

Does developing land lower everyone's taxes?

Myth #2: Developing vacant land lowers everyone's property tax because the increase in the land's assessed value generates more property tax revenue.

True or False?

Almost always false. While developing vacant land does increase its assessed value and therefore generates increased property tax revenue, in almost every case the direct and indirect cost of services that the Town needs to provide to the newly-developed property outweighs the increase in tax revenue.

Consider this (from the Town of Atkinson's *Land Conservation Plan of 2022*):

1. Considering the conserved land owned by the Town, 79% of that land was acquired BEFORE January 1, 1993. Only 21% has been acquired since 1993.
2. For large cluster developments in Atkinson, 73% of that land was developed AFTER January 1, 1993.
3. For those of you who have lived in Atkinson for a while, have your property taxes gone up or down since 1993?

Summary of Town-Owned Conservation Land			
Acres	#	When Acquired	%
480.52	34	Prior to 1/1/1993	79.2%
125.82	20	After 1/1/1993	20.8%
606.33	54	Total	100.0%

Summary of Cluster Development in Atkinson			
#	When Developed	Land	%
		Consumed	
4	Prior to 1/1/1993	365.54	27.1%
17	After 1/1/1993	983.54	72.9%
21	Total	1349.08	