

Death By Sprawl

Phillip Longman argues that we need radical measures to improve public health—foremost among these is reducing sprawl.

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Contributed by The Practice of New Urbanism

“Death by Sprawl:

On a statistical basis, what’s most likely to get you killed in the next year:

(A) living in Israel during the Intifada;

(B) living in crime-ridden, inner-city Baltimore, Chicago, Dallas, Houston, Milwaukee, Minneapolis-St. Paul, Philadelphia, or Pittsburg; or

(C) living in bucolic outer suburbs of those cities?

The answer is overwhelmingly C. A recent study of University of Virginia professor William H. Lucy found that Americans’ migration into sprawling outer suburbs is actually a huge cause of premature death. In the suburbs, you’re less likely to be killed by a stranger—unless you count strangers driving cars. Residents of inner-city Houston, for example, face about a 1.5 in 10,000 chance of being killed in the coming year by either a murderous stranger or in an automobile accident. But in the Houston suburb of Montgomery County, residents are 50 percent more likely to die from one of those two causes because the incidence of automobile accidents is so much higher.”

Full story: [The Health of Nations](#)

Source: [Washington Monthly](#), Apr 08, 2003.