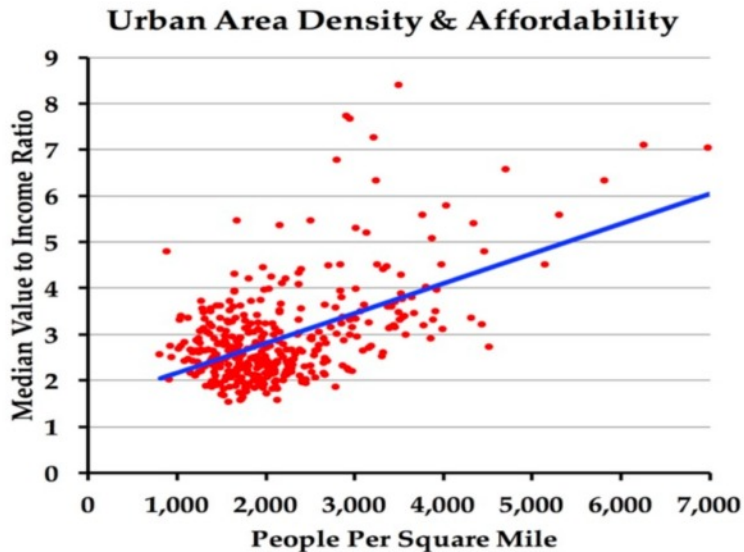


Density Will Not Make Housing Affordable



No matter how often urban planners chant, "grow up, not out," the fact is that **no urban area in the nation has ever made housing more affordable by increasing its density.** In fact, as the chart above shows, there is a clear correlation between density and housing unaffordability.

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Every major city in America except Houston has local zoning, yet **only those cities that have growth constraints have become unaffordable.**

<https://www.cato.org/blog/more-housing-regulation-wont-make-housing-affordable>

Hong Kong is 2.5 times as built "up" as Manhattan is, yet Hong Kong is even more expensive per unit than Manhattan. And generally, the data runs in that direction - not only does intensification within a regulatory boundary "not restore affordability", it seems that the more density you "allow", the higher your average housing unit price gets. The correlation runs the opposite way to the assumption. At the other end of the data set for cities globally, are very rapidly-sprawling cities like Atlanta where the density is around 1/40th of Hong Kong and the average section size is 2/3 of an acre; yet the real per-unit housing price on average is 1/5 of Hong Kong. <http://makingnewzealand.wixsite.com/home-site/single-post/2016/09/01/The-Myth-of-Affordable-Intensification>

It is a terrible mistake to be confusing ALL zoning rules with the single true determinant of inequity in housing and economic mobility:

That is, can rural land at rural land prices, be converted to urban use?

This suppresses the price of all urban land to the extent that it is such a small input into "housing costs" relative to the cost of structures, it is very hard to push "house prices" up into unaffordable territory.

<http://www.newgeography.com/content/005428-zoning-and-urban-containment-the-need-clarity>