



THE STATE OF THE STATES

APPENDIX I: Comparison Among Definitions of Urban/Developed/Built-Up Areas

	NRI	NLCD	FUT
Terminology	“Developed Land. A combination of land cover/use categories, large urban and built-up areas, small built-up areas, and rural transportation land.”	“Developed”	“Urban and highly developed”
Summary definition	A land cover/use category consisting of residential, industrial, commercial, and institutional land, as well as other human-dominated land uses.	A land cover/use category including areas more than 20% covered by constructed materials like asphalt, concrete and buildings, and developed open space, like large-lot houses, parks, and golf courses.	Mapped using NLCD data, so conforms to NLCD definition, but does not include roads.
Definition	“A land cover/use category consisting of residential, industrial, commercial, and institutional land; construction sites; public administrative sites; railroad yards; cemeteries; airports; golf courses; sanitary landfills; sewage treatment plants; water control structures and spillways; other land used for such purposes; small parks within urban and built-up areas; and highways, railroads, and other transportation facilities. Also tracts of less than 10 acres that do not meet the above definition but are completely surrounded by Urban and built-up land. NRI recognizes two size categories: areas of 0.25 acre to 10 acres, and of at least 10 acres.”	Ranges from “Developed High Intensity - highly developed areas where people reside or work in high numbers, e.g. apartment complexes, row houses and commercial/industrial. Impervious surfaces account for 80% to 100% of the total cover” down to “Developed, Open Space- areas with a mixture of some constructed materials, but mostly vegetation in the form of lawn grasses. Impervious surfaces account for less than 20% of total cover. These areas most commonly include large-lot single-family housing units, parks, golf courses, and vegetation planted in developed settings for recreation, erosion control, or aesthetic purposes.”	Mapped using NLCD data, so conforms to NLCD definition, but does not include roads.
Rough estimate of housing density captured	Captures development at a density down to one house per 10-20 acres, so it includes some large-lot housing.	Developed Classes typically do not include houses on lots larger than one to two acres.	Includes NLCD Developed Classes. The LDR analysis extends to U.S. Census blocks in which the average acres-per-dwelling-unit is below the county farm size threshold, which ranges from one to 335 acres across the country.