

II. Land Use and Public Facilities

1. Overview

In 1995, the Land Use and Public Facilities Workgroup developing the *Strategic Regional Policy Plan for South Florida* concentrated on enhancing the framework for land use decisions; where to direct future development and redevelopment; the revitalization of deteriorating urban areas; and how to ensure the adequacy and effective delivery of public facilities and services in the region.

The region is projected to have a population increase over the next twenty (20) years of approximately 1 million people. A diverse mix of land uses, along with adequate and appropriate public facilities and services, will be needed to accommodate the anticipated growth. The cost of development will have an impact on all residents, businesses, agriculture and the natural environment. Land use and public facilities decisions will also impact sustainable development in the region. Key indicators of the system can track these impacts. Summarized below are the results of tracking several indicators:

- The rate of population increase and growth and development is not consistent throughout the region. There is more pressure to develop on the western edges of Miami-Dade and Broward Counties than there is in most of the older, historic urban core areas. The rate of development in Monroe County is substantially affected by the County's Rate of Growth Ordinance.
- It is currently projected that future regional growth will trend predominantly toward the west, toward the Everglades ecosystem and away from the historic, urban communities lying to the east. Although there has been some increased movement toward the east during the last few years, numerous impediments to eastern community revitalization still exist. These impediments include the quality of public schools and school performance, the perception of crime, and the availability and quality of water and sewer infrastructure.
- Consistent information is not available for existing and planned public facilities that are provided by different local, regional, state and federal authorities in the region.
- Resources are not available to adequately operate, maintain, upgrade and expand public facilities, such as water, wastewater and storm water, where they exist, to meet current needs. The result is public facilities that are not adequate to meet current needs.
- Public facilities, such as water and wastewater, do not exist in some areas of the region, including within existing urban centers.

As we look forward to the next 20 years we need to critically review our current strategic policy framework. The increase in population will impact sustainable development in the region. The current trends should be addressed in order to maintain quality of life in our region.

2. Assessment of Land Use and Public Facilities Goals

Goal:

- 2.1 Achieve long-term efficient and sustainable development patterns by guiding new development and redevelopment within the region to areas which are most intrinsically suited for development, including areas (1) which are least exposed to coastal storm surges; (2) where negative impacts on the natural environment will be minimal; and (3) where public facilities and services already exist, are programmed or, on an aggregate basis, can be provided most economically.

Indicator: Increase the proportion of the region's population growth which occurs outside the Category 3 Hurricane Evacuation area, away from Natural Resources of Regional Significance, and in proximity to designated transportation corridors or within Transportation Concurrence Exception Areas.

Proxy Indicator:

- (1) The rate of growth in population versus the rate of growth in households.
- (2) Land in single family housing versus multi-family housing.
- (3) For Monroe County, the rate of growth of seasonal population.
- (4) For Monroe County, the rate of growth based on the County's Rate of Growth Ordinance and the carrying capacity of the land.

Analysis

Population growth has occurred within the existing framework of the Urban Development Boundaries and the Monroe County Rate of Growth Ordinance. The Urban Development Boundaries have not been expanded in ten years, coastal area densities have been maintained or decreased, and development has occurred within existing urban areas and revitalization activities have increased. The Region is projected to increase by approximately 1 million people between the years 2000 and 2020. Although development has occurred within existing urbanized areas during the last few years, numerous impediments to redevelopment of urban areas still exist. For example, public facilities, such as water and wastewater, are not available in some communities and inadequate in others. The rate of development in Monroe County is substantially affected by the County's Rate of Growth Ordinance.

