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It is the mission of Planning Forum to serve as a medium for the multi-disciplinary exchange of ideas related to the study of human communities and the interplay of social, political, and economic policy and action with built and natural environments. This nontraditional, cross-disciplinary forum seeks participation and representation from students, faculty members, and field practicioners.

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The Eleventh issue of Planning Forum has arrived later than usual, but certainly no less relevant. The articles contained within represent a broad range of scholarly work, from the application of social theory to city planning, to a prescient debate over economic incentive policies. The articles also present several different styles of writing, showing that the planning article itself can be as diverse as its subject matter.

Justin Hollander's essay explores the areas where analytical thought derived from the social sciences can inform and complement the practice of the city planner. Hollander employs a hypothetical case study to illustrate the benefits "Jane Planner" receives from an informed move away from the strict rational planning model of her predecessors.

J. Rosie Tighe shares an article on affordable rental housing for low-income residents of several Massachusetts communities. Tighe's article focuses on an often neglected aspect of the affordable housing issue: the need for affordable rental properties. With the current housing boom showing no signs of abating, this is a significant concern for national communities that seek to provide attainable housing options for their workforce population.

Dr. Tracy McMillan, one of Community and Regional Planning's newest faculty members has shared a report that she co-authored with two other researchers on a California program to provide safe walking routes to local schools. Her article, a mid-project evaluation, is a reminder of the time and care required to effectively plan and realize a large-scale public health program.

In the Point/Counterpoint section, six diverse individuals discuss the costs and benefits of economic incentive policies. The regular Point/Counterpoint feature of Planning Forum is intended to present a timely and relevant discussion. This issue's installment certainly lives up to the expectation: as the journal goes to print, the city of Austin is preparing to offer the Samsung Corporation the largest incentive package that the city has ever made.

As ever, the Planning Forum has been a joy and a learning experience for the all-volunteer staff that has worked on it. We hope you enjoy the content we are sharing with you, as much as we have enjoyed putting it together.

Sincerely,

Seth S. Otto
Senior Editor

The Uses of Social Theory in The Practice of City Planning

Justin Hollander

Abstract

An emerging body of literature in social theory is fast gaining relevance in the urban and regional planning field. This paper begins by defining social theory in the planning context and then, through a hypothetical case study method, examines the relevance of social theory for planning practice. A major finding is that key ideas in social theory can be of great value to planning practitioners as they consider the moral and ethical dimensions of their work. With increasing critiques of the rational planning model and positivist practice, the implications of these findings are profound for planning practice: a new set of ideologies can help professionals ask fundamental questions about what and who they are planning for.

Introduction

A city planner, Ms. Doe, in Anywhere, USA has a job to do. Her boss has tasked her to establish an historic district, initiate a recycling program, enhance transportation options for residents, and preserve open space around the city's reservoir. These fairly typical planning activities are not the starting point for Ms. Doe. She approaches her work from an (often sub-conscious) theoretical framework. This framework guides her through the difficult questions of: why work? How do we do it? Where do we want to go? Who are we? Planning theory can contribute to this framework. Influential planning theory, nicely summarized by Friedmann (1987), stems from a vast body of philosophy incorporating Adam Smith from the right, Karl Marx from the left, and scores of others somewhere in the middle. Planning theories can be about how planning works, can be substantive theories used by planners in their work (i.e. transportation theories or environmental theories), or can be the "procedural theories of planning" (Klosterman 1980, v). Or as Friedmann (2003) more recently put it, theories used in planning, theories of planning, and theories about planning. This planning theory is important to planning practitioners, but the focus of this paper is on the utility for planners of a largely distinct body of thought, social theory.

Social theory, like planning theory, can be part of the planner's theoretical framework. Other factors like religion, peer-observation, and habit can also contribute. In this paper, I seek to determine to what extent social theory can play a role in Ms. Doe's practice.

I begin by describing Ms. Doe's planning work, then offer a definition of social theory and describe its multiple dimensions. Next, in the context of Ms. Doe's historic district project, I pose the question: can social theory be useful? The last section of this paper goes beyond Ms. Doe's projects in Anytown, USA and asks the bigger question: how does social theory effect the planning profession and its practitioners?

Jane Does' Planning Practice

In this paper, I will show the ways in which social theory can be used in a hypothetical planning practice. For this purpose, I will introduce a generic planner, Jane Doe. She works at a municipal planning office in a medium-sized city. She reports to a director who oversees planning, community development, and engineering. That director then reports to the head elected official in the municipality, the Mayor. Her bosses' political ties provide her with some latitude in her work, but she also works with a number of constraints. She can establish citizen advisory groups, hold public meetings, initiate research projects, and manage day-to-day development review independently. The major constraints placed on her work are related to her bosses' political relationship both to the Mayor and to other power players in the community. She has to do her work without impeding his political objectives. However, she implicitly accepts these constraints because they allow her the latitude to be effective in her work.

What is Social Theory?

Ms. Doe is not knowledgeable about social theory, she has not read Brook's (2002) Planning Theory for Practitioners. She studied planning and knows the basics, but is guided in her actions most by how she sees her peers act and her own moral compass. Ms. Doe is largely unfamiliar with the body of literature which offers guidance for understanding people's actions. This "social theory" is broad and interdisciplinary. It offers ontological guidance, is comprised of both normative and empirical dimensions, includes several models from which to organize democratic practices, and provides a number of approaches to democratic practice.

Ontological Dimensions

In his book on social justice, David Smith (1994) asks if "some general or universal conception of social justice is possible" (23). He goes on to remark that "some see universalization and impartiality as dangerous and even impossible in the real world of differences among peoples" (32). The notion that there are universal codes of morality and ethics which can be applied "universally" is not widely accepted among social theorists. Rather, many believe that relativism better captures the "realities" of a socially constructed world (Young 2000; Rorty 1996). These relativists refuse to apply universal moral codes upon others, but instead believe that context, cultural practices and historical circumstances are more relevant for the development of moral codes. For Ms. Doe, her effectiveness in her job depends largely on the extent to which she subscribes to a relativist perspective of morality, that perspective which her boss takes up. If she

chooses to rely on her own moral compass based upon some form of universalism (i.e. Christianity) then she may clash with her boss and find herself either out of a job or ineffective.

Moving from universalism to relativism requires the adoption of procedural approaches to moral action, rather than substantive. A universalist is clear in goals and can envision end points (a teleological ethic). For example, a universalist may believe strongly in animal rights as a universal right. When approached with news that animals are being used for cosmetic testing, the universalist would fashion a teleological ethic and approach the problem substantively - the testing must stop, how is not important. On the other hand, a relativist might not believe that animal rights can be perceived universally and when told of the testing news would seek a different approach than the universalist. The relativist would be concerned with ethical guidelines and adopt a deontological ethic and address the testing through a process, comprised of ethically sound acts. The relativist is not preoccupied as to whether their efforts result in the termination of testing, but primarily with whether their process was moral in addressing the testing.

Just processes are a big part of Ms. Doe's practice; laws and regulations in her community require a variety of open and public processes for many development projects. She can maintain her relativist posture while adopting a deontological ethic, one that emphasizes the process. For example, imagine that the Mayor's property owner friends desire that a new city parking garage be built at a location currently occupied by single-room occupancy housing. As a result, Ms. Doe's boss directs her to conduct a feasibility study of the new parking garage, including the Mayor's friends' site. Listening to her universalist morality, she demands that affordable housing be maintained, she questions the inappropriate influence the friends are exerting, and she challenges the need for a new parking garage in the first place. However, as a relativist, she can put such concerns aside and focus on implementing a just process. Such a just process can ensure that each possible site is given fair consideration, that the prudence of a new garage is debated in a public forum, and that full and open competition is ensured at every stage.

The above example illustrates how the concepts of universalism, relativism, process, substance, deontology, and teleology are related and interrelated. But together with a final concept, foundationalism, they contribute, ontologically, to understanding social theory. Rorty

(1996) wrote about foundationalism and anti-foundationalism and argues strongly that attention to a single object, or foundation, "is always just a hypostatization of certain selected components of...practice" (334). Foundationalism is closely tied to the notion of universalism, where both stretch their arms around a single idea or object, fixed in time and space, and then adopt substantive and teleological practices to reach it. The absolute foundationalist is unwilling to hear another's viewpoints if their perspective is not grounded in the same foundation (be it Catholicism, Communism, Libertarianism, or Hokeyism). Here Smith's (1996) admonition of the dangers of universalism can be reiterated for foundationalism. His acknowledgment about the "real world of differences among peoples" will be addressed later in this paper (32). For our fictitious planner, Rorty's fears would be realized if Ms. Doe was to object outright to an idea or action simply because it violates the tenets of a given foundation, in her world an example may be "smart growth."

The ontological dimensions of social theory discussed in this section help us to understand the moral choices which people make, why they make them, what the ethical implications are, and what is meaningful in our lives and our work. Next, I will discuss the two main classes of social theory, the normative and the empirical (or descriptive).

Normative and Empirical Dimensions

Habermas (1996) offers three normative models of democracy, which serve as a useful starting point to describe the normative dimension of social theory. The models, liberal, republican, and discursive, paint a picture of the world where three possible outcomes are available. Under the liberal model, self-interested individuals operate in a marketplace all vying for influence. Under the republican model, a collective society is formed around a state-defined common good. In the discursive model society can operate through an intersubjective discursive arena, where an open process ensures that the best argument wins and the outcome is de facto moral. Dryzek (1990) and Young (2000) also posit normative models for democracy, Dryzek advocating for an abandonment of instrumental rationality towards a communicative rationality and Young condemning the republican/aggregative model and favoring what she calls differentiated solidarity. Under differentiated solidarity, people with like interests and backgrounds congregate, but not in an absolute way. The scourge of residential segregation is overcome in this normative model

for a city without "clear borders...[where neighborhoods] shade into one another and overlap" (p. 225).

All three authors are acknowledging a world condition, how things presently operate, and then are dreaming of how the world should operate. This is a key element of social theory, it speaks to a final direction or goal for which practice can be aligned.

Equally as important is empirical or descriptive dimensions of social theory. Jessop (2003), Mitchell (2003), and Mitchell (2002) all write about the world we live in. It is their work and others which incite some social theorists to focus on normative theory. Mitchell's (2002) work documents the ways in which unbridled capital accumulation worked to maintain the power and influence of colonial powers over their dominions long after colonialism ended. Likewise, Mitchell (2003) and Jessop (2003) provide keen observations of the ways that place and the economy, respectively, are controlled by the powerful. These well researched volumes provide the important empirical dimension for which social theory requires. Practicing planners will not likely adopt normative theories which are not well grounded in empirical or descriptive theories. For example, Mitchell's (2002) accounts of the Egyptian government's efforts to eliminate malaria highlight the problems of instrumental rationalism, which then makes Young's (2000) normative vision of differentiated solidarity that much more appealing.

