

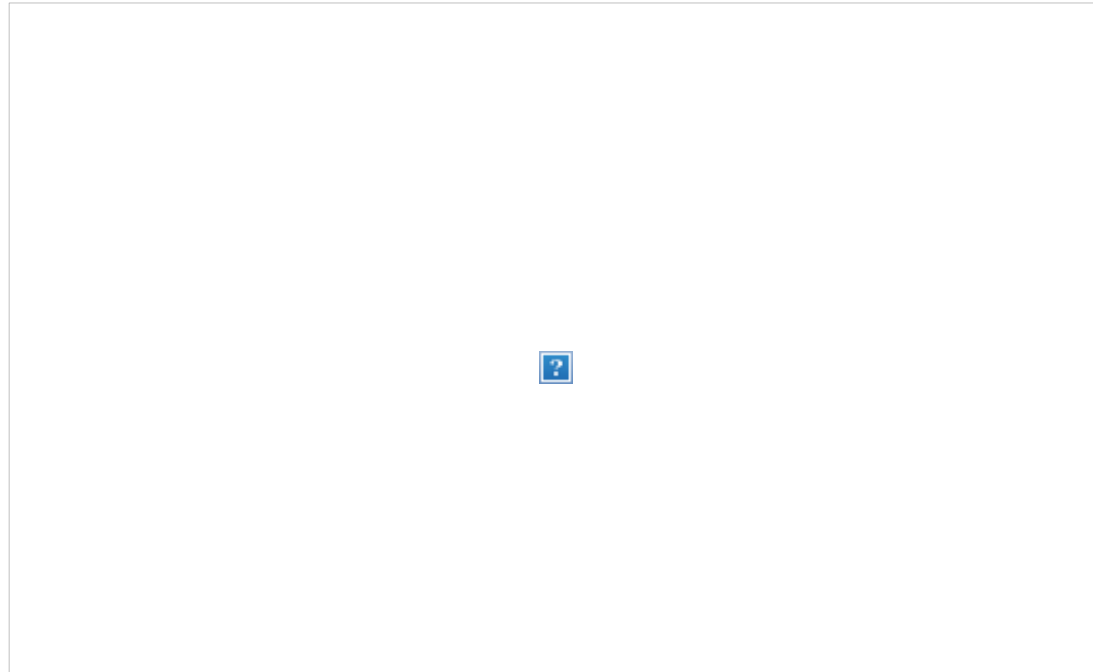


# The Blog



## Where You Live Matters Most When Creating a Green House Plan

Posted on 20. Feb, 2012 by [Maryruth Belsey Priebe](#) in [Articles](#)

