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## Speaker: Future lies in walkable communities

From staff reports

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With the cost of gas continuing to climb and more than a million more South Carolina residents expected by 2025, state and local leaders as well as everyday citizens are trying to devise ways to shape future growth.

The traditional model of bulldozing virgin land on the edge of town to make way for businesses and new subdivisions isn't working anymore, a leading authority on smart growth practices told a group of local leaders and business people Friday.

Parris Glendening, former governor of Maryland and president of the Washington-based Smart Growth Leadership Institute, lectured for nearly 90 minutes about the importance of managing growth. He was the final speaker in this year's Building Our Future series, which is sponsored by Partners for Active Living, the Spartanburg Area Chamber of Commerce and Upstate Forever.

"The truth is almost every single subdivision constructed in the United States puts local government further in the hole," said Glendening, adding that the cost of roads, sewer and other services outpace revenue from property taxes.

Add to that equation higher gas prices and the younger generation's demand for amenity-rich, walkable communities, and many cities are struggling to adjust to the new societal shift.

Glendening encouraged local leaders to increase housing density and create walkable communities as they rethink land use patterns.

"Traditional, walkable communities are selling out faster than they can be built," Glendening said.

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