Models of Practice

Models of democracy can provide answers to questions like: who are we planning for? Who is a citizen? Where are the boundaries of our community? What is the effect of power? For some models, more questions are asked than answered. But moving beyond the distinction between normative and empirical, these models begin to establish a framework for asking and answering questions.

Habermas' (1996) three normative models of democracy, republican, liberal, and discursive discussed earlier are only the beginning in reviewing the range of democratic models. Young (2000) refers to the aggregative as some form of a combined republican-liberal model and offers up the deliberative model as an alternative. In Figure 1, the republican model if shifted to the left under "substance" and "universalism", where "liberal" and "discursive" are placed under process and relativism. Habermas (1996) argues that only the discursive approach can effectively ensure

a just outcome. Others have contributed to the idea of discursive or deliberative democracy and introduced other important ideas about power and access (Dryzek 1990; Benhabib 1996; Young 2000). The deliberative model provides for a fair and open process, where power is checked at the door. Not all agree with the possibilities for discursive or deliberative democracy. Flyvberg (1998), drawing heavily of Foucault, writes that any consensus reached from such a process is de facto suppression of those voices not in consensus. Commenting on this position, Lake (2004) said "continuous conflict is the signpost of a vital democracy."

Approaches

The models of democracy described above do not provide details, do not give instruction, and do not address exceptions. For that I go one step further and review a final dimension of social theory, a set of detailed approaches to practice. As was seen throughout this paper, social theory is replete with dualities. In Figure 1, the approaches are aligned along a set of dualities where the left-side is closely related to ideas of universalism, substantiveness, and the republican model of democracy, while democratic approaches on the right-side align more with relativism, process, and discursive models of democracy. This rather crude organization is useful in understanding broad ways in which the concepts are related.

Most social theorists today are critical of the Enlightenment-era instrumental rationality which characterizes much of urban planning practice. The use of objective, universal theoretical models based on realism to "solve" a problem is counterbalanced against a communicative rationality where an open, power neutral, purely subjective, idealistic, deliberative process navigates through "problems" (Dryzek 1990).

The immense complexity of the world make problem definition, solution, and evaluation an entirely subjective process (Mitchell 2002). However, total reliance on subjectivism will not allow an actor to judge the good from the evil (Sack 2003). In addition, issues of difference become intractable under instrumental rationality. The very act of talking about difference essentializes it. The plan that provides for transit access for all without acknowledging or addressing excessively high automobile ownership rates among whites simply contributes to structural inequities and historic discrimination. On the other hand, by employing Young's (2000) model of differentiated solidarity, difference can be acknowledged while not forced, and built into deliberative processes.

For example, under Young's vision a city neighborhoods' are both homogenous (that people elect to live in close proximity to people like them) and heterogeneous (that the borders of each neighborhood are fluid and each neighborhood is in solidarity with the others). When the residents of a city need to join together to address political challenges, the differentiated solidarity approach allows ethnic, religious, or other groups to speak about their differences and their unique needs and desires while contributing to a larger community dialogue.

Each approach discussed has a counter approach. But few have been thoroughly tested and evaluated. What would such an evaluation look like? Like Rawls' original position, is there an original city where these models and approaches could be tested and the victorious ideas could be adopted universally? Ontologically speaking, that would simply not be possible. Context matters. Nevertheless, what follows is an attempt to map the ideas of social theory onto the practice of planning using our fictitious planner, Jane Doe.

Jane Does's Projects: Where Does Theory Fit In?

In the beginning of this paper, I introduced Jane Doe, city planner in Anytown, USA. She was asked by her boss to establish an historic district, among other projects. How does the preceding discussion on ontological, normative, empirical, democratic models, and approaches help or hinder her work?

The simple answer is yes, social theory is of great value to Ms. Doe. It helps her ask the most important question of all, "should I do anything?" Normative frameworks allow Ms. Doe to visualize a future of how things should be. Empirical frameworks allow her to evaluate the current functioning of her world. Are historic resources being preserved? How can that even be assessed? Normatively, should Anytown, USA look the same in fifty years as it does today? Who will bear the cost? Is Ms. Doe more aligned with universalism or relativism, is the substance the most important thing to value (i.e. the creation of an historic district) or is a just and fair process more important? What democratic model will she employ to advance the project? Will rationality be defined through communicative or instrumental terms? How will difference be managed?

These questions highlight how the compelling arguments of Habermas, Young, Dryzek, Benhabib, and others are less compelling as a planner when you have a job to do. Ms. Doe is not necessarily in a position to question the project at its outset. I know in my own professional experience I was rarely in such a position. For example, Congress acted, the President spoke, my boss got the message, who am I to challenge? But, at the same time, the questions above do provide for places in the margins, where no one notices, for Ms. Doe to pursue her independent work. As a planner, you need not work as an automaton. The National Historic Preservation Act provides for an opportunity to create a public process in historic district creation. The planner, in fact, has some latitude to expand or contract that public process. Drawing on the deliberative model, using the communicative rationality approach, Ms. Doe can go far in advancing justice and meeting her boss' demands.

Implications for Planning Profesion

Planning theorist have drawn extensively on social theory in their writings about communicative planning, collaborative planning, and participatory planning (Innes 1995; Forester 1999; Healey 1996). These theories of planning provide a link between the insights offered by social theory and the on-the-ground work of a practicing planner. In many ways the usefulness on social theory for practitioners comes through the planning academy through a somewhat convoluted stream. First, planning theorists learn social theory, then they re-write planning theory as appropriate, and through universities planning educators train future planners using the latest planning theory. In this way, social theory plays a central role in shaping the ideas and education of the next generation of planning professionals.

When looked at through the eyes of a practitioner, outside the convoluted path of planning theorists and university classrooms, what does Ms. Doe's experience tell us about the importance of social theory? Planning is at a cross roads: go down the road of the status quo or continuously critique and look for better ways. Mitchell (2002) offered a great deal of insight in his review of this fundamental choice. The field of education has made its choice, contemporary teaching theory leaves little room for instrumental rationality (Fernstein 2001). Political scientist Gordon Schocket (2004) has said that the legal profession is going the same way. Is planning next?

I would argue yes, but, not entirely. Just as teachers need to teach their students the ABC's, in addition to how to be an "agent for change," planners need to attend to the basics of subdivision control and traffic counts, in addition to ameliorating structural inequalities. The original city which I described above does not exist, context matters, and social theory can help planners to see "the real and the good" (Sack 2003, 1).

The delicate dance which Ms. Doe undertook is hard because of the dualities highlighted in Figure 1. Going all the way to the left or all the way to the right is often impossible. Planners must move ahead with their work while paying heed to fundamental ontological questions, to which model they are working under, and to which approaches they are employing at what cost to others. Does it make Ms. Doe's job harder? Yes. Is it worth it? Most certainly.

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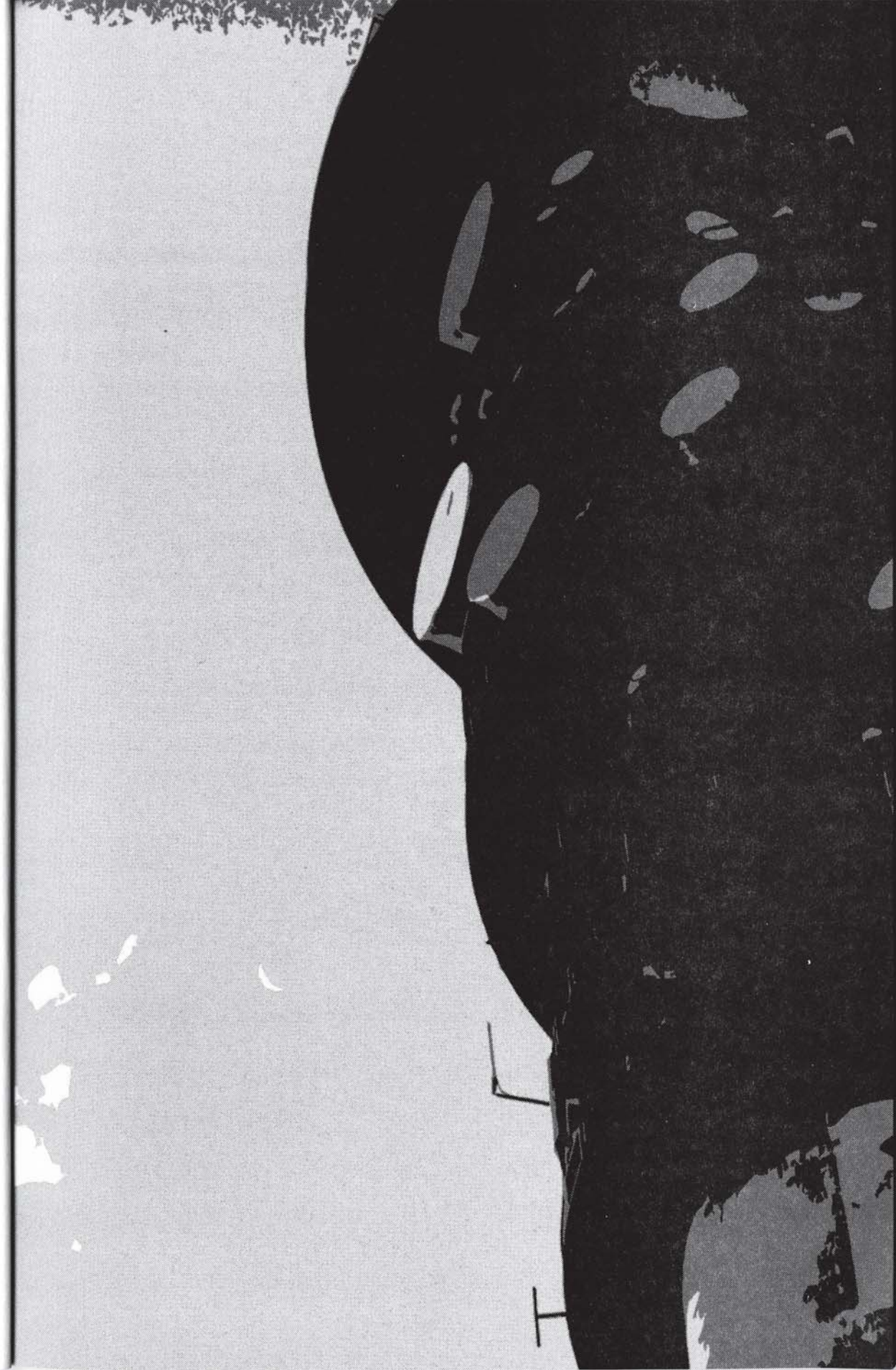
Affordable Family Rental Housing: Successful Practices in Massachusetts Communities

J. Rosie Tighe

Abstract

According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition, Massachusetts is the least affordable state in which to live. The burden of these high housing costs is disproportionately felt by low- and moderate-income residents. As the prospect of owning a home becomes less of a reality for many Massachusetts families and as market-rate rents have soared, the need for affordable rental housing becomes more pressing. This paper explores what the best processes are for developing affordable housing for low- and moderate-income families in Massachusetts. The identification of replicable practices demonstrates that creative options exist for cities and towns facing the dilemma of rising housing costs coupled with increased budgetary restrictions.