Monroe County's growth and land use is constrained by a number of issues. An area of Critical State Concern, a vast majority of the county is environmentally sensitive. Lack of adequate infrastructure for stormwater and wastewater magnify the effects of population growth in near shore coastal waters. The

desirability of the county as a place to live and the limited amount of developable land have made land costs prohibitively expensive, leading to shortages of affordable housing and adequate school sites. With infrastructure and the environment showing signs of stress and nearly 15,000 undeveloped platted lots in existence, Monroe County has instituted a Rate of Growth Ordinance (ROGO) to manage the impacts of growth over time. In addition, a Florida Keys Carrying Capacity Study is currently being undertaken by the Florida Department of Community Affairs and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to determine the ability of the Florida Keys ecosystem, and the various segments thereof, to withstand all impacts of additional land development activities.

Implications

The current trends and existing efforts undertaken for development and redevelopment, particularly regarding urban core revitalization, need to be continued, sustained and expanded. This will decrease pressure on the Everglades Ecosystem and the lands needed for water conservation. These trends and efforts include:

1. A movement within developed communities by residents seeking a more urbanized life style has begun as many communities undertake community revitalization activities and promote moderate increases in density and intensity, mixed-use, pedestrian friendly development which features good urban design.
2. The ongoing transformation of some of the region's predominantly suburban communities into new activity centers which offer a range of activities and services (commercial, retail, office, manufacturing, entertainment etc.)
3. Communities throughout the region are promoting the creation of town centers which feature mixed use development and pedestrian friendly design.
4. Mixed use commercial, retail, and in some cases, residential development projects featuring transportation oriented design along transportation facilities such as I-95 and Dixie Highway are underway in Miami-Dade and Broward Counties.
5. The passage of state brownfields legislation and Southeast Florida's designation as a National Brownfields Showcase Community has spurred the remediation and redevelopment of brownfield sites in many of the region's communities.
6. The implementation of the Florida Keys Carrying Capacity Study after it is completed and evaluated.

Goal:

- 2.2 Revitalize deteriorating urban areas.

Indicator: Increase the percent of public and private investment which is directed to urban areas that are in need of rehabilitation.

Proxy Indicator:

- (1) Increasing number of community visioning programs
- (2) Increase in multi-family or mixed-use residential developments
- (3) Number of brownfield sites redeveloped
- (4) Code revisions to promote flexible urban designs for schools and mixed-use development

Many urban core communities are beginning to have serious discussions about revitalization and have established Community Redevelopment Areas, Transportation Concurrency Exception Areas, Regional Activity Centers and have embarked in a variety of visioning programs to engage residents in the improvement of their communities. Many of these visioning programs work to encourage the creation of compact, pedestrian-friendly communities and the preservation of remaining open spaces. The need to restore the Everglades ecosystem and protect the region's water supply has linked together the work of complementary organizations such as the National Audubon Society and its Everglades Restoration Campaign, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and its Sustainable Everglades Initiative, as well as Florida's Sustainable Communities Network, National Brownfields Partnership, and the Department of Community Affairs Eastward Ho! Initiative in partnership with the South Florida and Treasure Coast Regional Planning Councils.

Revitalization Efforts

There is a host of individual, group, public, private and civic sector activities that help to promote urban revitalization. The Table below provides some examples of these activities. These activities are complementary but not always coordinated. Revitalization cannot be achieved overnight, but encouraging these types of activities will help to facilitate additional revitalization and reduce the risks and obstacles that are inherent in the revitalization process. Whether its improving the quality of schools, reducing crime, improving infrastructure, or redevelopment, some of the more noticeable revitalization efforts encourage and promote continuous improvement in the quality of life in the region include:

Implications

Urban revitalization is critical to the sustainability of the region. In the *Rival Development Trends Cost Analysis Study* conducted by Dr. Robert Burchell of Rutgers University the potential benefits of infill development would have the potential benefits of cost savings of \$6.1 billion, increase development markets and tax base with 694,968 new jobs, saving 13,887 acres of fragile environmental lands, and savings of \$1.54 billion in local road costs.

Examples of Revitalization Efforts in South Florida

Federal Empowerment Zone Designation of neighborhoods between the Port of Miami and Miami International Airport.

Front Porch Florida Designation of Opa-Locka and Dorsey Riverbend.

