

Examining the Relationship between Property Value and Urban Sprawl in Canyon County, Idaho

Abstract

Urban sprawl is a reality in the United States, and while sprawl has its proponents, the term has generally become associated with negative consequences such as traffic congestion, increase in impermeable surfaces and loss of wildlife habitat. In order to mitigate these often severe consequences, it is helpful to understand what perpetuates sprawl. This study represents an attempt to determine whether or not the appraised value of a property is related to where urban sprawl is occurring. Although sprawl is usually attributed to large metropolitan areas such as Atlanta or Los Angeles, it also occurs in rural areas of the country such as the agriculturally rich Treasure Valley in southwestern Idaho. Using samples taken from Canyon County, Idaho, the significance of appraised land value in relationship to those areas where urban sprawl has occurred was explored. The study uses a two sample difference of means test to compare the average appraised value of the land in areas of urban sprawl where 1) some sort of change has occurred to the property (i.e., subdivision, combination, etc.) changing its classification from an undeveloped or natural use to a developed use and 2) those areas within areas of sprawl where no change occurred. The results of the analysis confirm that the mean values of the two samples were not significantly different. Thus, for Canyon County, there is no statistically significant relationship between the appraised value of property and urban sprawl.