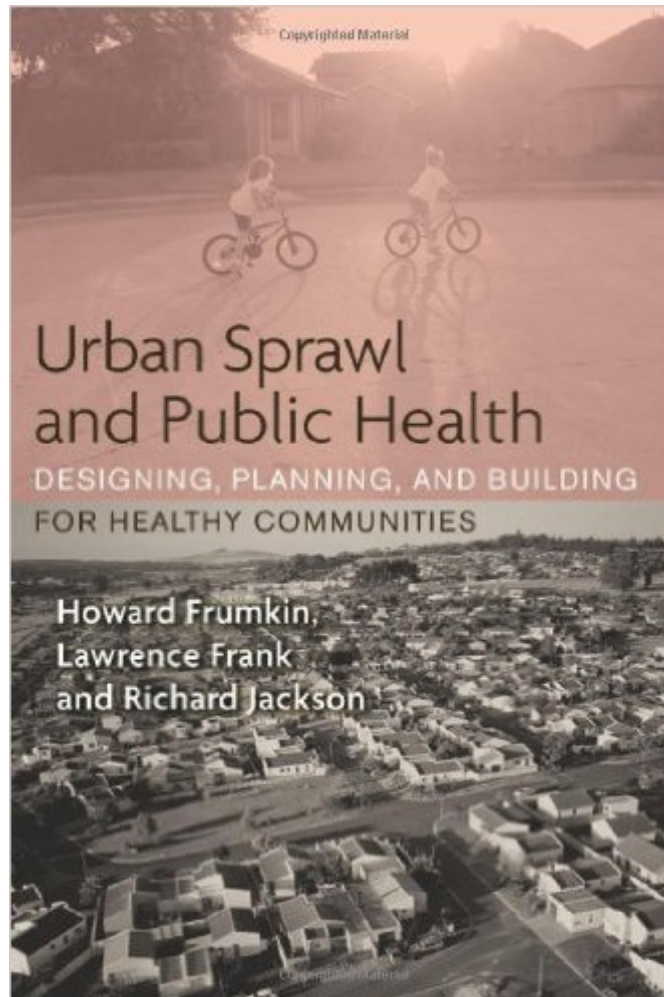


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# Urban Sprawl And Public Health: Designing, Planning, And Building For Healthy Communities



## Synopsis

In *Urban Sprawl and Public Health*, three of the nation's leading public health and urban planning experts explore an intriguing question: How does the physical environment in which we live affect our health? For decades, growth and development in our communities has been of the low-density, automobile-dependent type known as sprawl. The authors examine the direct and indirect impacts of sprawl on human health and well-being, and discuss the prospects for improving public health through alternative approaches to design, land use, and transportation. *Urban Sprawl and Public Health* offers a comprehensive look at the interface of urban planning, architecture, transportation, community design, and public health. It summarizes the evidence linking adverse health outcomes with sprawling development, and outlines the complex challenges of developing policy that promotes and protects public health. Anyone concerned with issues of public health, urban planning, transportation, architecture, or the environment will want to read this book.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The costs of sprawl are enormous. This book describes the costs in terms of many different types of public health measurements. If you haven't thought about sprawl, this is a good place to start. It is chilling to think about how many physical, emotional, psychological and medical ramifications there are to the US automobile lifestyle. The price to degradation of the planet was not discussed in depth but that too would make you think about our legacy of our lifestyle to the quality of our planet for future generations. I am encouraged that the topic is being developed. The automobile lifestyle is

addictive and to change it will require a paradigm shift. The shift starts with organized discussions and lucidly presented data. This book is excellent on both accounts.

A broad (though not particularly deep) guide to the public health problems associated with sprawl, including: (1) the air pollution caused by sprawl-induced auto traffic, (2) the health consequences of the reduction in walking caused by automobile dependency, (3) injuries and deaths from auto traffic, (4) water quality problems associated with suburban development, (5) the alleged intangible costs of automobile dependency (e.g. driving-induced stress, the isolation of nondrivers). None of these issues are addressed in enormous detail; for example, the book occasionally mentions pro-sprawl counterarguments, but does not fully address them. But then again, each of these topics could probably justify a separate book.

The Europeans are way ahead of our efforts to consider health issues in the urban planning process. This book provides a history and direction to address urban sprawl and understand well the health implications of reckless or solely market-driven city planning. After all, no built community will have sustainability, if its populations are at risk for chronic and acute illness. Presented are the ingredients to make our cities safer and livable. This is a must read for City Planners, County officials, and anyone interested in cleaning up our urban communities with an eye toward social equity and environmental justice. MJY

The authors have brought together several disciplines in a compelling and convincing narrative that links the importance of urban planning for healthy living. The book contains striking data, stories and photos that show how closely the rise in obesity, diabetes and asthma (to name a few) have been linked to increasing urban sprawl. One of the main results of urban sprawl is increased time spent driving which not only increases stress but the time spent in gridlock traffic reduces family time and community involvement. The result of spending so much time commuting is much more severe than many people realize because it results in exhausted, anxious and stressed people who have little time to their children and neighbors, or in the language of the book "social capital." I highly recommend this book for anyone who seeks to see healthier cities that are designed for people rather than cars.

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