	8.942	.000
PerUmEmp	10397.081	7013.787	.059	1.482	.141
0010Cha	191.049	1280.769	.006	.149	.882
LnPopDen	612.073	223.634	.142	2.737	.007

a. Dependent Variable: PCI

Unemployment

Like the population growth model, the unemployment model also resulted in a low R Square with little explanatory power. The GMA, percentage white, some college completed, and median home price variables all were statistically significant at a 95% confidence interval. According to the model, the presence of the GMA is associated with a 2.1% increase in unemployment with all other things held equal. It is important to recall that Florida's economy is tied very closely to the tourism and entertainment sectors, both of which had been severely hampered by the recession.

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.566 ^a	.321	.268	.025137196825 399

a. Predictors: (Constant), PCI, GMA, 0010Cha, HHSIZE, 8090Cha, PerWhite, LnPopDen, MedHome, PerSomCol

b. Dependent Variable: PerUmEmp

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.182	.046		3.940	.000
GMA	.021	.006	.353	3.609	.000
8090Cha	.011	.010	.112	1.200	.233
PerWhite	-.079	.021	-.386	-3.749	.000
HHSIZE	.007	.013	.051	.559	.578
PerSomCol	-.104	.049	-.382	-2.107	.037

MedHome	-2.004E-007	.000	-.364	-2.101	.038
0010Cha	.012	.017	.063	.692	.490
LnPopDen	-.001	.003	-.042	-.333	.740
PCI	1.803E-006	.000	.319	1.482	.141

a. Dependent Variable: PerUmEmp

Median Home Value

The final regression model, which tested for the impacts of the GMA on median household income, also reported a high R Squared with .810 of the variance explained by the model. The GMA variable, household size population density, per capita income, and unemployment rate were all found to be statistically significant at a 95% confidence interval. Consistent with a number of previous studies, the growth management variable predicted a \$16,479.38 increase in housing value all else held constant.

Model Summary^b

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.900 ^a	.810	.796	24115.155

a. Predictors: (Constant), PerUmEmp, 8090Cha, HHSIZE, 0010Cha, LnPopDen, GMA, PerWhite, PCI, PerSomCol

b. Dependent Variable: MedHome

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-126071.292	45599.652		-2.765	.007
GMA	16479.377	5600.099	.155	2.943	.004
8090Cha	9703.672	9152.649	.052	1.060	.291
1 PerWhite	-26293.846	21310.927	-.071	-1.234	.220
HHSIZE	35162.803	12251.097	.134	2.870	.005
PerSomCol	99632.341	47185.341	.202	2.112	.037
0010Cha	-5328.700	16175.938	-.016	-.329	.742

LnPopDen	-5778.544	2865.882	-.131	-2.016	.046
PCI	8.092	.905	.789	8.942	.000
PerUmEmp	-184411.387	87790.685	-.102	-2.101	.038

a. Dependent Variable: MedHome

Discussion and Conclusions

Discussion

Throughout the body of this paper, I have explored Florida's Growth Management Act from three angles: (1) did the GMA create impacts which limited sprawl and contributed to the conservation of valuable agricultural and natural resources, (2) did the growth management act significantly negatively impacted the economic health of the state, and (3) did the claims of Gov. Rick Scott, State Senator Mike Bennett, and Barney Bishop that the GMA constituted an obstacle to economic growth in the state that had outlived its usefulness hold any merit.

As was found in previous studies by John Landis and Tim Chapin (among others), taken together these results suggest that the Growth Management Act has had, at most, a modest impact on population growth rates in Florida. U.S. Census estimates indicate that the state's population continues to grow at a rate well above the national average, despite already experiencing densities many times the national and regional averages. While over the last two decades, Georgia's growth rates have exceeded those found in Florida, my analysis suggests that this change speaks more to Georgia's rapid expansion than to Florida's decline, with Georgia's last two decades of growth ranking among the three highest rates in the last one hundred years for the state. That our regression model of population growth indicated that the GMA variable is not statically significant is little surprise.