Introduction

As the prospect of owning a home becomes less of a reality for many Massachusetts families and as market-rate rents soar, the need for affordable rental housing becomes more pressing. Because it is primarily local governments that bear the burden of housing their residents, the identification of creative ways for cities and towns to develop affordable rental housing is vital. This paper explores some best processes for developing affordable housing for low- and moderate-income families in Massachusetts. Identification of replicable practices will demonstrate that creative options exist for other cities and towns facing the dilemma of rising housing costs coupled with increased budgetary restrictions. The implementation of these practices will increase affordable housing options, thereby enhancing the quality of life of many Massachusetts families.

Three case studies of affordable family rental housing developments in diverse Massachusetts communities demonstrate that developing affordable housing of any kind is a complex matter. The large-unit rental housing that is necessary for low-income families is particularly difficult, as this type of affordable housing typically encounters strong challenges from neighbors and/or community associations. Nevertheless, these case studies show that effective leadership from city residents and employees, coupled with knowledgeable professionals can create a successful development process. Ultimately, this paper establishes that any city or town can develop affordable family rental housing. It also finds, however, that adequate financing, town planning, successful community participation, strong city leadership, appropriate design and the cooperation of a knowledgeable developer are all vital to that success.

The affordable housing crisis is a national phenomenon. According to the 2003 Joint Center on Housing Studies, affordability remains America's most widespread housing challenge. Safe and affordable housing is a need that is unmet for millions of American households. Numerous studies show that there simply is not enough supply to meet demand for affordable housing, and

> Absent stronger income gains among the nation's poor, subsidies are the only way to provide decent housing for lowest income households because developers simply cannot build and operate

units at rents they can afford (Joint Center for Housing Studies 2003).

According to the 2002 Millennial Housing Report, 13.4 million renter and 14.5 million owner households have housing affordability problems. These issues negatively impact family well-being, child development, stress, economic achievement, and self-sufficiency (Bipartisan Millennial Housing Commission 2002).

The combination of three factors is exacerbating an already severe and widespread housing affordability crisis in this country. First, the federal government has not focused on the production of affordable housing in recent decades; second, the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) budget authority has steadily declined relative to other social service and health programs; and finally, the private market has not provided nearly enough housing that is affordable to low-income Americans (Dolbeare and Crowley 2002). Consequently, this crisis negatively impacts the economic and social well being of millions of households – particularly the elderly, young families, single women, and minorities. Continuing the current trend of declining federal support will exacerbate the gap between the highest and lowest wage-earners as well as the gap between white and non-white households.

While federal support for all housing programs has declined in recent decades, the emphasis of what policies remain is placed heavily on homeownership. Helping individuals and families finance their first home is something that resonates with policymakers and voters alike as being singularly American in scope. In contrast, rental housing is often equated with public housing, specifically, the enormous, cookie-cutter housing projects of the 1950s and 1960s. The negative connotations commonly ascribed to public housing are similar to those attributed to welfare and other federally sponsored programs to aid the poor.

For these reasons, programs to support rental-housing development have typically been less politically viable than those fostering homeownership. However, homeownership is not a viable option or a desirable one for many American individuals and families. Renting provides the flexibility necessary for growing households, or those whose careers require mobility. Furthermore, many Americans do not have the long-term stable income stream homeownership requires. For these populations, affordable rental housing is a necessity. By focusing on successful practices in the

development of affordable rental housing, this study seeks to demonstrate that even this considerably less popular type of affordable housing can be developed well, and by and size and scale of municipality.

The Massachusetts Context

While housing affordability is a problem in every part of the country, Massachusetts is the least affordable state in which to live (Bluestone 2003). The burden of high housing costs is disproportionably felt by low- and moderate-income residents. The cost of housing in Massachusetts is among the highest in the country – between 1980 and 2003, the nation's largest overall percentage increase in housing prices took place in Massachusetts (Heudorfer 2002). Over the past ten years, the situation has worsened to the point that the lack of affordable housing "now affects all but the most affluent housing consumers and threatens to undermine the state's economic competitiveness" (Goodman and Palma 2004). The state's housing crisis has been caused by a number of factors, including the lack of vacant land in urban areas, restrictive land use practices in suburban areas and a lack of housing production at all levels of affordability (Goodman and Palma 2004).

An examination of the state's affordable housing inventory reveals that some Massachusetts cities and towns have been much more successful at developing affordable housing than others (Department of Housing and Community Development 2002). Chapter 40B of Massachusetts law mandates that each of the state's 351 cities and towns share the burden of producing and preserving affordable housing, by having 10% of each town's housing stock be subsidized and affordable to low and moderate income (LMI) households.

Chapter 40B allows developers to apply for a Comprehensive Permit, which streamlines the permitting process at the local level. Within the application for this permit, a developer may request a waiver of zoning or other requirements that would otherwise bar the development from being constructed. If denied, and the city or town's subsidized housing makes up less than 10% of its housing stock, the developer has the right to appeal the decision to the state Housing Appeals Committee (HAC). In order to do so, the development in question must contain at least 20% affordable units. The HAC then weighs the regional need for affordable housing against the community's economic or environmental impact arguments. If the regional housing need is found to be greater than the community need, the appeal is granted and the development can be built.

The law has been unquestionably successful in its goal of producing LMI units. Nearly 20,000 units of housing for low- and moderate-income families in more than 200 communities have been built using its guidelines. Though these developments are often controversial at the outset, the end products usually involve collaboration between communities and developers and are successfully integrated into the surrounding neighborhoods (Heudorfer 2002). Despite these successes, the demand for affordable housing is still not met in the state. In the 1990s, the number of households increased by nearly 130,000, yet fewer than 92,000 new housing units were built (Bluestone 2003).

Case Studies

The following three case studies analyze affordable family rental housing initiatives in suburban and rural towns in Massachusetts. The cases indicate that the most successful developments occur when the city leadership, citizens, and developer understand and appreciate each other's goals, and that those goals do not significantly conflict. By outlining the obstacles encountered by municipalities in the development of units, and identifying how those obstacles were overcome, the cases demonstrate that it is in the power of Massachusetts cities and towns to successfully integrate affordable family rental housing into their communities. Doing so, however, requires that affordable housing be made a priority by both the local government and its citizens.

The projects outlined below were selected because numerous experts in the field of affordable housing in Massachusetts suggested them as high quality affordable family housing developments that meet specific needs of their respective communities. Furthermore, the municipalities chosen are dissimilar in terms of population, income, and region. The city of Haverhill is a former mill town located on the New Hampshire border that has historically been a working class community. Recent increases in housing costs threaten many long-time residents. Falmouth is a waterfront community on Cape Cod that must address the needs of full-time residents while maintaining desirability to the tourists and summer residents that provide substantial revenue to the town coffers. Newton is a wealthy first-ring suburb of Boston with excellent city services and public schools

that is combating rapidly rising land and housing costs. Despite the vast differences among these towns, the affordable housing developments that have been built in them share many similarities. This indicates that their common experiences are not limited to any one type of community, but may be applicable in a variety of municipalities.

● ●

Case #1: Auburn Apartments, Haverhill
Sponsor: GreatBridge Properties
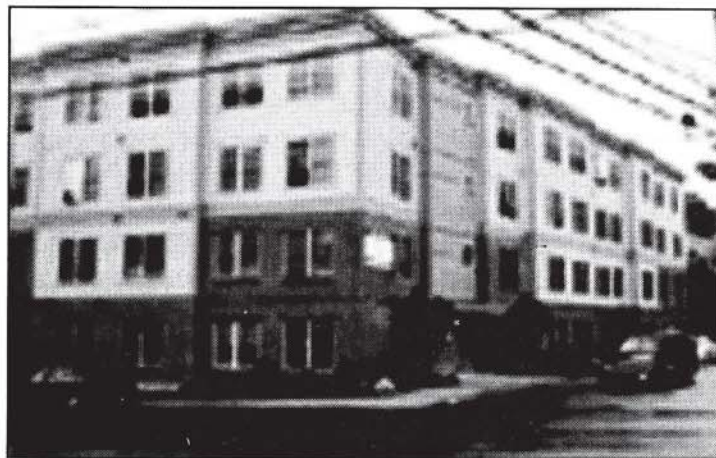*Developer:* GreatBridge Properties
Number of units: 30
Number of 2+ BR units: 23 (11 2-bedroom units) (12 3-bedroom units)
Percentage of units that are affordable: 100%
Income Range Targeted: 3 units: 40% of AMI; 3 units: 50% of AMI; 24 units: 60% of AMI
Year completed: 2003
Total Development Cost: $4.5 Million

Community Name: Haverhill
Reached 10% according to DHCD: No
Political Structure: City – Mayor; City Council
City Housing Components: Town Community Development Office; Affordable Housing Task Force; Haverhill Housing Authority

Area: Lawrence MSA
AMI: $74,300
Median rent: $575
Renter-Occupied: 38.5%

The City of Haverhill is located in northeastern Massachusetts in Essex County about a half hour's commute to Boston. Like many of its neighbors, Haverhill evolved into a major industrial center during the 17th and 18th centuries, and suffered a serious decline beginning in the 1930s. Thanks to emerging computer technology and research industries, the city is experiencing an economic upswing and a newly rehabilitated central business district (Boston Globe 2002a). The downtown area known as "The Acre" is adjacent to the business and government center of the city, yet has not participated in the revitalization that has touched the rest of the downtown. This section of the city is a mixture of residential and commercial uses, much of which is vacant and in need of considerable repair.

Before 2000, few developers had expressed interest in Haverhill as a spot for revitalization or affordable housing. The development of Auburn Apartments was the result of considerable work on the part of city leadership, community activism, and an experienced and patient developer. Auburn Apartments sits on the edge of The Acre, and acts as a buffer between the commercial district and the residential areas beyond. At first glance, the building does not distinguish itself from its environs. The four-story structure with its combination of brick and vinyl siding blends in with the mixture of commercial and residential buildings of similar scale and design surrounding it. Only after looking closely does it become clear that the building is brand new – the perfectly pointed bricks and gleaming playground reveal its true age. The newly constructed edifice substantially improved the aesthetics of the neighborhood, as it replaced a dilapidated and underused structure that contained only a liquor store on the ground floor, with vacant office space above.

