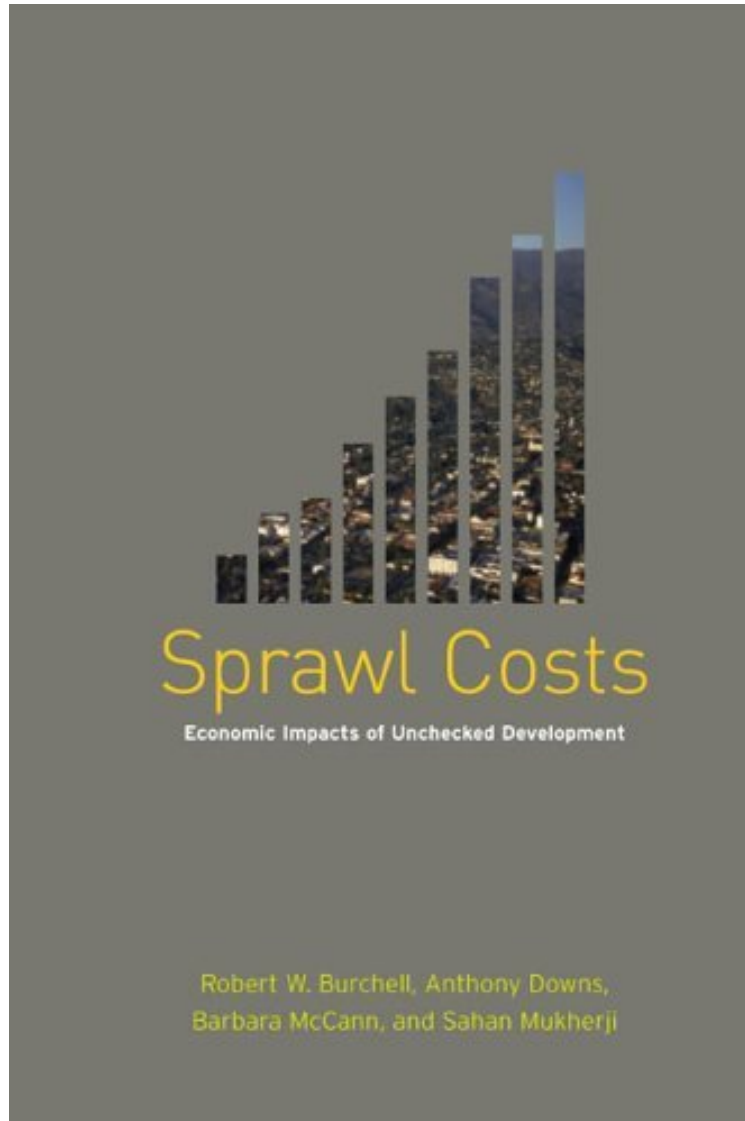


[Download free pdf] Sprawl Costs: Economic Impacts of Unchecked Development

# Sprawl Costs: Economic Impacts of Unchecked Development

*Robert Burchell*

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**Robert Burchell : Sprawl Costs: Economic Impacts of Unchecked Development** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Sprawl Costs: Economic Impacts of Unchecked Development:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Four StarsBy greggood price and fast delivery15 of 17 people found the following review helpful. Potent ammo against unchecked growthBy Rural GalAs a rural resident trying to help my town control predatory developers and manage issues of growth and land use, this book is a potent tool, a fact that is clearly disturbing to some who stand to profit handsomely from sprawl, like the automobile and oil companies, the

large-scale construction industries, millionaire developers, automobile manufacturers, and big-box national retailers. It's interesting that Diane Bast has written a negative review without mentioning, either here or in her .com profile, that she holds the title of Vice President of Internal Affairs for the benign-sounding (and Richard Mellon Schiafe-funded) "Heartland Institute," whose work she cites here. She also fails to mention that her husband Joseph L. Bast is also founder, president and CEO of the Institute, whose board of directors includes representatives from General Motors, Exxon-Mobil, and Philip Morris, along with various banks and insurance companies. The Institute has also over the years received substantial funding from the tobacco industry, among other large multinational companies. Of course, none of these board members mention these affiliations on Heartland's flowers-and-little-kids adorned official website, because that would be giving the real purpose of the organization away. I doubt that such an organization would subsidize any research which would support public transportation or de-emphasize converting far-flung farmland or open space into cookie-cutter subdivisions, so Ms. Bast's citations are unsurprising given her unmentioned affiliation to that organization. As for Mr. Cox, a quick check of his consultancy website reveals his purpose is to denigrate comprehensive planning efforts (because they supposedly put constraints on private ownership and the so-called "free market") and to promote gasoline-powered transportation over rail, public transportation and other environmentally- friendly alternatives. (In the 1920s and 30s, a consortium of carmakers and tire manufacturers bought up and dismantled existing electric trolley systems in major cities, and Mr. Cox and his colleagues are apparently dedicated to making sure that such systems stay dead.) In fact, despite Ms. Bast's derision of "politics" as a factor in the costs of sprawl, the Heartland Institute has been more than willing to use politics to its own corporate ends, including coordinating the blast-faxing of legislators to oppose or overturn anti-smoking, pro-environmental and health-care regulatory legislation that could cut into the profits of its benefactor companies. Despite her sprinkling her review with references to the poor and minorities, her organization believes in unfettered corporate power, first and foremost. I believe the reader should take that into account when reading her comments. The fact remains that sprawl enriches developers, car manufacturers, oil and real estate companies much, much more than individual homeowners, who find that as gas hits \$3 - \$4 a gallon and above, and their property taxes jump as overburdened small towns try to cope with the sudden need to build new schools and keep formerly little-used town roads in repair, that their "affordable" homes cost them more to own than they imagined -- and that the only part of the supposed wealth they generate is when they sell them, long after the strip-mall, big-box and cookie-cutter developers have pocketed their profits and gone elsewhere. There is a biological analog to unfettered and out of control growth. It's called "cancer." Cancer eventually kills its host. Sprawl kills community life and saps a region's vitality. This book lays out the evidence in black and white. For more information on the Heartland Institute, go to [...]

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Not for Practical Purposes  
By Christopher Wolfe  
I was hoping that this book would offer insights into the fiscal impact of development on municipalities. It doesn't. This book uses national level data to estimate the costs associated with urban expansion versus urban containment. This is an important aspect of regional sprawl, but it ignores the financial cost implications of different types of development forms. There is no discussion of how municipal costs vary with different residential densities or by land use category.

The environmental impacts of sprawling development have been well documented, but few comprehensive studies have examined its economic costs. In 1996, a team of experts undertook a multi-year study designed to provide quantitative measures of the costs and benefits of different forms of growth. *Sprawl Costs* presents a concise and readable summary of the results of that study. The authors analyze the extent of sprawl, define an alternative, more compact form of growth, project the magnitude and location of future growth, and compare what the total costs of those two forms of growth would be if each was applied throughout the nation. They analyze the likely effects of continued sprawl, consider policy options, and discuss examples of how more compact growth would compare with sprawl in particular regions. Finally, they evaluate whether compact growth is likely to produce the benefits claimed by its advocates. The book represents a comprehensive and objective analysis of the costs and benefits of different approaches to growth, and gives decision-makers and others concerned with planning and land use realistic and useful data on the implications of various options and policies.

"A mix of art and science, *Sprawl Costs* carefully spells out the implications of two futures—sprawl-as-usual vs. compact growth—and the results are sobering. The authors provide convincing evidence that governments, businesses and families can save money and avoid headaches if our leaders pursue smarter growth strategies."