

## What is Urban Sprawl?

Urban sprawl is the spread of city buildings and house with the expansion of human population in the surrounding area away from the central urban area. It is the migration from overcrowded and populated towns and cities to surrounding rural environment which then causes residential developments or projects to contract more homes, shops, schools and businesses. This usually results in low density, monofunctional, usually car-dependent communities.

### The World and Urban Sprawl

Urban sprawl is a general problem in the world with many of the world's countries. Some countries with very small land mass have built upwards usually four to seven storeys high and narrow streets. Some countries are shrinking due to the population migrating which then causes other cities to grow. 37% of all future urban growth is expected to happen in China, India and Nigeria. Due to urban sprawl the world's oil prices are rising and carbon constraint is becoming increasingly untenable. Urban sprawl has many effects to many countries in the world. Most megacities (10-20 million) live in urban settlements and megacities, mostly in Asia are swamped with so many people that basic supply of housing, clean water and sanitation is difficult. The total area covered by cities is set to triple over the next 40 years, which eats up farmland and threatens the planet's sustainability.

### Nature of Perth's Urban Sprawl

Over time Australia will grow into one of most urbanized countries in the world with nine out of ten of Australians living in urban areas. 85 % of our population lives on the cost as original Australian settlements were established near sources of fresh water or deep harbours. In Perth urban sprawl is the biggest social and economic problem that also provides environmental issues. Our urban sprawls is now recognized as one of the biggest in the world. If this spread continues at this rate experts say Perth's metropolitan area will stretch 270km, from Myalup to Lancelin by 2050. Based on the latest audit of population density of approximately 1000 cities over the world, ranked Perth the 59<sup>th</sup> biggest city, geographical size. However Perth had the lowest population of the top 60 non-US cities. This highlights the extent of urban sprawl in Perth which costs families a lot of money in transport, taxpayers who fund infrastructure in new suburbs. Long Point, south of Rockingham, was used by locals to four wheel drive, fish and camp. Driving in the dunes was prohibited as it was a restricted area with native flora and fauna which was fair but was now sold off to developers who bulldozed and flattened the vegetation. Perth is currently covering 6000 square km and is still spreading, expecting to double by 2050. It is also expected by then to reach a population of 3.8 million and 800000 houses to support all those people. Block sizes of houses have halved and prices soared over 400% since 1990. It is even predict that Perth's population density will double and the amount of vehicles owned will soon hit two million.

### What causes urban sprawl?

- Lack of Comprehensive Planning
- Little or no regional planning are on one of the major causes
- Officials in densely populated area plan in isolation without consulting nearby communities result in poorly planned developments on the outskirts of the urban center
- Instead of bridging the existing infrastructure and amenities of surrounding communities, the less densely populated areas often incur new public expenses for infrastructure improvements.
- Rapid Population Growth
- This is a major factor as sharp increases in residents, beyond capacity, create new communities
- Regional population continues to increase and spread further and further out from the urban center
- Likely for Perth residents to find themselves in medium or high density areas
- Subsidized Infrastructure Improvement
- Municipalities subsidize cost of infrastructure such as roads, sewerage, and public transport
- They are paid by the government and not coming from our pockets
- Consumer Preferences
- People want to design larger homes with more bedrooms and bigger yards
- House more space and more square footage which is more affordable and available than in crowded city centers
- Lower Land Rates
- Lower cost in land and building in outer suburbs than in inner
- Improved infrastructure
- Increased spending on certain types of infrastructure, including roads and electricity means they are higher quality
- Rise in standard living
- Increase of this and family income means people have the ability to pay to move to travel and commute longer distances
- Lower House Tax Rates
- Cities usually have higher property taxes

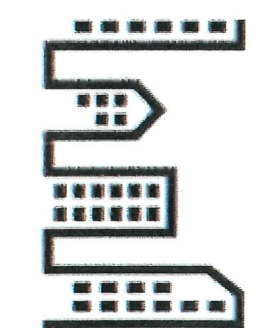
### Ways people intensify urban sprawl

People intensify this problem when they want to venture out further because of the lower land rates. In general there's been an increase of standard living in the outer suburbs. With higher family incomes they can afford to live there and commute longer distances. People also love places less trafficked and much calmer which is a major cause of sprawl. There's lower land and tax rates in outer suburbs. But the main way people intensify this problem is population growth which leads to more housing to accommodate this amount of people.

### Ways people can help reduce urban sprawl

There are government and non-government organisations already helping to try and decrease the growth of Perth. Some ways the public can help is learn about urban sprawl. A reason this is an ongoing problem and almost impossible to stop is because there is a lack of education about it. We need to be more educated about the negative impacts and take action to prevent irresponsible development. The community needs to take more action and challenge their local government and project councillors to vote in favour for more sustainable development methods. If enough community action is taken the government is then more likely to agree with the public and change. Planners and architects needs to promote smart growth with the public so more know when and where we should sprawl and we don't jeopardize land and community. We need to improve infill by building above one storey, develop a car-parking strategy and increase density in established inner suburbs. There are other ways to help solve this issue before our city and environment is ruined so if you want to know more contact your local government about ways they try to help reduce this problem.

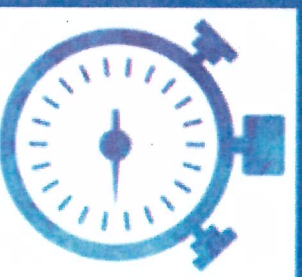
See over for sources



# PERTH URBAN SPRAWL



Growth spurt: The pink area shows where Perth's suburbs will expand by 2050. It will stretch 270km from Myalup to Lancelin



# GOT A MINUTE?

## SOCIAL DISADVANTAGES

- Increased public expenditure because of costs of infrastructure and buildings paid by taxpayers
- Increased traffic from more use of cars
- Health issues when overweight from use of cars
- Dependency on cars
- Impact on social lives as people live further out
- As some people who can afford to build in outer suburbs leave the poorer people are left in the inner areas there will be a segregation issue with one's social status
- Increasing fuel prices from longer travel times
- Burden for the state's economy for the money spent on infrastructure and services
- New communities are left without access to services

## ENVIRONMENTAL DISADVANTAGES

- Because of the greater usage of cars this creates more air pollution
- Rivers, lakes and wetlands are in bad shape
- 12 mammals, including the numbat, have disappeared from the metropolitan area in Perth
- 40 bird species home to Perth are in a serious decline
- Approximately 3% of native vegetation of the Swan coastal plain have been cleared and the remaining in poor condition
- Region's lakes and wetlands are a magnet to wildlife and are considered the city's most important ecological asset are drained, filled in or damaged
- The Environmental Protection Authority say "Perth's rivers and estuaries are in poor condition"
- The amount of land cleared every week is equivalent to 10 W.A.C.A grounds

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