

This Chapter Has Been Updated. Updates Are Available At: www.heinzctr.org/ecosystems

Urban and Suburban Areas





What Indicators Are Used To Describe Urban and Suburban Areas? **Can we report trends? Are there other useful reference points?**

SYSTEM DIMENSIONS			
●	Area of Urban and Suburban Lands	How much land do “urban and suburban areas” occupy? How much of this land is developed, and how much is forest, grasslands and shrublands, wetlands, and croplands?	Current data only, regional comparison
?	Suburban/Rural Land Use Change	How are patterns of development changing at the boundary between suburban and rural areas?	No data reported
●	Patches of Forest, Grassland and Shrubland, and Wetlands	How large are urban/suburban forests, grasslands and shrublands, and wetlands, which provide green space and wildlife habitat?	Current data only, regional comparison
⊖	Total Impervious Area	How much urban/suburban land is covered with buildings, concrete, asphalt, and other “hard,” or impervious, surfaces?	No data reported
?	Stream Bank Vegetation	What fraction of urban/suburban stream banks are vegetated?	No data reported

CHEMICAL AND PHYSICAL CONDITIONS			
●	Nitrate in Urban and Suburban Streams	How much nitrate is found in urban/suburban streams?	Current data only, federal standard
●	Phosphorus in Urban and Suburban Streams	How much phosphorus is found in urban/suburban streams?	Current data only, federal goal
●	Air Quality (High Ozone Levels)	How common are air pollution levels that exceed federal guidelines in urban/suburban areas?	Trends, federal standard
Ⓛ	Chemical Contamination	What levels of artificial compounds and heavy metals are found in water and soil?	Current data only, federal standards and guidelines
?	Urban Heat Island	How much hotter are urban/suburban areas than less-developed areas nearby?	No data reported

BIOLOGICAL COMPONENTS			
⊖	Species Status	How many of the plants and animals that once inhabited areas that are now urban/suburban are locally at risk or absent?	No data reported
⊖	Disruptive Species	Are there more or fewer “disruptive species” such as white-tailed deer and Scotch broom in urban/suburban areas?	No data reported
⊖	Status of Animal Communities in Urban and Suburban Streams	What is the condition of fish and bottom-dwelling animals in urban/suburban streams?	No data reported

HUMAN USES			
⊖	Publicly Accessible Open Space per Resident	How much public open space is there per urban/suburban resident?	No data reported
?	Natural Ecosystem Services	What other important ecosystem services are provided by urban/suburban areas?	No data reported

● All Necessary Data Available
 Ⓛ Partial Data Available
 ⊖ Data Not Adequate for National Reporting
 ? Indicator Development Needed