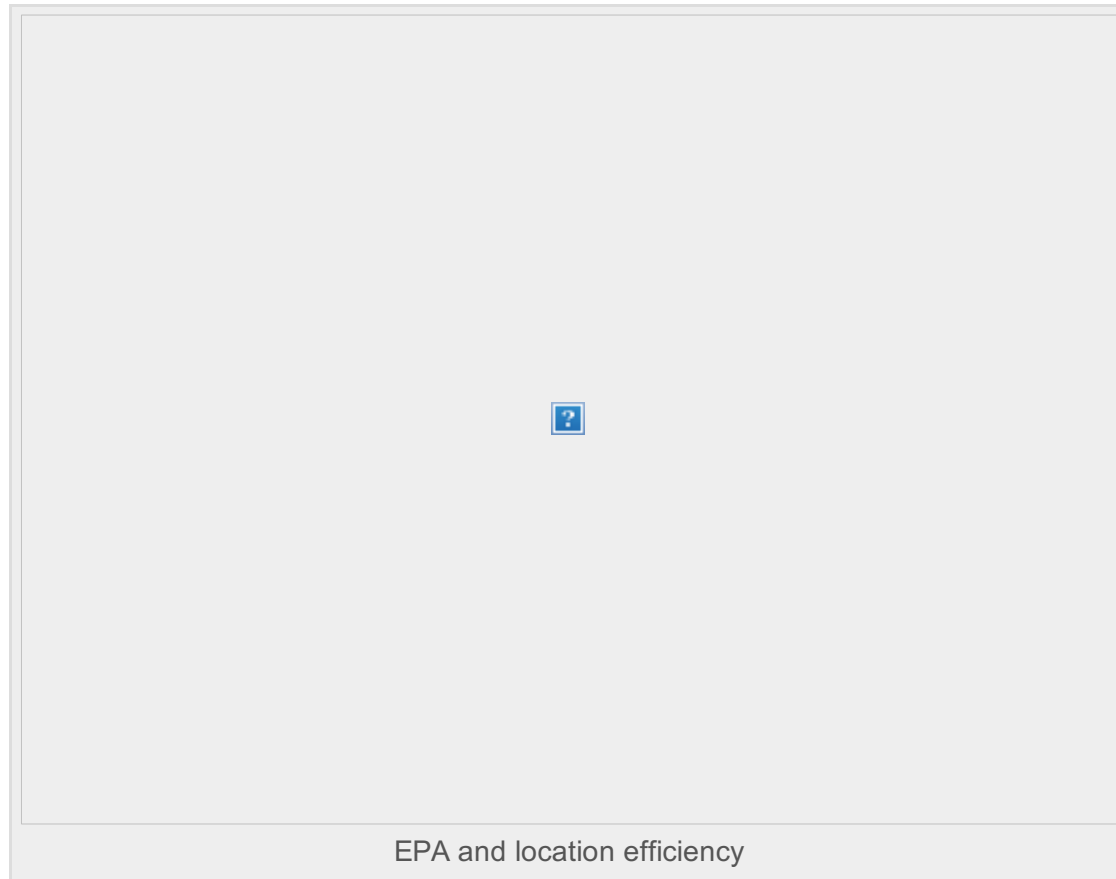


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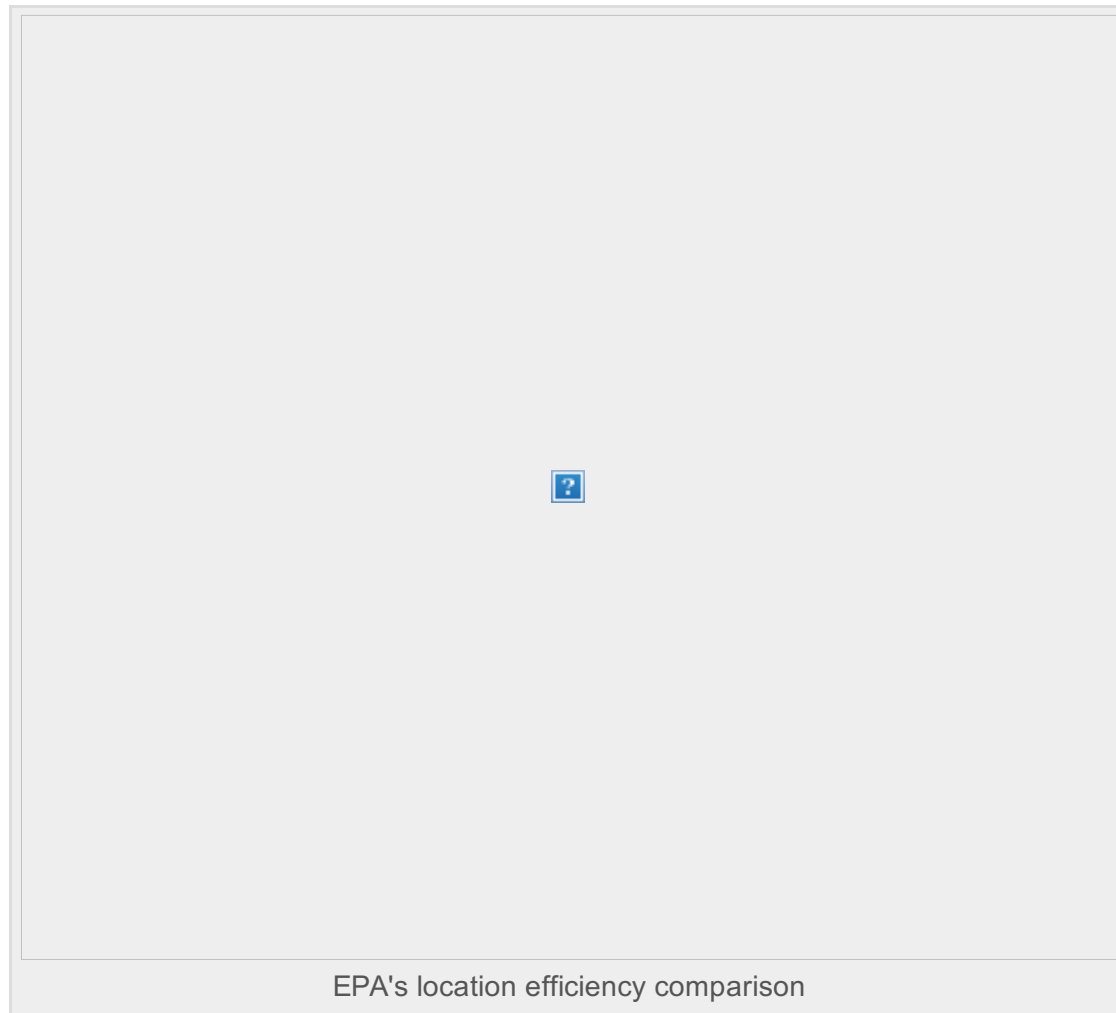
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Two studies, [one recent](#) and [one a year old](#), explain graphically why *where* you locate your green home is more important even than how green your house actually is. So while we definitely advocate [green house plans](#), whether you're building new or renovating, even if you change all of your light bulbs to CFLs and super insulate your home, if you choose to live in the suburbs, your actions will have much less of an impact on your environmental impact.



Examining 28 different communities in the US for 6 household sizes and 12 income brackets, the Renewable and Appropriate Energy Laboratory (RAEL) of the University of California in Berkeley study, [Quantifying Carbon Footprint Reduction Opportunities for US](#), found that where you live impacts how far you drive, which is perhaps the single biggest factor in how much carbon you produce per year.



This is backed up by the US EPA study, [Location Efficiency and Housing Type – Boiling it Down to BTUs](#), which shows that living in a transit-friendly site with an efficient single-family home and vehicle will save 19% more energy than an energy efficient home and vehicle located in the burbs.

What's the alternative? It's simple: live in a dense urban neighbourhood by choosing to use an infill property or renovating an existing home using green house standards. Why? Here are the benefits of choosing to live in a more efficient location:

- Dense urban environments with easy access to public transit and public

paths encourage residents to leave their cars behind and choose lower-carbon commuting methods like cycling, walking, and taking the train.

- Mature neighbourhoods with vibrant communities, including local restaurants, shops, and services, make it easier for residents to find what they need close to home, further reducing their carbon footprint for transportation.
- Homes that share walls, such as those in multi-family developments, condo buildings, and duplexes, use less energy and experience less heat loss.

Revitalizing existing neighbourhoods and building in developed neighbourhoods seems to be obvious choice if you're looking to create a [green house plan](#) of your own. That means being part of an established community, which seems like a good idea, too.



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## About YellowBlue Designs

We blog about green building practices to help you create energy efficient homes.

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