Though the overall rate of growth does not appear to have been much affected by the GMA, the results of this study suggest the GMA does appear to have been successful in curbing the conversion of agricultural and forest lands to urbanized uses. Sanchez and Mandel previously found that growth rates in high density areas fell more dramatically between pre- and post-growth management eras than did those in low density areas, leading them to conclude that the act was more effective at reducing the

rate of development mid-density areas than at reducing rates in low density, rural environments. By contrast, our data indicating slowed rates of farmland and forest land conversion and declining rates of land urbanization suggest that when development did occur in exurban and rural environments, it is increasingly occurring in more compact forms than it had prior to the act's passage, often in as new urbanist and neo-ruralist development. Perhaps no clearer example of Florida's commitment to compact development exists than its ratio of single to multifamily housing building permits, which outpaced the regional competition by nearly 10% annually.

St. Lucie County, for example, has implemented a "Towns, Villages, and Countryside" plan, which calls for traditional neighborhood development and a strategy of creating overlay districts for "new settlement in the undeveloped areas [that] requires a sustainable growth pattern characterized by a mix of uses, building types and income levels as well as a pedestrian-friendly block and street network, ... [which] preserves a significant amount of public open space, promotes strategies for viable agriculture, and helps mitigate the environmental impact of new development in the area" (St. Lucie County 2010, 11-1). St. Lucie's TVC strategy mixes prescriptive standards, such as maximum allowable development programs within the designated areas, with incentives for developing within an established urban service boundary and a transferable development rights program (St. Lucie County 2010). More importantly, the plan limits all new development within the district to be in the form of towns and villages, created by a system of neighborhoods that manage water and wastewater comprehensively and allow for a significant amount of countryside. Strict requirements for these towns and villages, including minimum parcel size, generous open space requirements, and minimum zoning densities, are present to preserve the areas natural and agricultural elements.

St. Lucie County TVC Town Requirements

Size	
Min. Parcel Size for a Town located Outside of the USB:	625 acres
Min. Parcel Size for a Town located Inside of the USB:	225 acres
Maximum Parcel Size:	N/A
Open Space & Countryside	
Open Space & Countryside Required Outside the USB:	60% (50% Countryside min.)
Open Space & Countryside Required Inside the USB:	40% (Countryside min.)
Density Required in Net Developable Area*	
Min. Average Density required Inside USB:	6 dwelling units/ acre
Min. Average Density required Outside USB:	5 dwelling units/ acre

Source: St. Lucie County Comprehensive Plan

St. Lucie County TVC Village Requirements

Size	
Min. Parcel Size for a Village located Outside of the USB:	500 acres
Min. Parcel Size for a Village located Inside of the USB:	110 acres
Maximum Parcel:	624 acres
Open Space & Countryside	
Open Space & Countryside Required Outside the USB:	75% (65% Countryside min.)
Open Space & Countryside Required Inside the USB:	40% (Countryside min.)
Density Required in Net Developable Area *	
Min. Average Density required Inside USB:	5 dwelling units/ acre
Min. Average Density required Outside USB:	5 dwelling units/ acre

Source: St. Lucie County Comprehensive Plan

Planning strategies for growth management as comprehensive as in St. Lucie County, however, require a commitment not only from the local governments, but also from state government. The apparent decrease in county-level funding for comprehensive planning efforts over the GMA's final six years, raises questions about the act's ability to be effective without the state's contributing a significant source of funding necessary to maintain and implement current plans. Heavily reliant upon sales tax revenues from the tourism and entertainment industry, local governments are poorly financially equipped to continue to support planning initiatives in times of economic recession. In order to keep the system moving smoothly, then, state financial support is a necessary component. Unfortunately, the GMA's history is marked by a dichotomy between the legislature's "promised 'new fiscal reality,'" in which the state would provide nearly two-thirds of the funding through new state-level taxes and the

fiscal reality, in which it would fund less than half of the necessary amount (Nicholas and Chapin 2007). In fact, the state has, at times, also directly hampered the ability of local governments to utilize additional direct funding sources (Pelham 2014). Unable to invest the money in updating comprehensive plans adequately due to shrinking government revenues throughout the recession, local governments and developers were left holding the bag. As Pelham has argued, “the state’s failure to face up to this issue has undermined support for the growth management process among the development community and local government officials and impeded implementation of major growth management policies such as concurrency and compact form” (Pelham 2007, 14).

