

SPRAWL: the Enemy of the Greenbelt

If you love the Greenbelt and natural areas, you'll hate sprawl. Urban sprawl devours natural spaces, farmland, fresh water and clean air near the Greenbelt. This makes it easier for developers to demand access to land inside the Greenbelt. The costs of sprawl are like a bad credit card debt that you can never pay off.

SPRAWL: HARMING THE GREENBELT AND NATURAL SYSTEMS

Sprawl needs land that can easily be bulldozed and has few, if any, buildings on it. This means destroying farmland, wetlands, forests, and natural areas in and around the Greenbelt.





Whenever these precious lands are destroyed it weakens the entire Greenbelt system that protects us from flooding, cleans our water, stores carbon and grows our food. It's a death by a thousand cuts that needs to be stopped before the system is so eroded and damaged that there's no fixing it.

The Greenbelt and its surrounding ecosystems represent a legacy of natural spaces, local food and fresh water for future generations.

WHAT IS SPRAWL?

Sprawl is a 1950s recipe for building cities that:

-  **Bulldozes large amounts of farmland** and natural areas, often on the edge of towns and cities but also far removed from existing towns and cities.
-  **Builds isolated homes** in neighbourhoods far away from where people work and shop.
-  **Forces people to drive** to get around which means owning expensive vehicles and being surrounded by large amounts of road infrastructure, highways and parking lots.
-  **Allows developers to keep making profits by destroying farmland and natural areas** in and around the Greenbelt instead of building sustainable communities within already developed areas that include a mix of affordable housing types.

SPRAWL	VS.	Sustainable Communities
✗	 GREENBELT Friendly	✓
✗	 FARMER Friendly	✓
✗	 WILDLIFE Friendly	✓
✗	 Builds CLIMATE RESILIENCE	✓



ontario greenbelt alliance



environmental defence



YOU CAN STOP SPRAWL AND HELP THE GREENBELT TODAY!

THE COST OF SPRAWL

Sprawl is the most expensive way to build towns and cities for growing populations:

Sprawl significantly raises your property taxes. Sprawl needs much more infrastructure (roads, sewers, and bridges) to service residents than sustainable communities designed for walking and transit.

Sprawl makes your energy bills and fuel costs much higher and pollutes the air. Bigger homes need more heating and cooling. Driving burns more gas just to get around.

Sprawl worsens the climate crisis. Sprawl uses more fossil fuel energy making the climate crisis worse than sustainable communities.

Sprawl destroys our ability to feed ourselves. Once built on, farmland is lost forever and we lose access to fresh, healthy local food. We become more reliant on imported food as the climate crisis worsens global food scarcity.

Sprawl destroys the natural systems that provide us with vital free gifts. We lose wetlands and natural spaces and the free clean air and water they create. And we lose natural systems that help us get through the climate crisis (eg. flood protection, storing carbon, habitat for pollinators, etc...).

Sprawl makes you car dependent. Low density neighbourhoods make it too pricey to provide good public transit service. Most people are forced to own and operate a second car.

Right now, many municipalities are discussing where they will build homes for future residents. Most developers want sprawl. But, **more and more local community members are pushing back against sprawl and demanding more Greenbelt-friendly sustainable communities.**

Contact your local Councillor today and let them know you do NOT support more sprawl. Instead, demand Greenbelt-friendly, **sustainable communities** that are walkable, transit-focused communities with a variety of affordable homes for different incomes and stages of life.





Want more information on sprawl?

Environmental Defence Canada: **Who Pays for Sprawl** (<https://environmentaldefence.ca/who-pays-for-sprawl/>)

Smart Prosperity Institute: **The Cost of Sprawl** (https://institute.smartprosperity.ca/sites/default/files/sp_suburbansprawl_oct2013_opt.pdf)

Like this factsheet?

Find more at greenbeltalliance.ca

SPRAWL	VS.	Sustainable Communities
✗	 CLIMATE Friendly	✓
✗	 Affordable, MIXED HOUSING	✓
✗	 Affordable PROPERTY TAXES	✓
✗	 Affordable ENERGY BILLS	✓

