



Module 3, Investigation 1: Briefing

Let's go to the mall

Background

This investigation examines why malls are located where they are.

You may have noticed that there are different types of malls. For example, strip malls may have several stores lined along a busy street or may be arranged around a shared parking area. Outlet malls usually have brand name discount stores in separate buildings with ample parking. Other malls have many stores under one roof surrounded by large parking lots. Often these malls are multilevel and very large. Over time malls have increased in size and in the range of goods and activities they offer. In addition to numerous retail stores, they may have food courts, movie theaters, skating rinks, video arcades, and other forms of entertainment. This type of large mall is the topic of this investigation.

Malls use a lot of land and stand out on the landscape. They are large enough to appear on aerial photos and satellite images. Malls affect other places in a community and encourage dependence on automobiles. Wherever malls are built, vegetation and wildlife habitat are lost.

Shopping malls are found in large and small communities and are a part of everyday life for most people in the United States. Studying mall locations helps us understand patterns of economic activity in our communities and applies ideas about geography to daily life.

Objectives

In this investigation you will

- describe why malls are located in some places and not other places, and
- explain why NASA scientists are interested in studying malls.

Procedures for the Investigation

You will consider different aspects of the locations of shopping malls and examine images gathered by NASA showing an area in Huntsville, Alabama. Complete Logs distributed by your teacher.