Land Use Zoning: The DNA of sprawl

May 18, 2006
Business as usual

“The Inland Empire's accessible location, pro-business attitude, lower operating costs and excellent quality of life have made it the fastest growing region in the nation.”

Inland Empire Economic Partnership
We can’t go on this way

- My house is too big to heat.
- That I drive to in a car that’s too large.
- And it’s too far from work.
- Fueled by gas that’s too expensive.
- And the money just goes to terrorists.
- Who want to attack the way I live.
- And I’m too tired for irony.
The DNA of where we live
Zoning: Cracking the code

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Think Globally

By the year 2020, there will be one billion cars on the road
Global warning?

“Rising global temperatures are expected to raise sea level and change local climate conditions, which could alter forests, crop yields, and water supplies and also affect human health, animals and many types of ecosystems.”

U.S. E.P.A.
It is glorious to drive

“Soaring car ownership, frantic motorway construction and a booming economy evokes images of America . . . Yet, in China's case, these developments have been compressed into just a few years.”

*The Economist*
Number One

By 2015, China will overtake the U.S. as the world’s largest oil consumer
Forget about the panda

This year alone, China will construct 112,000 miles of rural highways
A nation at risk

“America is addicted to oil, which is often imported from unstable parts of the world.”

President George Bush, 2006 State of the Union
Running out of gas

“We are approaching the plateau of production; these are the first signs that we are there. Cheap oil is history.”

Ali Bakhtiari, Iranian National Oil Company
The other cost
In love with our cars?

According to the MTC, from 1990-2000 Santa Clara County VMT increased 20%, with the average adult resident logging 25 miles on the road each day.
“High mileage moms”

Two-thirds of all trips to shuttle others around are made by women.

61% of women make at least one stop after work vs. 46% of men make a stop on the way home.
Making ourselves sick

“There is increasing evidence that the way we design our communities discourages physical activity such as walking and cycling, contributes to air pollution, and promotes pedestrian injuries and fatalities.”

Center for Disease Control

Public health crisis

“People living in automobile-dependent neighborhoods walk less, weigh more, and are more likely to suffer from high blood pressure.”

“Relationship between Urban Sprawl and Physical Activity, Obesity and Morbidity”

*American Journal of Health Promotion*
Going to waist

“Expanding roads to solve traffic congestion is like loosening your belt to cure obesity”

Walter Kulash
Pave paradise

California has more cars than drivers and seven parking spaces for every car.
The Origins of Sprawl
Livable America

A unique historic heritage
Sprawl America

Placeless
“Generica”
What went wrong?

Shame of the cities
The origin of zoning

Belching smokestacks and putrid air
A better model

Chicago
World’s Fair
Imagine a Great City

“Make no little plans. They have no magic to stir men's blood and probably themselves will not be realized. Make big plans; aim high in hope and work . . . Let your watchword be order and your beacon beauty. Think big.”

Daniel Burnham
America hits the road

"My interest in good roads is not merely an interest in the pleasure of riding in automobiles. It is of the most fundamental importance that the United State should think in big pieces, should think ultimately as a whole."

Woodrow Wilson
Green towns

“An experiment that out to be copied by every community in the United States”

Franklin Roosevelt
Autopia

1939 brought the dream of Futurama
Deferred dream

Pent-up demand
Healthier lifestyle

We Look

The grass is greener
The DNA of Sprawl

The new landscape
Experts

Planners, developers and lawyers
The unchALLENGEABLE

Traffic engineers
Conventional suburban development

- Zoning segregates homes, schools, stores and jobs
- Produces auto-dependence
- Is the law in virtually every city in California
Crayola zoning

From making places to making maps
Euclidean zoning codes

“... excluding from residential areas the confusion and danger of fire, contagion and disorder which in greater or less degree attach to the location of store, shops and factories.”

Village of Euclid, Ohio vs. Ambler Realty Company
What do you want it to be?

Interpreting the code
You get what you plan for

Is this the best we can do?
EVOLUTION OF SPRAWL

We have adapted to our environment
No future

It only gets worse
The reaction

Growth vs. no growth

ENVIRONMENTALISTS ARE REALLY JUST OUT TO REDUCE THE QUALITY OF OUR LIFESTYLE.
The reactionaries

Public hearings
One project at a time

Ad hocracy
Design Review

Design guidelines, design by committee
High hopes
Changing the Code

Taking on the status quo
Back to the future

New Urbanism
A place for everything and everything in its place

A “fine-grain” mix of uses, offering a wide range of ways to get around
Planning neighborhoods

Projects vs. places
Creating choices

Form-based codes create places that work for people
The American Dream
Evolution of subdivisions
TND: Back to the future

Choice: Mix of Housing Types

Front

Uninterrupted Curblines

Back
Reclaiming the crudscape
Evolution over time
Survival of the fittest
Renewing the public realm

For too long, we have let developers and their projects program our cities.
Form shapes function
The Benefits

Getting what we want
Community vitality
Creating places

Form-based codes make buildings behave and create quality places instead of fighting battles project by project.
Preserving character

Change can be harmonized to preserve existing community character.
A healthier lifestyle

“We must be alert to the health benefits, including less stress, lower blood pressure and overall improved physical and mental health when people live and work in accessible, safe, well-designed, thoughtful structures and landscapes.”

Dr. Richard Jackson, MPH
Economic vitality

Development certainty and a distinct sense of place revitalize older areas and promote smart growth
How Do We Start?

Citywide vs. specific area

Resources:

- Local Government Commission
- Congress for the New Urbanism
- Form-Based Codes Institute
The time is right

“Nothing is more powerful than an idea whose times has come”
Alternate world view

“Where there is no vision, the people perish”

Proverbs 29:18
Where is it taking hold?

Florida
Texas
California
Gulf Coast
Your role

Making the personal and community choices that create a model for our future
Popular mandate

The process will be a locally-based one that focuses on what matters most in each community.
Who are potential allies?

“Not the usual suspects”
Planners, developers and Realtors
Business
Environmentalists and historic preservationists
Key to success

Building cities around people
Livable cities

Why not here?
Meeting the Challenge

“We will ever strive for the ideals and sacred things of the city, both alone and with many. We will unceasingly seek to quicken the sense of public duty.

“We will transmit this city not only not less, but greater, better, and more beautiful than it was transmitted to us.”

Athenian Oath