When the developer of Auburn Apartments - Bill Caselden of GreatBridge Properties – approached the town, the groundwork had largely been laid for the development of affordable housing in the downtown area. Haverhill has long had a reputation of affordability, but in many ways, the city's reputation worsened its housing crisis. People flocked from other areas over the past two decades to take advantage of the lower

rents to be found there (Goldstein 2003). Compounding the problem is that in recent years Haverhill experienced significant losses to its once prodigious affordable rental housing stock. Much of this loss was a result of condominium conversions coupled with increased rents.

By 1990, Haverhill had one of the biggest shortages of affordable housing in Northeastern Massachusetts, and since 1995, this shortage has worsened, with home values appreciating by more than 31%. These increased prices placed low and moderate-income families out of the market. Population growth has also contributed to the housing shortage. Since 1990, the population increased 14.7% - from 51,000 to nearly 59,000 residents – this is a rate of growth higher than any other city in the region. Many of these new families are minorities and immigrants; Latino students in Haverhill's school system increased by 60% from 1990 to 2000 (US Census 2000). These new residents are having an increasingly difficult time finding affordable housing. Consequently, according to a former city employee, "the development of housing, particularly in targeted low income neighborhoods was a priority in our Consolidated Plan." In order to further facilitate affordable housing production, the city also approved an Inclusionary Zoning Bylaw, which requires that 10% of all new rental housing be affordable.

Once the severity of the city's affordable housing shortage was identified, the town designated a number of vacant and underused parcels as development priority sites. Many of these were in The Acre. According to developer Bill Caselden, in areas like this, "owners aren't going to do anything more than their neighbors. Sometimes, there needs to be a spark, a visible investment, to spark improvements and encourage other people to make investments without feeling they are the only ones taking huge risks."

Auburn Apartments is home to thirty households, many of whom have been on the Haverhill Housing Authority waiting list for years. The apartments come with sizeable bedrooms, kitchens and living rooms, and the developer donated funds to build a small playground behind the building. The project is accessible to public transportation as well as pharmacies, supermarkets, and city offices and schools. This project, in combination with a number of other efforts, has provided a needed spark to Haverhill's downtown revitalization. Since groundbreaking at Auburn Apartments, there has been a significant increase in interest in developing other properties in the neighborhood. Furthermore, "more and more people

are taking pride in their properties," said one long-time Haverhill resident. "There are new buildings and people are cleaning up their homes. It's all improving"(Goldstein 2003).

The Mayor's personal commitment to the Affordable Housing Task Force demonstrated that housing was a top priority of the city. He chaired each meeting of the task force himself, seldom leaving that role to aides as often occurs in other towns. Due in large part to the Mayor's leadership, the town was ripe for the development of affordable family rental housing by the time GreatBridge expressed interest in 2001.

GreatBridge selected the site at 62 Portland Street because of its prime location, size, and an accommodating owner, who was extremely cooperative in extending the developer's option throughout the lengthy funding-approval process. The project had to go through two rounds of applications to receive the necessary Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC). This type of delay is not unusual, as competition for LIHTC is strong, and the credits are only distributed once per year. However, these delays can often present great challenges for developers and cities that are not working with understanding owners, or in areas where market pressures make it very difficult for owners to accommodate any kind of delay.

The development was designated for family housing for two reasons. The first was that the 1999 task force study had identified family units as the most needed. The second is that new production of family rental units presents the most funding possibilities. Sources such as the Affordable Housing Trust Fund and the Home Funders programs at the state level give preference to developments with a significant portion of family-sized units. This means that there are considerably more sources of funding to fill in the gaps for family developments than for other types of housing such as those aimed at the elderly or buildings with primarily studio and one-bedroom units.

Auburn Apartments utilized many of these sources of funding. Besides the LIHTC, which provided the greatest single source to the project, the development secured a mortgage from the quasi-public Massachusetts Housing Partnership. The project received gap funding from both state and local HOME funds, with the remaining money provided by the developer. In total, Auburn Apartments utilized seven sources of funds. Only the LIHTC posed any problems for the developer, as the project had to wait for a second round of funding. While the owner was willing to wait out

the delay, the project had to absorb significant legal fees for both the owner and developer until funding was secured and the property could change hands.

The project met with great success despite this financial delay because of strong top-down leadership. Although the mayor had already written numerous letters of support, he personally attended the final tax credit meeting in Boston to demonstrate the city's desire to see this project move forward. The mayor's support, and his history of pushing for affordable housing made a huge difference to the success of this project, which had many potential liabilities: It was sponsored by a for-profit developer from out-of-state, met with significant delays in obtaining LIHTC funding, and it was to be the highest-density development in the neighborhood. Often, just one of these issues is enough to cause concern among neighbors and community groups. In Haverhill, however, the leadership in the town had consistently sought out the opinion of community members and ensured that the public was knowledgeable about the process and the problems that the project was addressing. Political support often means community support. According to Paula Newcomb, political leadership, "without a doubt" has an impact on the level of community and neighborhood support for affordable housing.

Caselden says that he'd much rather come to an agreement with the town than use the tools afforded to developers under Chapter 40B. However, in his experience, even in situations where a comprehensive permit is not necessary (or is approved by the town without an appeal to the state board) the statute has a dramatic effect on the willingness of many towns to cooperate with developers. Municipalities would rather work with a developer to ensure that some of their goals are met than risk a 40B appeal that could lead to a development that is completely outside the objectives of the city.

Another reason for the strong community support was the scale of the project. With only 30 units at 4 stories, the development was, "large enough to have an impact, without being so big as to be daunting." With a number of additional projects currently being planned, it is believed that numerous small developments can collectively make the same impact as a very large development without the level of opposition often encountered when proposing large, dense projects. Using affordable housing as downtown infill at under-used sites can often produce much-needed housing with fewer costs. This becomes especially attractive in areas where the city is

putting other funds into revitalization efforts, or when existing structures create negative perceptions among residents. Conversely, larger sites in less-developed areas or on the outskirts of town often require developers to pay the price to bring necessary infrastructure such as water and sewer to the development. The town also pays the price in a loss of open-space. Infill projects solve both of these problems as well as improve the appearance of a neighborhood.

The Auburn Apartments development process is an example of how a municipality, community leaders, and a private developer can work together to address affordable housing needs in an efficient manner. Instead of simply reacting to a proposed development, the city had a plan in place, identified priority sites for development, and was willing to work with a developer in order to increase their supply of affordable rental housing. For these reasons the city was able to control many of the variables in the pre-development process. However, it took a very strong-willed leader in order to facilitate these advances and a developer willing to cooperate, to create a successful example of affordable family rental housing.

Case #2: Gifford Street, Falmouth
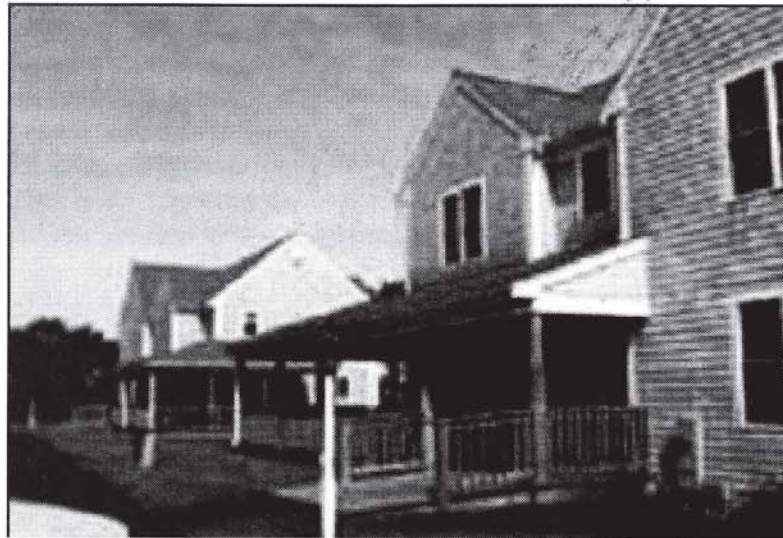*Project Name:* Gifford Street Phase II
Number of units: 14
Number of 2+ BR units: 0
Percentage of units that are affordable: 100%
Income Ranges Targeted: 3 units: 50% of AMI; 11 units: 80% of AMI
Year completed: 2002
Total Development Cost: $1.6 million

Community Name: Falmouth
Reached 10% according to DHCD: No
Town Political Structure: Town government w/ Selectmen & town meeting
Town Housing Components: Housing Authority; Planner

Area: Cape Cod – Barnstable County
AMI: $58,700
Median rent (county): $637
Renter-Occupied % - 14.3%

Like most towns on Cape Cod, Falmouth has a history as a fishing, farming and whaling community. The growth of Falmouth accelerated after 1910 with the proliferation of automobiles, which made the Cape much more accessible. The increasing size and worldwide renown of the scientific institutions at Woods Hole have contributed to the growth and importance of the town. Its location and extensive coastline as well as its expanding amenities has made Falmouth very desirable for retirees, summer residents and even those who commute the 75 miles to Boston for work. This growth, along with increasing environmental restrictions and open space preservation has severely limited the amount of land available for development, and thus has put enormous pressure on the Falmouth housing market.

Despite the numerous constraints facing housing development, Falmouth has constructed an array of affordable housing with remarkable success. The town has 130 units of affordable housing built or in construction over the past two years, but still falls well short of the 10% threshold at just under 5%. One major reason for this recent success is the director of the Falmouth Housing Corporation, Robert Murray. Bob has been described as "the housing wizard of Cape Cod," and as head of the nonprofit Falmouth Housing Corporation (FHC), he is personally responsible for the development of many affordable housing units in the town. The FHC was established in 1996 to address the housing needs of low-income households on the Upper Cape. The organization began acquiring property in mid-1998 and currently owns 63 units of housing, all of which are affordable to low and moderate-income households. There are plans for 90 more units to begin construction in 2004. In total, the FHC owns over 23 acres of land in the town of Falmouth.

The FHC's latest development is Gifford Street, Phase II, which accommodates 14 families earning less than 80% of AMI, although many of the residents are Section 8 voucher holders who earn less than 30% of AMI. While there are a few units that are designated as project-based Section 8, many residents reside in Gifford Street with their existing, transferable Section 8 vouchers. This is because there are so few units available to Section 8 holders on Cape Cod. Many have to travel twenty to fifty miles away in order to find units that will accept their vouchers. The Gifford Street development provides housing on the Cape for these individuals and families and allows them to reside much closer to their families or places of work.