Rather than a head on discussion regarding the state’s failure to provide this funding, the discourse surrounding the GMA, instead, shifted to the potential harm to the state’s economic competitiveness, a red herring. Florida’s rapid and steep job-losses during the recession combined with state legislators’ short memories and ideological opposition to government regulation in any form to convince them that the Growth Management Act curtailed employment opportunities in the state. Lost in the debate, however, was the demonstrated fact that Florida led the region in annual employment growth in the years leading up to the recession and again emerged as the leading state for job creation between 2010 and 2011, prior to the GMA’s gutting. Even the real estate and construction industries, those jobs most at risk as a result of land regulation, outpaced their regional competitors both before and after the recession.

If this is the case, why then did our regression model attribute a 2.1% increase in unemployment to the GMA? The answer lies in the period in Florida’s history that the data represented. First, prior to the recession, Florida was issuing building permits at a rate that accelerated more rapidly than was sustainable, far surpassing those of other states in the region. While this simple fact, itself, lends credence to the belief that the GMA was, if anything, too lax rather than too restrictive in its regulation of land markets, it also portended a more economically problematic outcome: the residential land

markets in Florida were severely overbuilt to an extent well beyond that seen in other regional states. Thus, when the mortgage crisis induced an economic recession, Florida was positioned for disaster. Compounding these issues was Florida's industry mix which, with a core industries of tourism and entertainment, is particularly vulnerable to economic downturn. Thus the data for the period of analysis (2008 – 2012), picks up these regionally anomalously high levels of unemployment precipitated by the overbuilt residential market going into the economic recession and Florida's vulnerability to recession due to its favored industries.

An area of potential conflict with earlier research came in assessing the GMA's impact on per capita income. A.C. Nelson and David Peterman had previously found that growth management practices may be positively associated with increased personal income. Analysis of the data from the Florida Statistical Abstract supported Nelson and Peterman's contention, with Florida averaging between 12.6% and 38.2% higher than peer states. Controlling for a number of other variables, including education level, unemployment, and percentage of the population that is white, however, the regression model predicted a statistically significant negative correlation between per capita income and the GMA variable. In fact, the model suggested that being under the jurisdiction of the GMA was predictive of an \$895 decrease in per capita income. Two possible factors help explain this divergence between the regression model and the review of the Florida Statistical Abstract numbers. First, in the model, having some college experience was predictive of a \$15,034 increase over no college experience. In turn, 49% of Floridians have a minimum of some college education, while that value falls to just 45% in the control counties. Second, in exploring a related issue of poverty rates in Florida, Chapin offers the following: "At the heart of this incongruence is a Florida economy that remains exceedingly tied to its staples: tourism and entertainment. While these industries have been a major part of the state's economic growth in the last several decades, they traditionally pay less and offer fewer benefits than many other industries" (Chapin 2007, 125). In order to correct for this important difference, it would be

necessary to rerun the model with a variable taking into account the percentage of the economy in a county that is tied to the tourism and entertainment industry.

Also consistent with previous studies was the finding regarding median home values. Nearly two thirds of previous studies had found a negative correlation between growth management regulations and housing affordability (Connerly 2007, 264). Not only did our data show the Florida's median home value consistently measured above those in other regional states, the regression model suggested a \$16,479 increase in median home value within Florida. The explanation for this increased value is likely multifaceted. Through concurrency requirements, Florida was capitalizing the costs of infrastructure improvements into land values, thereby driving up home prices. This effect was intensified by charging impact and other development fees, which developers passed through in the sale of new homes. Further, the regulation restricted the supply of available land, which with a steadily increasing demand provided by Florida's region-leading growth rates, also reduces land (and, therefore housing) affordability. Finally, well-executed growth management programs can increase the amount of greenspace and levels-of-service available to community residents, thereby making them more desirable.

