

You are not logged in. (Log in | Create account | Subscriber Center | Contact Us | Bookmark Us)

Search



51° Overcast 5 Day Forecast | Radar



- Home News Opinion Tell Willie Obits Arrests Sports Couples Entertainment Events Movies Restaurants Classifieds

Step Up - Scale Down

Click here for more information

Taste of Home Cooking School Click here for more information

Experts warn of future Upstate sprawl

Development could devour more than 1 million acres by 2030

E-mail story Discuss story iPod friendly version



By Carlos Galarza (Contact / Staff Bio)

March 28, 2008 - 05:36 p.m. EST

SENECA — At the rate that development is projected to gobble up green space in the Upstate region in the next 22 years, local governments should start planning now to avoid suffocating sprawl.

A planning expert from the Clemson University Strom Thurmond Institute and an Upstate Forever official who advocates protecting resources from uncontrolled growth issued the warning Thursday night during a packed FOLKS forum at Duke Energy's World of Energy.

Jeffrey Allen presented growth projections from a Strom Thurmond Institute study showing growth projections for eight Upstate counties. The study extrapolated a growth or sprawl ratio of 5.1 percent in the region by 2030 based on the pattern of growth and land development from 1990 to 2000. The ratio means that for every 10 percent increase in population growth, developed land will increase by 50 percent.

Allen told the audience that he had just read an article about the fastest growing cities in the nation that placed Atlanta and Charlotte among the top 10. He said those two cities at opposite ends of the Interstate 85 corridor that take in the Upstate region would continue to grow rapidly, "and there's going to be spillover for sure."

Allen said that using the 5 to 1 ration projection, developed land in the Upstate region would go from 500,000 acres in 2000 to 1,522,891 acres in 2030. He projected a map showing the developed land in red. He called it a bloody sight.

Although the population growth rate is going to stay the same during the next 25 to 30 years, Allen said sound comprehensive planning could change the land development ratio down from 5 to 1 to as low as 1 to 1.

"It's not an impossible thing to do if certain things are done," Allen said.

Upstate Forever Executive Director Brad Wyche echoed Allen's warning.

"If this is not a wake up call, then I don't know what is," Wyche said. "We're going to look a lot like Atlanta in 2030.

The eight Upstate counties in the Strom Thurmond Institute study included Anderson, Pickens, Greenville and Spartanburg. Although Oconee County was not included because of funding limitations, Wyche said all the projections apply to it also.

Wyche challenged every county in the Upstate, including Oconee, to start a Conservation Bank. He said counties could use the same formula as the South Carolina Conservation Bank, which collects \$15 million to \$18 million a year by putting aside a portion from deed-recording revenues. Counties also get a share from deed-recording revenues, and they too could set aside part of it for conservation.

Or counties could follow Charleston's lead in using revenue from a half-cent sales tax to fund conservation, Wyche said.

State Sen. Thomas Alexander, R-Walhalla, as well as Oconee County Council Chairman George Blanchard, and Pickens County Planning Commission Chairman DeWitt Stone attended the forum.

ADVERTISEMENT: Fire Magic patio & fireside store advertisement with image of a patio grill and contact info (864) 888-4413

ADVERTISEMENT: Allstate logo and text 'TO SEE HOW MUCH YOU COULD SAVE, You're in good hands.'

Most Discussed / Most E-mailed: Tell Willie: 4/2/08 (4 comments), Oconee County inmate could face federal case (2 comments), Tell Willie: 4/1/08 (10 comments)

Get home delivery of the Daily Journal/Messenger for as little as 30 cents a day! Click here to sign-up.

Pickens & Oconee County	New Homes in Lake Wylie
Keowee Mountain, Six Mile SC Pickens and Oconee County SC	Minutes to Charlotte and Airport Special Offers Now Available

Comments

Readers are solely responsible for the content of the comments they post here. Comments are subject to the site's terms and conditions of use and do not necessarily reflect the opinion or approval of Eagle Media. Readers whose comments violate the terms of use may have their comments removed or all of their content blocked from viewing by other users without notification.

Post your comment

Commenting requires free upstatetoday.com registration.

Username:

Password: (Forgotten your password?)

Comment:

- Sections [Local](#) / [State](#) / [Nation](#) / [World](#) / [Sports](#) / [Weather](#) / [Entertainment](#) / [Business](#) / [Contests](#) / [Movie listings](#) / [Events calendar](#) / [Classifieds](#)
- upstatetoday.com [Contact us](#) / [Privacy policy](#) / [Staff](#) / [Advertise](#) / [Subscribe now](#)
- Submit [Submit an obituary](#) / [Submit a birth](#) / [Submit an anniversary, wedding announcement or engagement](#) / [Submit an event](#)
- RSS [View all RSS feeds](#)

Online Contents of this site are © Copyright 2008 Edwards Group. All rights reserved. See our terms of use for RSS feeds.