

Development vs. Environment SCENARIO SHEET

The coastal city of Springfield has been contacted by a real estate developer that would like to build a mixed use neighborhood on the eastern edge of town, near the seashore. The development would include high-end homes, luxury town-homes, and many affordable apartments. Within walking distance of the residential area would be shopping areas. A proposed coal-fired power plant and concrete factory on the site would provide electricity and jobs for up to one thousand residents of Springfield.

On one hand, the recent economic downturn has left many citizens of Springfield without jobs. This has put a strain on city resources, as more and residents can not afford their homes and must live on the streets. Even those who still have homes are forced to borrow heavily from the bank or take on menial, low-paying jobs to support their families. Crime is increasing in the city and suicides are at an all-time high.

The proposed development would bring many people back to work in well-paying jobs and related business, like retail shops and restaurants, would likely sprout up as well. The forecasts created by the real estate developer predict a complete revitalization of Springfield over the next ten years.

Environmentalists, however, are very concerned. The ecologically sensitive location of the proposed development is very close to wetlands and forests that support many important species. Construction alone could cause untold damage to the local habitats, they say. Not to mention the increased industrial and residential growth that would likely overburden Springfield's wastewater treatment facilities.

Some residents have complained that insufficient environmental impact studies have been completed. They worry that the full effect of this huge building project is not really known. The coastal location that will make the new homes highly desirable will also bring in tremendous tax money for improving the city. But, the shoreline environment is the most vulnerable location in the city.