Urban Infill Grant Assistance Program that will provide \$2.5 million for the development of revitalization plans and plan implementation projects.

The passage of Florida Forever that will provide nearly \$170 million annually for the purchase of environmentally sensitive lands, including parks for urbanized areas.

Federal Brownfields Showcase Communities Designation and brownfield redevelopment such as Lowe s in Oakland Park.

Eastward Ho! Design Charrettes for Downtown Kendall, Miami Shores/El Portal, North Miami Beach, Overtown, and Oakland Park.

Urban code development for Downtown Kendall.

Community Investment Grants for Homestead, Goulds, East Little Havana, Little Haiti, North Miami Beach, Ojus and Dania Beach.

Visioning exercises in South Miami, Miami Design District, Biscayne Boulevard, Pompano Beach, Hollywood and Broward County.

The extension of the U.S. 1 Busway and the development of an Urban Transit Village in Homestead.

Tri-Rail double tracking and downtown shuttles.

Revitalization of Las Olas Boulevard, designation of Downtown Ft. Lauderdale Regional Activity Center, and the City of Ft. Lauderdale Community Area Planning Initiative.

Mixed-use developments such as Shops of Sunset Place and the Village of Merrick Park.

First residential and mixed-use development in Downtown Hollywood in over 30 years and revitalization of Hollywood Boulevard and Harrison Street.

Proposed Town Centers in Aventura, Coral Springs and Weston.

Mixed-Use Transit Oriented Design of development for Cypress Creek Park and Ride facility.

Source: South Florida Regional Planning Council

Goal:

2.2 Revitalize deteriorating urban areas.

Indicator: Increase the percent of public and private investment which is directed to urban areas that are in need of rehabilitation.

Proxy Indicator: Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) Scores, Florida Writes! scores, and A+ Education Reform Grading System. Target Grade: 8 (Middle School)

Analysis

Attracting and maintaining a portion of future regional growth into the region's urban core has long been considered an important component of efforts to restore the Everglades and revitalize and improve the quality of life in our older communities. While there are many factors that impact the location decisions of existing and future residents, the quality of education in the public schools is often cited as a key determining factor in the final selection of where prospective homebuyers choose to purchase a home. Existing public school construction standards constrain the location of new schools in the urban core due to parcel size requirements.

Measuring School Performance

Factors that impact school performance include, but are not limited to, the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (poverty), class size, the rate at which students move into or out of the school population during the school year (mobility / stability), school attendance rates, school suspension rates, dropout rates, teacher qualifications, and english language proficiency.

The Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test, or FCAT, was developed to measure whether students are meeting math and reading standards set by the state. It includes questions in which students must explain how they reached their answers. Fourth-graders are tested in reading, fifth-graders are tested in math, and eighth and tenth graders are tested in both. Florida Writes! tests the communications skills of Florida's fourth-, eighth- and 10th graders each January. These tests are the two major indicators of whether a school will be considered to be "failing" and whether its students may qualify for vouchers in the future under the state's new A+ education reform plan. The state's new A+ education reform plan requires all schools to receive a report card on how well they perform. Schools will receive grades from A to F and will receive rewards or sanctions depending on their performance.

Here's what the school grades mean:

- A Reading, math and writing test scores meet the state's highest criteria and attendance, dropout and suspension rates are better than state averages.
- B Reading, math and writing test scores meet the state's highest criteria.
- C Reading, math and writing test scores meet state's minimum criteria.
- D Reading scores or math scores or writing scores are below the state's minimum criteria.
- F Reading, math, and writing test scores are below the state's minimum criteria.

What is an "acceptable level" of achievement?

On the FCAT test: At least 60 percent of the students would have to earn a score that roughly equates to a D or better for the school to reach the "acceptable level." To assign an A or B under the grading system, at least 50 percent of the students have to earn a score of C or better.

On the Florida Writes! test: In middle school, at least 67 percent of the students have to score at the state average (about a C) or better to be acceptable. To assign an A or B under the grading system, at least 75 percent of the middle school students have to score better than the state average.

