

The cost of **GROWTH**

- Each new single-family house built requires \$20,000 to \$30,000 or more in public infrastructure to provide water, sewers, storm drainage, roads, fire stations, schools, libraries and other community facilities.
- Urban development in North America has covered more land in the last 50 years than in all previous history.
- Urban sprawl in the U.S. is consuming 2.2 million acres of land per year or 256 acres of land every hour.* At this rate, new development is covering an area equivalent in size to the state of Indiana every 10 years.
- Almost half of the land being developed is farmland (cropland or pastureland).
- Between 1970 and 1990 the population of the U.S. increased at a rate of about 1% a year. But the number of housing units increased at twice that rate – about 2% a year.
- Between 1970 and 1990 the size of the average new home increased from 1,500 square feet to more than 2,000 square feet while the average number of persons in each house declined from 3.1 to 2.6.
- From 1969 to 1990, the number of vehicles increased 6 times faster than the U.S. population. 25% or more of urban land area is devoted to auto travel.
- The average North American citizen consumes 5 times more resources than the average world citizen.
- On average, each North American requires 11 to 13 acres of ecologically productive land to supply his/her current consumption levels. By contrast the average resident of India has an “ecological footprint” of only 1 acre.
- If everyone on Earth had the same levels of consumption as North Americans, we would need 3 planets to satisfy our demands.
- In the U.S., we have lost 95% of our old-growth forests, 55% of our wetlands, and 99% of our native prairies.

From Better, Not Bigger by Eben Fodor

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