Taken in sum, these findings directly challenge that veracity of growth management opponents' claims that the act undermined Florida's economic competitiveness. At best, calling the Growth Management Act a 'job killing' bill is uninformed. At worst, it is a disingenuous attempt to obscure facts and to turn the public opinion against land market regulation through economic fear-mongering. In a public forum in Sarasota following the legislative session during which HB7207 was passed, State Senator Bennett, a developer himself, was asked, given the current surplus of housing in the state, how gutting the GMA would help create jobs. Unable to answer the question, he acknowledge that it may take years to have any positive economic impact (Pittman 2011). Former President of the Associate Industries of Florida president, Barney Bishop has even gone as far as to admit that DCA wasn't actually

that bad, but their unwillingness to cut deals forced lobbyist to convince legislators otherwise in order to keep building costs low: “DCA isn’t evil. They didn’t do a bad job across the board. It’s that they were a more difficult agency for the growth community to deal with than they had to be” (Pittman 2011).

The blame for the dismantling of the growth management act, doesn’t just lay with the development community. In many respects, the development community fell victim to a state legislature that failed to make good on a twenty-five year old promise to keep the full financial burden of concurrency from falling solely at their feet. Not only did the legislature not provide funding to local governments to fully implement their visions for a balancing of environmental and agricultural conservation with promoting economic development, while limiting sprawl, it hamstrung these governments’ ability to find alternative sources of funding, such as the cap on local government millage rates or the 1992 “save our homes” amendment to the state constitution, which prohibited them from raising property tax assessments for owner-occupied properties beyond the lesser of the increase in the consumer price index or three percent annually (Nicholas and Chapin 2007, 55). In playing the political game of refusing to raise taxes and even cutting taxes in the face of shortfalls, Florida’s legislature has not only failed to be everything to everyone, but have essentially doomed Florida to a future that the Growth Management Act was intended to prevent.

The analysis provided in this paper does have a few limitations, which should be mentioned here. First, much of the data available does not reach back adequately far to assess the pre- and post-growth management era conditions. Further, because the area of analysis is the state of Florida, it can be difficult to isolate the impacts of the Growth Management Act from those of other state-level policies or from economic characteristics of Florida’s industry mix and state funding and tax collection mechanisms. One possible solution for this would be to acquire planning expenditure data by jurisdiction for the entire duration of the act, categorize these jurisdictions by levels of planning expenditure per capita, and regress variations in spatial patterns and economic performance over these

categories. Finally, the impact of comprehensive planning is intended to be long range, and as such, can be difficult to definitively identify and attribute to the plan. Future research that fully account for these limitations would expand the understanding of the full range of effects of Florida's GMA.

Conclusion

With many of the key provisions of the Growth Management Act no longer in effect, the state of Florida is now at a crossroads. The responsibility for ensuring a sustainable Florida has been punted to local governments, who now bear the burden of safeguarding their communities from sprawl and needless conversion of agricultural and natural lands. Doubtlessly, difficulties will arise as some communities take this charge seriously, while others do not, with the repercussions of poor planning decisions being felt by all. Some, such as Tom Pelham, have expressed hope that in October's midterm elections, progressive politicians might gain control of the legislature and restore key provisions of the act (Pelham 2014). The likelihood of such an outcome, however, is slim. Looking historically, midterm elections have been particularly unfavorable to the party of sitting U.S. presidents and most of the anti-regulation Tea Party legislators' seats appear secure (Street 2014). Instead, Pelham may be forced to accept the reality as it now exists: "It has been a rather sad experience to hear former governors, like Governor Bob Graham, talk about how 40 years of hard work - 40 years of hard work - have been dismantled in the twinkling of an eye with no deliberation, no forethought, simply responding to the desires of key lobbyists in Tallahassee" (Pelham 2014).

It is probably an oversimplification to attribute the act's demise to an abrupt shift in the state's political winds. During Governor Jeb Bush's administration, early seeds of HB7207 had been sown. Recall that the 2001 Growth Management Study Commission had recommended severely limiting the Department of Community Affairs' oversight authority, but at the time, such a position was not yet politically popular. A few years later, Chapin and Connerly documented declining levels of support for a

government role in managing growth across key demographics since the bill's inception. In their analysis they found support among Republicans had fallen 13.3% and support among independents had fallen a full 14% (Chapin and Connerly 2004). Ten years after Chapin and Connerly's study, it seems that this was only an early warning of what was to come. In future years, researchers will be able to look back on the Growth Management Act and explore the full impacts of the removal of its most important provisions. Given the current political climate and lack of public appetite for governmental invention in Florida, we can only sit back and hope for the best as local governments take the reins.

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