Gifford Street is a two-lane road running north from the central business district of Falmouth. It was developed with a variety of commercial and industrial uses including the recently completed Gifford Street Homes Phase I. This project was developed simultaneously with facilities for a number of community agencies including a food pantry, recycling center and community farm, and contains 28 units of housing, many for Department of Mental Health (DMH) patients. Phase II consists of four new structures: six one-bedroom units and six two-bedroom units in three buildings, plus a three-bedroom unit in the fourth structure. The fourteenth unit is in a pre-existing two-bedroom house. Local shopping, town services, beaches and other amenities are within two or three miles of the project site, and Falmouth High School is located less than one-quarter mile from the project.

Like other affordable housing developments in Massachusetts, Gifford Street Phase II required a number of funding sources in order to cover the cost of development. In addition to FHC cash and equity contributions, the project received a construction loan from the Cape Cod Housing Consortium and permanent funding from the MassHousing Partnership Fund, a MHP Perm Plus loan, and gap funding from the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. In total, the project utilized eight sources of funding. Acquisition costs were significant for this project, at 15% of the total development cost. This is typical of projects on Cape Cod and in other areas that have very high land costs, making it more difficult to build housing at a level affordable to families that need it most in these communities.

Gifford Street Phase II received a 40B Comprehensive Permit that allowed the project to be built without conforming to the existing zoning measures. While some Comprehensive Permit applications stimulate considerable opposition from the community, or from the town's Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA), the permit for Gifford Street met with little resistance from either. According to Murray, Falmouth "provides a good example of what happens when a town is really behind a project." The town's leadership has been solidly behind the majority of FHC's developments. The ZBA even worked overtime to approve a previous development in time for Murray to apply for the LIHTC necessary to make the financing work. According to Murray, this type of support is rare on and off Cape Cod, and has a significant impact on the quality and quantity of housing that gets produced. He believes that the Cape is a difficult place to develop affordable housing, not because of "environmental constraints or a lack of developable land. It's a lack of leadership. That lack has cost the Cape much when it comes to housing."

The level of local governmental support for housing in Falmouth is what drew Murray to the town. As an affordable housing advocate in a variety of roles in neighboring Harwich, Murray was increasingly frustrated by the lack of progress in that town. "In Harwich, it has taken five years for three lousy houses," Murray said. "It just isn't worth the time and the effort. I just decided I'm going to spend my time where I'm going to make things happen." Proactive leadership on the issue of affordable housing is essential according to Murray. "There are great myths surrounding affordable housing. When a town's leadership does not dispel these myths, or worse perpetuates them, it can be devastating to a project."

It is these myths that often cause surges of community opposition to proposed affordable housing. Whether it is a concern for increased crime, traffic, school costs, or environmental impact, it is the responsibility of elected officials to address the concerns in a practical manner. Murray adds that a "practical manner" means Selectmen, councilors, aldermen, and mayors need to act in the best interest of all residents, not a few neighbors. By supporting developments that augment the affordable housing stock while maintaining the integrity and character of the existing community, many of the myths surrounding affordable housing can be dispelled. In many cases, using the Comprehensive Permit Process under Chapter 40B makes it easier on towns. "As an instrument for the municipality, 40B works quite well," according to Heather Harper, Assistant Town Administrator. The Gifford Street Developments are an example of a 40B success – making it possible for a private nonprofit to work with the town to build 40 units of 100% affordable housing.

Despite, or possibly because of, 40B's achievements in Falmouth, the town has pursued initiatives to strengthen local control over growth and housing. Recently, an Affordable Housing Action Plan was approved via town meeting and certified by DHCD, which will allow the town greater control over development, and will limit overrides of local zoning. By pursuing projects that are within the local housing plan's guidelines, the projects should receive greater support from the city, and fewer instances of community opposition.

Gifford Street, Phase II did not encounter much community opposition

for two reasons. First, the site is in a relatively unpopulated area with few abutters. While the ideal is to build new affordable units in accessible areas close to infrastructure and transportation, the options for development are not always great – especially on Cape Cod. However, when housing needs to get built, it is sometimes necessary to make some concessions. Second, the earlier Phase I had been very well received by the community, and the combination of community group offices, DMH housing, elderly, and family units making up Phase II was seen as providing a needed service to the town. Furthermore, once the units were built, the design was praised as well – the FHC gets numerous requests from market rate renters and buyers about the units.

According to Murray, the FHC sought to conform to existing neighborhood design. This attention to detail made Phase II extremely easy to develop, both in getting support from the town and financing from state agencies. A record of success goes a long way in being able to finance affordable housing. "Agencies want to work with people who have the track record to get units in the ground," says Murray. Echoing this sentiment was MassHousing loan officer Andrew Winter, who added, "The financing approval and closing process is a complex one, with a fairly steep learning curve. An experienced developer typically will navigate this process more quickly."

Falmouth has been fortunate to be able to work with a developer who takes the community's needs seriously, and also puts much emphasis on the design of a project. According to town planner Brian Currie, "The Falmouth Housing Corporation works closely with the town and shares the same goals." The FHC used local architects who worked pro-bono on the Gifford Street projects, and refused to trim costs if it meant sacrificing design. "The price is insignificant when amortized over the project life, and it makes a real difference to the neighbors, the residents, and the town," says Murray. While this can sometimes have an impact on the affordability of the units, Murray believes it is worthwhile because, "If you build a really nice looking project, the next one is a lot easier. Good design gets you brownie points."

Case # 3: Kayla's House, Newton
Project Name: The Kayla A. Rosenberg House
Number of units: 5 rental; 4 homeownership
Number of 2+ BR units: 5
Percentage of units that are affordable: 100% of rental units
Income Range Targeted: 5 units: 30% of AMI
Year completed: 2003
Total Development Cost: $1.6 million
Town Name: Newton
Reached 10% according to DHCD: No
Town Political Structure: City – Mayor; City Council
Housing Proponents: CAN-DO; City Planning Office

Area: Middlesex County
AMI: $80,800
Median rent: $1000
Renter-Occupied: 29.6%

Newton, Massachusetts is one of the more affluent cities in the Commonwealth, with a median income of over $84,000. Located six miles from Boston, Newton is a first-ring suburb that has benefited greatly from the economic boom experienced throughout the metro-area. The city has been touted as,

A vibrant community that is desirable as a place to live and work due to its proximity to Boston, nearness to various highway and public transportation systems, attractive neighborhoods and high property values, well-run municipal government, and a strong, nationally-recognized school system. (Boston Globe 2002b, 1)

The vast majority of Newton's housing stock has always been priced at the upper end of the Boston suburban market. However, due to a 63% rise in property values in the past decade, even many long-time Newton residents are unable to afford housing. The city currently has the ninth highest property values in the state – beating out other high-cost towns such as Concord, Lexington, and every town on Cape Cod. To combat this trend, Newton has been proactive in the creation of both rental and homeownership units for many different segments of the community including families, the elderly, disabled, city workers, and the homeless.

Newton was the first community in the state to adopt the practice of inclusionary zoning during the 1960s. It began as informal policy, and in 1977, was made an ordinance requiring that 15% of all new multifamily units be reserved for LMI residents. This bylaw has provided about 225 units of affordable housing over its 30-year lifetime (Engler 2002). The city also passed an accessory apartment ordinance, which encourages in-law and garage apartments to be constructed in single-family neighborhoods. The establishment of these ordinances and bylaws demonstrates Newton's commitment to affordable housing development. The combination of strong city support and a broad range of housing advocates throughout the city has resulted in the successful development of a number of affordable housing projects.

One of these recent successes is located at 90 Christina Street. The project consists of three buildings – The Kayla A. Rosenberg House, which contains five rental units, and two duplexes that house four homeownership units. All of the buildings were designed (with the help of a pro-bono architect) to complement the existing neighborhood, and the lot stands

as a buffer between the residential area and an industrial park. Citizens for Affordable Housing in Newton Development Organization, Inc (CAN-DO) served as developer and manager of the project, forging a unique partnership with a local social service provider, Newton Community Service Center (NCSC). The two agencies worked for four years to develop the rental housing for young, at risk mothers and their children. The four homeownership units were proposed to defray development costs for the rental structure. Three of these units were reserved for income-eligible city employees, and the other for a first-time homebuyer who made less than 60% of AMI.

The partnership between CAN-DO and NCSC was established in 1999 when NCSC was having difficulty locating a site to house women who were participating in the agency's Parents Program. The program provides counseling and other services to new parents, many of whom are in their teens and early twenties. The agency had received a HUD grant through the McKinney/Vento program that would partially defray the cost of purchasing a property to house participants who were at risk of homelessness or abuse. After months of searching for a property in their price range, and a number of rejections by the city development board, the agency was "completely demoralized." When Josephine McNeil – executive director of CAN-DO – heard that NCSC was considering returning the money to HUD, she convinced her board of directors to step in to partner with NCSC. CAN-DO had been wanting to purchase the property at 90 Christina Street for two years, but was unable to obtain the necessary funding. It seemed like the perfect site for the project, and with the additional McKinney funding from NCSC, CAN-DO moved forward with the acquisition.

The project received a comprehensive permit from the Newton zoning board in 2000, and received significant support from numerous community groups as well as the Mayor and a number of aldermen. Despite growing neighborhood opposition to the proposed density of the development, CAN-DO was prepared to move forward when an abutter appealed the permit granted by the zoning board. According to McNeil, CAN-DO, "naively thought that there would be little opposition due to the location." The property serves as a buffer between the residential neighborhood and an industrial area, and therefore, was a fairly marginal site to begin with. Because of this, the project sponsors did not hold any community meetings until after the Comprehensive Permit had been received. By that point,

says McNeil, "it was very difficult to get those who were opposed to enter the planning process."

McNeil and CAN-DO had to wait nearly three years to break ground at Christina Street due to the lengthy appeal. In many cases, this type of delay can bring the delicate web of financing crashing down as costs soar. In this case, the city was willing to put some of their HOME and CDBG funds toward keeping the project afloat until the appeal was denied. Without this assistance, the project would likely have gone under. When asked if an earlier outreach attempt would have mitigated the level of opposition, McNeil was skeptical. "People just didn't want it there," she said. However, she adds that community outreach is always a good idea, but it is not always possible in a tight housing market like Newton. "Sometimes, an opportunity presents itself and you have to immediately act. [Owners] won't necessarily wait through community meetings so you can buy the property."

