

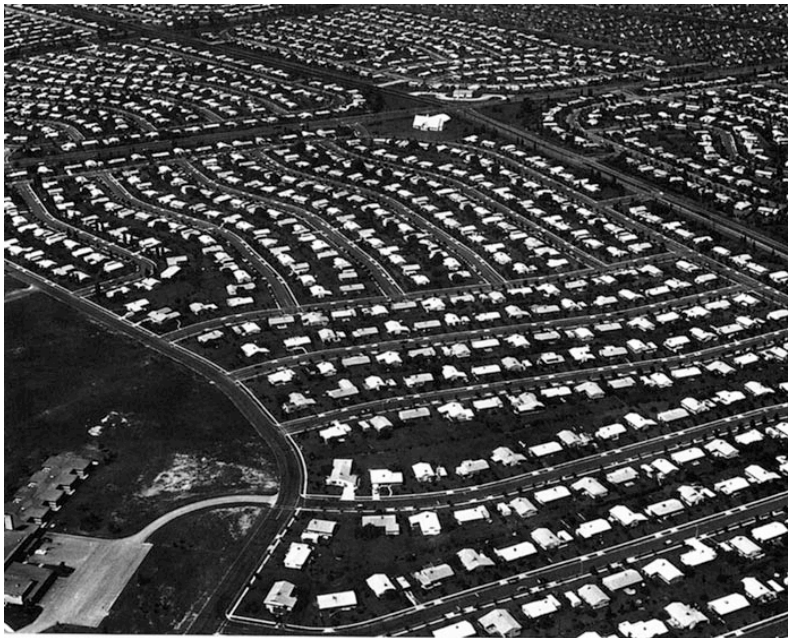


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## The Rise of Levittown, N.Y.

“Ultimately encompassing more than 17,400 separate houses and 82,000 residents, Levittown was the largest housing development ever put up by a single builder, and it seved the American dream-house market at close to the lowest prices the industry could attain. The typical Cape Cod was down-to-earth and unpretentious; the intention was not to stir the imagination, but to provide the best shelter at the lowest price. Each dwelling included a twelve-by-sixteen-foot living room with a fireplace, one bath, and two bedrooms (about 750 square feet), with easy expansion possibilities upstairs in the unfinished attic or outward into the yard. Most importantly, the floor plan was practical and well-designed, with the kitchen moved to the front of the house near the entrance so that mothers could watch their children from kitchen windows and do their washing and cooking with a minimum of movement. Similarly, the living room was placed in the rear and given a picture window overlooking the back yard. The early Levitt house was as basic to post World War II suburban development as the Model T had been to the automobile. In each case, the actual design features were less important than the fact that they were mass-produced and thus priced within the reach of the middle class.”

-- Source: Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (1985)



**Levittown development in Pennsylvania:** One of four “Levittown” housing developments, this one was completed after New York’s, and was nearly as large.