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The Hollywood Community Plan...High Density Housing

1 message

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NEWGEOGRAPHY

High-density Housing

by [Tony Recsei](#) 08/31/2011



Citizens in major cities are becoming increasingly unhappy about what they perceive as the escalating deterioration in their quality of life - traffic congestion, overloaded public transport, unaffordable housing for young people, increases in the costs of basic services and overcrowding.

We should start out by making it clear that we have no issue with anyone that *prefers* living in a high-density area .

The premise is that high-density living is better for the environment.

They say that people will use their cars less and that greenhouse gas emissions will be greatly reduced.

While these two propositions sound very much like commonsense the unfortunate fact is that the data does not bear them out.

The underlying research shows that the actual *travel energy* used by dwellers in inner suburbs is more than those in the outer suburbs.

When domestic energy is added to travel energy, the energy total for people in the inner suburbs is 22 per cent more than those living in the outer suburbs.

Traffic congestion increases whenever high-density policies are imposed wherever you are in the world.

Any slight increase that may occur in the proportion of people using public transport is overwhelmed by the greater number of people squeezed into that area.

The resulting congestion causes higher fuel consumption and dangerous exhaust emissions.

Many people still require their cars for getting to the many workplaces, sporting facilities, and relatives and friends homes not easily reached by public transportation and for transporting items that are impractical aboard public transportation.

High density advocates claim that high-density saves money.

This is palpable nonsense.

We are all acutely aware that high-density policies have resulted in a dramatic rise in the price of housing.

We are also conscious of substantial rises in the cost of services such as electricity, water and sewerage due to the incredibly inefficient modifications required to increase capacity in areas originally designed for lower densities.

A tragic and often overlooked failure of high-density policies is the adverse effect on human health. There is a considerable body of peer-reviewed research proving the link between density and ill health. Those forcing high-density onto communities that do not want it, should hang their heads in shame.

We reiterate that we have no issue with those of us that *prefer* living in a high-density area.

What we object to, is having high density policies based on demonstrably faulty premises forced upon people .

This is especially so when the result is maddening traffic congestion, more greenhouse gases, a creaking and overloaded infrastructure, the young and disadvantaged unable to afford their own home and poorer health outcomes.

(Dr) Tony Recsei has a background in chemistry and is an environmental consultant.