

## **Housing Units per Developed Acre (Density)**

By John Lipman, Cape Cod Commission

The chart below shows how developed land and population can be linked to provide an indicator of sprawl development. As land develops over time, the amount of land a given population was using in the past can be compared to the amount of land being used today. As we look back half a century to more traditional development patterns characterized by compact villages and surrounding countryside, we can calculate the amount of developed land serving the population at that time. If the amount of developed land that each person uses increases over time, we can conclude that sprawl development is increasing. That means that the acreage of shopping areas, housing and roadways are increasing at a faster rate than the population. The data indicate that each person who lives here now uses 57% more land than in 1950.

Year	Developed Acreage	Housing Units	Units/Devel. Acre	Change Units/Dev.Acre
1950	34,497	30,306	0.88	
1960	*	54,703		
1970	60,707	65,676	1.08	1.35
1980	*	99,946		
1990	96,342	135,192	1.40	1.95
2000	104,017	150,000	1.44	1.93

\* No acreage data for these years