Developing affordable housing in a city with such high land costs presents both density and affordability issues. With prices so high, increased density is almost always the only way to achieve affordability. Projects like Christina Street work because they involve increased density, yet are small enough to blend into the surroundings, and do not have a significant impact on the town infrastructure. Furthermore, high land prices drastically increase development costs, and it is a struggle to develop housing at a level affordable to those who really need it. This becomes more of an issue when funding from state agencies is required. Most state agencies place a ceiling on per-unit development costs for affordable housing financing. According to Andrew Winter, loan officer at MassHousing, "There is a challenge in using state funds in communities with high acquisition costs because at some point it appears extravagant. It may not be perceived as the best use of the state's money because you can spend less money in a different town to do the same project." While it makes sense to leverage federal and state funds in order to achieve the maximum number of units and levels of affordability, it poses a challenge to those aiming to develop affordable housing in communities with such high land costs. However, these issues can often be overcome by the city or town stepping in and contributing to acquisition costs, as Newton did for Kayla's House.

Because the project exceeded the development cost caps for most state agencies, CAN-DO turned to a local bank to provide the permanent

funding and filled in the gaps with more than fifteen other sources. In addition to the City of Newton HOME and CDBG funding, the Christina Street project received grants from a number of private foundations. The project also took advantage of a number of city funding sources for rehabilitation, including lead paint and asbestos remediation grants. Finally, the project received considerable in-kind donations, ranging from legal and architectural services to the granite sidewalks required under city regulations. In total, excluding in-kind donations, the project required seventeen sources of funds, ranging from an $800 asbestos remediation grant to the permanent loan of over $300,000.

CAN-DO was lucky to have a supportive community bank to provide the permanent loan for the project as well as city financial support. If this had not been the case, the team would have had to lower costs considerably in order to qualify for state funding. This may have affected the aesthetic quality of the project, decreased affordability, forced CAN-DO to increase the project density, or scrapped the development altogether. The possibility of having to compromise quality for affordability would have had a drastic impact on how the project was ultimately received by the town. CAN-DO makes an effort to build attractive projects and maintain them well. As McNeil said, "if you don't, you leave yourself open to being looked at as a negative example." If affordable housing is attractive and well maintained, it makes it much easier to develop future projects.

The high level of political support in Newton has also had a drastic effect on public opinion regarding affordable housing. According to McNeil, there has "been a sea change" in the city with respect to public opinion about affordable housing. "People are beginning to understand the affordability crisis," she says. Much of the reason for this seems to be that alderman, councilor, and mayoral campaigns have singled out affordable housing as an important issue in recent years. The lack of affordability is so widespread that it has been forced on the citywide political agenda. This has fostered increased understanding of the issues among Newton residents.

The Christina Street project is now completed and fully occupied. Neighbors consider the house to have a positive impact on the neighborhood, and the residents are able to live in close proximity to family, work, and school. The success of this project demonstrates the importance of patience, perseverance, and partnerships in affordable housing development. Without these attributes, CAN-DO could never have acquired the property, much

less developed five units of affordable rental housing. The development also received considerable support from pro-bono goods and services, which significantly lowered development costs while increasing the aesthetic quality of the development. Despite regulatory barriers, the City of Newton provided political and financial support that enabled the project to continue through a lengthy and costly appeal. Each of the obstacles Kayla's House faced was overcome with a little help, but any one of them could have rendered this project unworkable. The Christina Street story demonstrates that a competent developer, political will, and partnerships with willing agencies and service providers go a long way toward ensuring a project's long-term viability.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Each of the projects studied faced significant organizational, financial, and political challenges. The degree to which each of them overcame those challenges speaks to the abilities of those involved in the process. Each of the three cases can be considered a "successful" development to some degree. These cases demonstrate that the steps taken by the developers, planners, elected officials, and community members to facilitate various aspects of these projects also had a significant impact on their success. A number of repeated themes can be identified in these cases, and many of the measures instituted to overcome various obstacles may well be replicable in other situations where these challenges are present. While no two projects are alike, there are steps that can be taken to increase the chances of a smooth development process.

Many of the themes that emerged run counter to traditionally held presumptions about affordable housing development. Often, it is assumed that financing is the biggest barrier to the development of affordable housing. Contrary to what is often supposed, the cases indicate that Massachusetts has provided a variety of funding mechanisms that adequately support many projects in a relatively efficient manner. The seventeen sources required to fund the Newton project demonstrate how much more complex the process is when state funds are not available. However, even this development did get funded – and it was other impediments that threatened the success of that project.

Another surprising conclusion is the lack of regulatory barriers encountered. Building code regulations, septic requirements, and water resource guidelines are often cited as obstacles to the development of affordable housing or faulted for decreasing affordability in communities. Contrary to this assumption, none of the people interviewed cited regulatory barriers as a hindrance to development. This may have been because the developments all received comprehensive permits under Chapter 40B, which streamline the town regulatory process. However, it demonstrates that in these cases, regulatory hurdles were not a significant factor impeding development.

Despite these findings, the cases also demonstrate that affordable housing is difficult to develop, and the process is extraordinarily sensitive to even the smallest obstacle. Strong leadership, patience, and a cooperative developer aids considerably in creating a successful process. The most successful developments seem to occur when there is significant understanding and shared goals between the developer and the city or sponsor. This process becomes much easier when the city's elected officials choose to back a project publicly, and with vigor. Experienced developers understand the regulatory, planning, and financing mechanisms that can present obstacles to development, and when these developers work with the community to design quality affordable housing, it is likelier that the leadership will back future projects. The cases reviewed here indicate that adequate financing, successful town planning, community participation, strong city leadership, appropriate design and the cooperation of a knowledgeable developer each have a powerful influence on the success of affordable housing development. When all of these pieces are in place, financial pitfalls, community opposition, and regulatory obstacles can be overcome in the shared goal of developing quality affordable housing.

Financing

Support from the city, or a developer's deep pockets often must be employed in order to succeed. If developers and sponsors have the patience and expertise to seek out creative funding mechanisms, many financing issues can be overcome. The Christina Street project would have never happened without the McKinney grant supplied by NCSC or funding from the City of Newton that was provided while the development was under appeal. Furthermore, high land costs adversely impacted this project's ability to obtain state funding. Not all developers are able to obtain private bank funding at rates or regulations that are comparable to the state lending agencies. Each of these situations demonstrates that an affordable

housing development process seldom occurs within the confines of the original schedule. Financing obstacles, appeals, and regulatory issues can significantly delay a project and consequently significantly increase development costs.

While piecing together financing is often a long and frustrating process, there are enough programs and sources of funding that the availability of such funding is seldom an impediment to a development's success on its own. However, any obstacle to financing, even if it is only a delay in receiving financing, can pose serious logistical problems for developers. Therefore, it is necessary to foresee the possibility of these potential pitfalls before development begins and have contingency plans in place to deal with them. While CAN-DO was able to receive a loan from the city to maintain site control through the appeal process, not every city has the financial means or political will to provide similar support. Simply securing a line of credit with a local bank may create the financial flexibility necessary for a development to overcome financial delays or challenges.

Planning

All of the municipalities studied have instituted Housing Action Plans, and Falmouth's plan has been approved by the state, giving that community greater control over the Comprehensive Permit process. This reduces the opportunity for developers to override local zoning via the state appeals process, and ensures that multifamily housing can be developed in areas zoned for this use. Part of the process of creating a Housing Action Plan is the assessment of each community's individual housing needs, be it single and two-family homes in the relatively rural community of Falmouth, or the dense, urban infill project seen in Haverhill. Once a needs assessment has been produced, municipalities can facilitate affordable housing development while ensuring that new construction is appropriate for each town's particular needs and character. By planning for growth in areas that are environmentally sound and that have the infrastructure to support new development, cities and towns can make certain that developments for low and moderate income families address the affordability requirements of those households while maintaining the unique character of the community.

Leadership

As Bob Murray said, "[Building affordable housing] isn't rocket science. It's not hard to do, but you need leadership and commitment." The degree to which the leadership in a municipality dictates the tone of the community toward affordable housing can be problematic or extremely helpful. In Newton, the city planning office was extremely supportive of the development when financial resources were needed, while Haverhill's strong mayoral support ensured that the development team would not encounter any regulatory or political barriers. Having this type of top-down support may serve to streamline the permitting process, and make the navigation of city bureaucracy simpler for the development team.

Getting affordable housing on the municipal agenda can often foster political and community support, and there are a number of practical steps that can be taken to do so. Government is by no means a single, unified force. Often, the process of building affordable housing frustrates housing advocates, developers, and city planners equally. By identifying parties that are sympathetic to the housing needs of the community, the groups can work together to lobby the municipal political leadership to place greater emphasis on affordable housing. An effort that combines planners, advocates, and citizens has a much greater impact when working together than do each of these forces separately, especially if it presents a unified front with a unified agenda.

The second piece of effective lobbying is use of the media. Effective media coverage can be achieved by pursuing human-interest stories that involve the lack of housing, or that highlight good affordable developments. Other methods may be to organize a tour of existing projects that feature real people telling their success stories. Another effective method may be to call in to radio talk shows or write letters to the editor of local papers. Any time there is media coverage, forward clippings to local politicians to keep their focus on affordable housing. If these measures are in place in a community before a development is proposed, it is less likely that political or community opposition will develop into a time consuming or costly barrier to development.

Community Participation

Each of the projects analyzed pursued community outreach mechanisms to varying degrees, and with varying success. Clearly, the intense, top-down community outreach demonstrated by the city of Haverhill had a

positive impact on neighborhood acceptance of the project. Additionally, in each of the three cases, the faith community was utilized as an early step toward engaging residents. In all three towns, these efforts were rewarded by strong, continuous support from the clergy, congregations, and other religious community groups. However, the three project teams approached their respective communities in different ways, and at different points in the process.

Forming strategic alliances can also go a long way toward achieving successful housing development, be it with government agencies, or local non-profits. CAN-DO's partnership with NCSC ensured that both agencies' goals (affordable housing development; housing for young mothers) could be met. As previously discussed, community outreach can mitigate opposition to developments, especially if it is initiated at an early stage, and utilizes established community organizations such as churches, school groups, and local charitable agencies. However, in other cases, early outreach methods can simply provide the opposition more time to organize against a development. It is important to initiate community outreach in ways that will create a positive, non-combative environment. This is especially important when a developer is from out of town, or out of state, and might be perceived as an intruder trying to make a buck at the expense of the town.

Design

Each of the developers interviewed claimed that good design aided their ability to produce future projects with demonstrably less community and political opposition. This seems to be confirmed by the reaction that each of these projects has received since the end of construction. The extent to which affordable housing projects are in keeping with traditional neighborhood aesthetics or with stricter town design guidelines seems to have a noticeable impact after completion, as any opposition to these projects virtually disappeared once they were completed. The extent to which these projects each strove to fit in with the existing neighborhood demonstrates how far affordable housing has come from the cinderblock projects of the 1950s.

