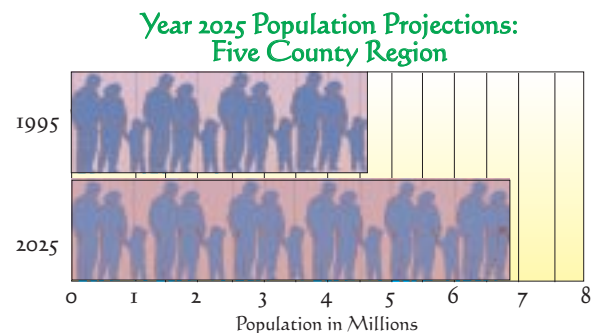


*Eastward Ho! Development Futures:
Paths to More Efficient Growth in Southeast Florida*
a study by Dr. Robert W. Burchell of the Rutgers Center for Urban Policy Research
May 1999

Message from Carolyn Dekle, Executive Director of the South Florida Regional Planning Council

Thank you for visiting the South Florida Regional Planning Council's web site. We are pleased to provide to you the Executive Summary of the recently completed study *Eastward Ho! Development Futures: Paths to More Efficient Growth in Southeast Florida* by Dr. Robert W. Burchell of the Rutgers Center for Urban Policy Research.

Dr. Burchell is a nationally recognized expert on growth management strategies and the effect of these strategies on the cost of providing services. The study completed for southeast Florida attempts to estimate the cost of accommodating projected regional growth of 2.4 million people in a region that currently has 5 million residents. This cost is projected to be more than \$10.5 billion over the next 20 years if current "sprawl" development patterns continue into the future. The report suggests that the region has an opportunity to realize a cost savings of nearly \$6.15 billion through infill development and redevelopment of existing urban areas. By directing a greater portion of future regional growth into the Eastward Ho! corridor at moderately higher densities, the region can realize nearly half of the \$6.15 billion in savings in housing costs because infrastructure already exists or new infrastructure can be economically built to connect to existing services.



Commissioned by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the State of Florida Department of Community Affairs, the study compares the resource consumption and costs of extending two different development patterns into the future in Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach, Martin, and St. Lucie counties. The first development pattern is *Existing* development or sprawl, which includes unlimited outward development, leapfrog development, and low density. The second development pattern is *Alternative* or more compact development, which holds a greater portion of future development close to previously developed areas and emphasizes infill redevelopment.



Courtesy of the Miami Herald

Resource consumption and other costs are viewed in four different substantive areas: (1) land consumption; (2) public infrastructure (roads, sewer and water lines); (3) housing costs; and (4) fiscal impacts. Some of Dr. Burchell's findings include land savings of 67,725 acres of developable land, 52,856 acres of prime farmland, and 13,887 acres of fragile environmental lands; savings of \$157 million in water capital costs, \$135.6 million in sewer capital costs, and \$1.54 billion in local road costs if the region pursues "alternative" or compact development versus existing development patterns.

Given the many needs of our communities, and the limited resources that are available to meet these needs, the opportunity to realize and redirect a portion of these savings into community revitalization efforts makes urban infill an issue that should be studied more closely. While the study is specifically targeted at the five “Eastward Ho!” counties, and it discusses the hidden costs of suburban sprawl and the possible benefits of promoting a policy of infill development and community revitalization in our region, Dr. Burchell’s general conclusion, that urban infill is on the whole less expensive than urban sprawl, is applicable to communities throughout our state and nation.

In order to encourage the revitalization and redevelopment of our older communities, and realize the potential savings associated with pursuing a policy of urban infill and redevelopment, we must first address some critical issues in our communities. These issues include the need to identify additional resources for water and sewer infrastructure upgrades, improved regional and local transit opportunities, and increased homeownership and affordable housing opportunities. We must develop strategies that prevent the displacement of existing residents as communities are revitalized, promote environmental justice, reduce economic disparity, and promote environmental restoration in both our natural and urban areas. Additional issues include urban design issues, the quality of our schools and the educational system, and public safety.



The good news is that our region is already making progress in many of these areas. However, much work remains to be done. If you are interested in learning more about the Eastward Ho! initiative, you will find a lot of information here at the Council’s web page. You are also welcome to contact our office at 954-985-4416 or reach us via email at: admin@sfrpc.com.

Thanks again for visiting with us.

**Eastward Ho! Development Futures:
Paths to More Efficient Growth in Southeast Florida**
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