CHAPTER 2

SOIL SURVEYS AND THE REGIONAL LAND USE PLAN

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CONSTRUCTION, research, and testing activities at the Cape Kennedy space center (then called Cape Canaveral) during the decade prior to 1962 had generated an economic transformation unprecedented in the peacetime history of the United States. Explosive growth conditions in and around the Cape created problems and potentials that demanded long-range as well as immediate attention. A multi-county organization was needed to assemble information and provide guidance to cope with the chaotic situation. In February 1962, appointed representatives from the six Florida counties nearest the Cape met to establish a Regional Planning Council.

The Council assigned top priority to early completion of a region-wide plan for future development. Such a task was indeed formidable. The six-county area covered more than 6,000 square miles, contained almost 700,000 people, and had experienced little or no comprehensive planning at any level of government.

After recruiting a small, professionally-trained planning staff, the Council embarked in late 1962 upon what turned out to be a unique work program. This program produced the desired plan in the remarkably short time of less than 12 months. Financed in part by a grant from the federal Housing and Home Finance Agency, key activities included:

1) Retention of a qualified consultant to furnish aerial photographs and appropriate base maps of the entire Region. Through interpretation of the new photographs, an up-to-date inventory of existing land use patterns was quickly accomplished.

2) Formation of two special advisory groups. The first of these, designated as "Panel A," was composed of state agency officials, university representatives, and a soil scientist from the USDA Soil Conservation Service in Gainesville. The second group, of "Panel B," was made up of nationally recognized specialists in fields such as population forecasting, industrial development, resource conservation, and

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