Despite the strides taken toward improved affordable housing design, there is little evidence to suggest that good design ensures an effortless process, as projects may still encounter NIMBY issues. However, while design does not necessarily aid in overcoming all community opposition,

good design does impact the broader reputation of the developer. As developers become known for incorporating neighborhood aesthetics into their projects, it may become easier for them to secure political support – if not community support. Each "good" development that gets built goes far to counter the stereotype of "cookie cutter" housing projects that may come with adverse impacts. While these efforts do not always pay off immediately, in the long run, building attractive affordable housing often makes it easier to build future developments.

Incorporating good design into affordable housing is not easy, nor is it inexpensive. Both the Falmouth and Newton projects were able to secure pro-bono architecture services from local firms. Working with an experienced architect enables the developer or sponsor to incorporate good design at a relatively low cost. While material costs may still be comparatively more expensive, the addition of good design principles may pay off with regard to community acceptance of the project when finished.

Developer

The reputation of the developer clearly has an impact on the ease with which a project is completed. Each participant interviewed agreed that once a developer has built one or two "good" projects, and has demonstrated an ability to navigate the financial and political maze that constitutes the affordable housing development process, it becomes easier to secure the trust and support of the town as well as state lenders. As Bob Murray said, "after a town or nonprofit sponsor has successfully developed a property, it makes it much easier to get the next one in the ground. Lenders are enthusiastic to work with people who have a good track record." Steve Gartrell added that experienced developers have an enormous impact on a smooth process, because the municipal planners, appeals board, or elected officials trust that their numbers will add up, that the design will be acceptable to the town, and that they will be able to secure the funding promised. The presence of an experienced developer can mitigate some of these issues, as well as ensure greater community support by employing outreach efforts early and continuously throughout the project.

The more proactive cities and towns are in developing affordable housing on their own or in partnership with nonprofit or private developers, the more they can ensure that the needs of the entire community are met. Failure by cities and towns to address municipal housing needs can result

in developments that are not in line with what city leadership or residents may envision for their community. Massachusetts cities and towns have been delegated the responsibility to provide adequate affordable housing for their citizens. The methods employed by developers are not always in line with what a community has deemed in its best interest. However, by no means are cities and towns powerless. Municipalities should authorize housing plans and initiate other measures discussed previously to build quality affordable housing. By working with developers to produce housing that fits with the character of each community, locating and providing creative financing methods, and planning for smart growth, cities and towns have a great deal of control over where, how, and for whom affordable housing is developed. In doing so, municipalities provide a needed service for residents while maintaining and augmenting the individual character of each community.

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SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL THROUGH SAFE COMMUNITIES:
RESULTS OF A COMMUNITY PLANNING GRANT PROGRAM IN CALIFORNIA

TRACY E. MCMILLAN, KIMARI PHILLIPS AND
ANNE SEELEY

Abstract

The U.S. is currently witnessing two concurrent trends in children: a reduction in walking or bicycling to school and an increase in chronic health conditions such as overweight/obesity and diabetes. Safe Routes to School (SR2S) is an international movement aimed at increasing safe walking and bicycling activity to school in order to address these transportation and health issues. The California Safe Routes to School through Safe Communities planning grant project awarded eight communities of varying size $25,000 over a 17-month period to develop: 1) a broad-based, community coalition in order to foster community ownership of the SR2S concept; and 2) a strategic plan for the implementation of SR2S interventions. A qualitative program evaluation was conducted to measure the grantee's success in meeting these objectives.
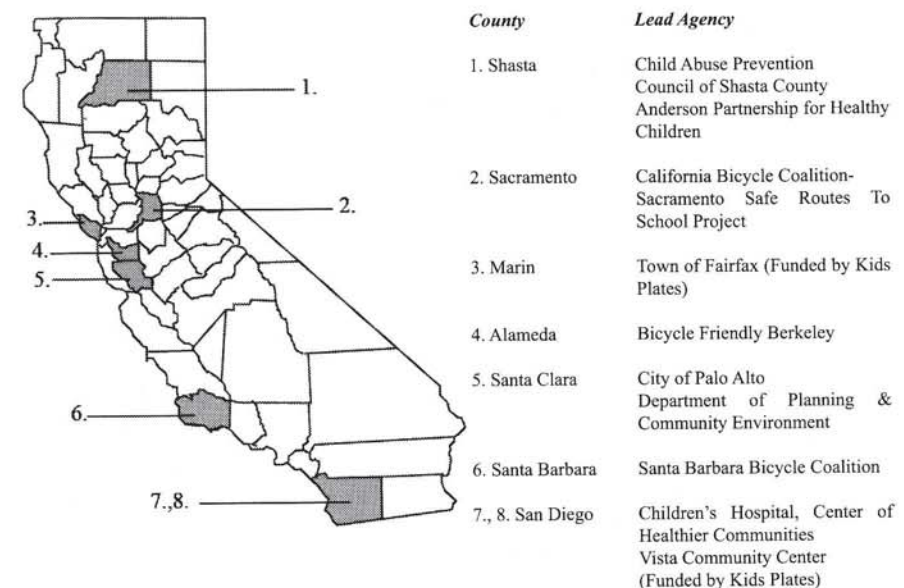
Introduction

Children's travel to school has changed dramatically in recent decades. Since the 1970s, walking or bicycling to school has been slowly replaced by the private automobile, contributing to increases in local traffic-related injuries and death, traffic congestion and air pollution (Nationwide Personal Transportation Survey, 1997; U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2003). In addition, children are also losing an opportunity to be physically active, contributing to increases in obesity, a known risk factor for diabetes and asthma. These chronic diseases are currently seen at higher rates and younger ages than ever before (Ogden et al, 2002; Sallis and Owen, 1999). Unfortunately, children who do still walk and ride their bikes often face an inhospitable physical environment. A lack of environmental support for active travel increases children's risk for pedestrian and bicyclist injuries, which are among the leading causes of death for children and adolescents aged 1-15 in California in 2002 (EpiCenter, 2004).

California has been at the forefront of Safe Routes to School (SR2S) initiatives in the United States that address these issues in children's transportation and health. SR2S is an international movement aimed at increasing safe walking and bicycling to school (Appleyard, 2003). The Safe Routes to School through Safe Communities planning grant project was a multi-agency collaborative program implemented in 2000–2002. The project was administered by the Active Community Environments (ACE) Project of the Institute for Health and Aging (University of California, San Francisco) and the California Department of Health Services (DHS). Funding for the project was provided by the California Office of Traffic Safety and California Kids Plates, while technical assistance was managed by the State and Local Injury Control (SLIC) section of DHS. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Safe Communities model, which uses an informed community-based planning approach, guided grant applicants in their coalition and plan development (NHTSA, 2004). A critical feature of this model is the recognition that it takes time, commitment, and money to develop community support and "political will" to positively affect permanent changes in travel behavior.

Grant applications were evaluated based on the applicant's understanding of the community-based planning approach and the application of the approach to their community context. Eight organizations in communities of varying size across California were awarded $25,000 planning grants

Safe Routes to School Project Locations

County	Lead Agency
1. Shasta	Child Abuse Prevention Council of Shasta County Anderson Partnership for Healthy Children
2. Sacramento	California Bicycle Coalition-Sacramento Safe Routes To School Project
3. Marin	Town of Fairfax (Funded by Kids Plates)
4. Alameda	Bicycle Friendly Berkeley
5. Santa Clara	City of Palo Alto Department of Planning & Community Environment
6. Santa Barbara	Santa Barbara Bicycle Coalition
7., 8. San Diego	Children's Hospital, Center of Healthier Communities Vista Community Center (Funded by Kids Plates)

Source: T. McMillan; Graphic: S. Otto

(Anderson/Shasta County, Berkeley, Fairfax, Palo Alto, Sacramento, Santa Barbara, San Diego, and Vista). The organizations represented non-profit or governmental agencies. The grant recipients had two broad objectives: 1) to develop a broad-based, community coalition for SR2S in order to foster community ownership; and 2) to develop a strategic plan for the implementation of SR2S interventions. The program was designed to provide support for planning as opposed to implementation because it was felt that the basis of successful and sustainable programs is the ability to plan, rather than just react.

A qualitative program evaluation was conducted in the spring of 2002, approximately one year after the grants were awarded, to examine the outcomes, best practices and lessons learned from the Safe Routes to School through Safe Communities planning grant project, based on the two aforementioned objectives of the grantees. The evaluation determined that most grantees were just moving into the process of developing a strategic plan for the implementation of SR2S interventions by the conclusion of the grant period. Therefore, this paper will focus on the grantee's outcomes

in relation to the first objective—the development of a broad-based, community coalition for SR2S to foster community ownership.

Methods

The research team conducted site visits with each grant recipient and interviewed the state level grant coordinators to evaluate the effectiveness of the planning grant program. Site visits with grant recipients included: 1) in-person interviews with the project coordinator(s); 2) tours of target communities/schools; and 3) distribution of open-ended surveys to coalition members. Site visits lasted approximately 2-3 hours, with the majority of this time spent with the project coordinator(s). Field notes and pictures were taken at each site. Coalition members were asked to mail surveys to the research team directly for confidentiality; however, many were returned via the project coordinator. There was not a high rate of return of coalition member surveys. The original grant applications and progress reports were reviewed for verification of project goals and validation of in-person interview/survey content.

Project coordinators were asked questions about both the processes and support that went into the planning grant as well as the outcomes that were achieved as a result of the program. Questions specifically targeted organizational and community capacity to implement the goals of the grant; resources used and needed to achieve success; measures of success within the community; and the impact of the planning grant program on various subpopulations within the community (e.g., the grantee organization, children, parents and administrators at the targeted schools, local officials). Coalition members were also asked questions regarding project support and outcomes from the perspective of the role their organization played in the coalition and planning grant process.

The research team conducted in-person and telephone interviews with the state-level grant coordinators to gauge their opinion of the effectiveness of the planning grant program. The grant coordinators were asked to evaluate the program based on the original project goals and the reality of how the project unfolded in each site and as a whole.

Analysis of the data collected from the interviews, site visits and surveys consisted of identification of common themes, activities, best practices and lessons learned from the eight grantees and the state coordinators. The remainder of the paper presents the results of the program evaluation.

The Grantees

The grantees in this project came from a diverse group of communities, organizations and agencies. While this variation makes it difficult to draw many comparisons across the project sites, some overall trends across the grantees clearly stand out:

1. The commonality is personality: Project sites with dynamic leaders who had positive personalities, good relationship-building skills and were politically and media savvy shared the greatest success at gaining community and political buy-in for SR2S.