Findings

FCAT (1998, 1999), Florida Writes! (1997, 1998, 1999), and the state's new A+ education reform grading system data (1999) appear to support the assertion that school performance in eastern schools is inferior to school performance in newer, western suburbs.

Implications

Generally speaking, poor performing schools adversely impact the future performance of the students who attend them as well as a range of private investment decisions by existing and future residents and business interests. Better performing schools contribute greatly to the success of community stabilization and revitalization and economic development activities as community tax bases are improved by an influx of middle class residents seeking high quality schools. On the human side, lower performing schools tend to be attended predominantly by poorer, minority students who have limited school selection choices. Lower levels of educational attainment are related to lower levels of achievement in the later stages of life and a continuing cycle of poverty - a cycle that must be broken as the region moves into the 21st Century. Additionally, demographic projections indicate that minority groups will continue to comprise a greater portion of the regional population, making the existence of the educational equivalent of the "haves" and "have nots" particularly alarming. On a regional scale, reinvestment in lower performing

See ["A+ Education Reform Grading System, Public Middle Schools 1999" Map](#)

schools and increased school performance promises to be a powerful tool for improving the quality of life throughout the region. The elimination of disparities in school quality and performance throughout the region will enhance community and economic development activities, promote prosperity, reduce economic disparity and inequity, develop the region's human capital, enhance urban infill and redevelopment activities, and assist in the preservation of remaining environmental and agricultural lands by attracting future residents into existing urban areas.

Goal:

2.3 Enhance the economic competitiveness of the region and ensure the adequacy of its public facilities and services by eliminating the existing backlog, meeting the need for growth in a timely manner, improving the quality of services provided and pursuing cost-effectiveness and equitability in their production, delivery and financing.

Indicator: Reduce the disparity in the provision of service based on the service provider and the level or quality of service.

Proxy Indicator: (1) Cost comparisons of infrastructure costs by service provider. (2) Cost comparisons of providing new infrastructure versus retrofitting/upgrading existing infrastructure. (3) Disparity in impact fee rates.

Chart

COUNTY	NUMBER OF POTABLE WATER FACILITIES	NUMBER OF WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITIES
Broward	73	77
Miami-Dade	176	61
Monroe	2	312
Total	151	450

Source: Florida Department of Environmental Protection, 1998, Potable Water Systems and Wastewater Facilities Data Files

Analysis

Local governments in the Region have a substantial investment in public facilities and services. However, adequate public facilities and services do not exist in all areas of the region to serve existing and future needs, including existing urban centers. A significant problem has been the challenge to provide adequate and cost effective potable water and wastewater treatment facilities and services. The provision of services is fragmented and may be inadequate to meet current and future demands. Current data indicate that while there are 151 potable water and 450 wastewater treatment facilities in the Region, many areas do not have access to these centralized facilities. Most of the wastewater and potable water facilities are not large-scale systems and only serve individual businesses, churches, subdivisions or other site-specific land uses. For example,

approximately 30,000 of the roughly 76,000 homes in the City of Hollywood are not connected to the City's wastewater system. Approximately 50,000 people in the service area of the Miami-Dade Sewer and Water Department are not on a central water system. In the Marathon Wastewater Study Area there are 65 wastewater treatment plants and 1,081 permitted septic tank systems. In addition, resources are not available to adequately operate, maintain, upgrade and expand public facilities, such as water, wastewater and storm water, where they exist, to meet current and future needs. For example, the estimated cost to connect the 30,000 houses in the City of Hollywood not currently connected to a central wastewater system is \$210 million. In Key Colony Beach, which has a wastewater system that serves the entire City, needed upgrades and expansions to serve the City over the next 20 years will cost approximately \$2.6 million.

Implications

The success of continued growth and revitalization in Southeast Florida is affected by the ability of the Region's public facilities and services to handle existing and increased demand. Without adequate facilities, growth and revitalization will be hampered.