



## **Land Use Planning Trends Evolving To Combat Environmental Problems**

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Saint Peters, MO based Pickett Ray & Silver is sharing their insight on recent changes in land use planning trends and how this field has evolved to combat some of the problems plaguing the environment. Urban sprawl has created a number of environmental problems which require several changes to land use policies and practices. Urban planning benefits new developments and the environment in many ways, and given how involved parties have updated their practices, the firm believes it is likely that the impact that urban development has on the environment will be lessened.

Land use refers to the methods by which people make use of land. This involves economic and cultural activities, such as those that pertain to agricultural, residential, industrial, mining and recreational purposes. Each type of land has distinct uses, with public lands and private lands being utilized differently. Urban development tends to happen on publicly owned land, which is where concerns regarding land use and the environment tend to arise.

?Land use changes occur constantly and at many scales, and can have specific and cumulative effects on air and water quality, watershed function, generation of waste, extent and quality of wildlife habitat, climate and

human health," says an EPA report that can be found at <https://www.epa.gov/report-environment/land-use>. The EPA, "is concerned about different land use activities because of their potential effects on the environment and human health. Land development and agricultural uses are two primary areas of concern, with a wide variety of potential effects."

There are a number of ways in which land development practices affect the land. Impervious surfaces, for example, are often the end result of land development. The construction of roads, parking lots and other structures leads to the creation of surfaces through which water cannot pass through. This affects peak flow, water volume, water pollution and ground aquifer recharge. Land development also increases air pollution due to an increase in vehicle use in developed areas. Similarly, it leads to the creation of "heat islands" which affect the climate on both a local and global scale. Links have been made between land use and an increase in the prevalence of infectious diseases as well.

Fortunately, several solutions to the problems caused by urban sprawl have been identified. Cities have already begun implementing certain policies to keep growth within urban areas without affecting rural areas. Compact building designs, for example, have the effect of greatly reducing the amount of space needed for urban buildings. Making it easier to get around a neighborhood on foot is another way in which cities have begun solving the issues caused by urban sprawl and where walking would be impractical, the provision of more accessible transportation options has proven highly effective. Urban planners have also begun implementing sprawl prevention policies which regulate land development.

"Growth and development is not always a negative aspect," says Pickett Ray & Silver. "However, it can become detrimental to natural resources and open spaces. At Pickett, Ray & Silver, we can help developers and cities plan the smart way by surveying the land to help you make informed decisions. Our civil engineering division can guide your team for commercial, industrial, and residential projects. Contact us today for a consultation."

Land planning is an important part of any successful development project. Before breaking ground, it is important to have an expert evaluate the land and come up with a development plan that works. Pickett, Ray & Silver performs thorough assessments of potential building sites in order to uncover the best method by which they can achieve their client's vision while also minimizing harm to the natural environment. Visit their Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/PickettRay/>.

"Based on your needs and goals, we perform site feasibility assessments to provide you with recommendations on successful development of the property," the land development company says. "Whether you want to build a large retail center, a distribution center or an industrial park, we can provide you with those options. We can help you develop plans for subdivisions that are strictly residential, optimizing green space and maintaining the best aesthetics. Some developments combine residential subdivisions with

retail stores, restaurants, banks and local government buildings. These are referred to as mixed-use communities. They often span thousands of acres and include open space, parks, walking trails, lakes and more.?

Julie Bartch of Pickett Ray & Silver can be reached in the event an interested party wishes to follow up on any further inquiries or concerns. More information regarding the firm's services and specialities can also be found on their official website. Alternatively, LinkedIn members may connect with the company's representatives through the following link: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/pickett-ray-&-silver-inc->.

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### **Pickett Ray & Silver**

*Pickett, Ray & Silver, Inc. has been providing quality engineering and surveying services since 1969. Our clients include local and national private firms, international manufacturing firms and local governmental entities.*

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