2. Readiness to change is critical: As passionate and dynamic as the primary person or group might be, it was rarely enough to mobilize a community. The greatest success happened in those communities where other parameters indicated that the community was ready to move forward on the issue of SR2S. For example, having a school administration that backed the SR2S concept was essential. In contrast, significant school or community policies that hinder the population's ability to walk or bicycle to school (such as mandated bussing) or a prominent community voice that "just wants to move cars" were possible indicators of a community not ready to promote active travel to school.

3. Think big, start small: A strategic plan that maps out a project's overall vision was essential; but it was equally important for this plan to be grounded in small, measurable objectives in order to stay on track and have the opportunity for feedback and frequent, visible successes.

Project Outcomes

The community-based planning process was designed to: 1) use available data to inform the planning process; 2) be highly collaborative through the formation of coalitions with representatives from sectors such as planning, health, and education within the community; and 3) prepare the community to acquire resources and political will to implement the strategic plan that would move them toward a funded proposal for SR2S programs. While each of the eight local projects encountered unique challenges and opportunities in attaining these outcomes, here is how they fared overall:
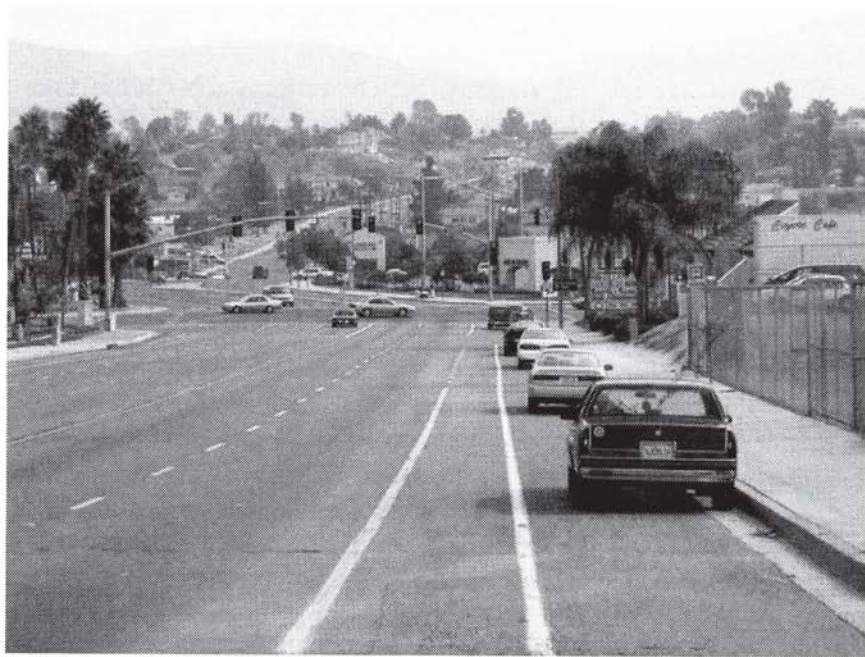
Wide street outside of a school.   *Source: T. McMillan.*

1) Using data to inform the process: Grantees were asked to use data as the basis of their decision-making about where to mobilize their projects and what they would specifically do with the community. They found data from multiple sources, including collision/injury data from police and hospital reports; traffic counts and speed measurements; surveys of parents and children on the walkability of neighborhoods; and general demographic data. Grantees found that gathering data specific to the traffic situation in their communities was difficult, time-consuming, and, in some cases, costly (due to time spent extracting the necessary and desired information). Consultants were sometimes hired to help with this task. Grantees were encouraged to use data in multiple ways, e.g., to assess community needs, interests and assets. However, due to the limited availability of data and expertise of coalition members, data were often used to help justify previously selected sites for the project. In the end, a broader definition and exploration of data, "assets" and "indicators" could have assisted grantees in locating project partners and resources and in developing asset-based action plans.

2) Collaborative Coalitions: Each local project was modestly staffed using grant funds, with the intention that coalition members would volunteer time to work with staff to foster community ownership. While meeting attendance was considered "decent" for about half the projects, (average meeting attendance was 10 individuals, meeting frequency varied across coalitions from monthly to quarterly), the work itself often exceeded the budgeted staff time, in part because the delegation of tasks to coalition members was limited. Shared workloads, especially among diverse partners, were a major challenge. The following are creative solutions recommended by SR2S projects to nurture collaboration and volunteerism:

a) invite key players to take formal ownership of the project during the initial grant writing phase
b) start by convening an informal entity that can evolve as the project progresses
c) convene smaller working groups that are site-specific, e.g., at each school, rather than one entity representing the needs of all schools within a district

All of the grantees felt it was important to recognize that the coalition was a collaborative rather than one-way process. It was important to both invite people to the table and let them participate when and in the best way they could. Everyone felt that there are critical relationships within their communities now that would not exist without the project. The projects helped bring different departments within city agencies closer together, brought community groups with similar agendas to the same table, and gave parents a forum with local governments and school boards that they did not have prior to this project.

3) Acquiring resources and political will: Public awareness of SR2S came through a variety of community events (e.g., Walk to School Days, open house events and city council presentations). However, results were mixed on whether that exposure subsequently turned into participation and support for the project. Grantees that had the most success either had a history of traffic-related injuries or deaths near their schools, or already had a vocal public surrounding the topic (e.g., a Safe Kids Coalition or a parent safety committee at the school or school-district level). Overall, grantees

felt it was critical to have the support of school administration; however, principals and school district superintendents were often the most difficult to reach because of the many competing demands on their time. Since the SR2S movement itself was gaining prominence nationwide, political figures in some of the communities were already aware of the issue and were prepared to support the action of the coalition. Still, educating the key stakeholders about the issue was an essential step in gaining and maintaining their support. Grantees used presentations, one-on-one meetings, and information exchange through key partners (e.g., Parent Teacher Associations) to inform local government officials, legislators, school administrators and parents regarding the coalition's efforts around SR2S. These and other methods used to gain buy-in are highlighted in the Best Practices section below.

Best Practices to Gain Community Support

An important step in moving the issue of SR2S forward within a community, region, or state is gaining the support of the public and key stakeholders. This was an essential element in the grant program, and the grantees used tools appropriate to their given situations to achieve this. Some of the ideas that proved most successful were:

Mini-grants: The South Coast SR2S Coalition in Santa Barbara used a mini-grant program to reach out to elementary schools. Schools received $500 to implement creative solutions to their self-identified issues related to traffic safety. As reported by the coalition: "Typical accomplishments of the mini-grant recipients were hosting bicycle rodeos, developing an incentive program for using alternative transportation that made students eligible for a raffle at year's end, bike helmet distribution, parent educational efforts and student-teacher assemblies" (Santa Barbara, final report) (see Appendix 1).

Public presentations and city-wide task force: In San Diego, the coalition successfully gained political buy-in for SR2S with a presentation to the city council's Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Committee. As a result, a new community task force with representatives from health, safety, planning and transportation, schools, and community members was convened to review and update citywide policies and warrants affecting pedestrian travel to school.

This task force in turn led to the City of San Diego's SR2S Task Force. The task force "will serve as an advisory body and clearinghouse for pedestrian issues. This task force ultimately will sustain the attention and action towards improving child pedestrian safety begun in Mid-City on a citywide level" (Children's Hospital, final report, 2002).

The Town of Fairfax in Marin County also used public presentations to gain support from community leaders. They prepared a PowerPoint slide presentation to profile the schools and surrounding community. "This presentation included the results of the parent and student surveys and slides of problem areas identified along the school routes. A "toolbox" presentation followed which offered possible solutions such as better crosswalks and traffic calming techniques" (Town of Fairfax, final report, 2002).

Walk to school day: All communities with a SR2S project held events for International Walk to School Day on October 2, 2001. Some grantees held additional walk to school events periodically throughout the year, even weekly (Fairfax). These events proved successful in raising attention and providing education about SR2S. The events were also effective at generating media exposure. Parents, children, school staff and administrators, local government officials and local businesses took part and contributed finances and incentive items as well. Walk to School events served as an opportunity for parents, city staff and officials to talk about safety around schools.

Walkability checklists/surveys: Coalitions used a data collection tool called a walkability checklist/survey during the project. These were simple checklists that evaluated the presence and quality of the pedestrian infrastructure near the school. This process provided an opportunity for children and community members to contribute to the process by identifying particular problems and helping to craft solutions specific to their streets and traffic patterns. As an example, parents involved in the Sacramento project hosted a tour for city staff and officials, using walkability checklists to identify local traffic problems and possible solutions firsthand.

Culturally appropriate events and materials: Grantees were most successful at engaging community members in the project when they used culturally appropriate materials and events. Brochures, walkability checklists, walk to school day surveys and other printed materials were produced and distributed in languages that matched the community profile. These culturally appropriate materials were obtained from the Department of Health Services, private sources (e.g., automobile clubs), or produced

in-house by grantees. The Townsite SR2S Coalition in Vista held walking events on Cinco de Mayo, successfully combining traffic safety messages with the cultural heritage of the community.

Lessons Learned

All projects contain a bit of trial and error, especially when they occur in the uncontrolled environments of our communities. The grantees and the state-level coordinators of the overall program identified some lessons learned that they feel are important for other SR2S community planning projects.

"Kill your speed...not me"
Source: T.McMillan

Grantees' recommendations:

1) Communication is key: Connect with groups in your community who are working on the same or similar issues. Communicate with these groups early on to prevent 'turf' battles or unnecessary work that duplicates what others have done. Plan to reach the broadest possible audience by using a variety of methods, such as targeted and town-wide mailings, telephone chains, and electronic communication.

2) Schools have agendas, too: Schools have requirements/ mandates to meet and their previously- established priorities may or may not mesh with the project's agenda. For the grantees to work most effectively with the schools, it was necessary to find out a given school's agenda and spin the program to fit it. Since many schools were concerned about test scores the grantees worked traffic safety and physical activity promotion into the curriculum in a way that would help schools meet testing requirements/goals. In some instances, schools did not see that it was within their jurisdiction to address traffic concerns off school grounds. Grantees educated school officials on the benefits and relevance of active and safe travel to school.

3) Identify an interested target population: Some projects initially proposed to work in a geographically large area with many school sites to provide resources to the community they already served through other activities. However, all grantees found that the topic of SR2S is an intense but fairly localized issue (both in terms of physical place and population served); therefore, it was typically more effective for most projects to work on a school-by-school basis as interest arose.

4) Involve critical players from the get-go: Certain entities are essential partners in these types of projects (city planning/engineering; school districts; public safety; city health agencies, etc.). They should be invited to participate in the project from the beginning (e.g., at the initial grant-writing phase) in order to help shape the vision of the planning group, understand the commitment, and share the workload.

5) Everything takes longer than you think: Getting a diverse group of people together who have varying schedules and agendas takes time, as does getting them to plan, promote, and assist with events. Allow for the different operating speeds of various types of organizational entities. One grantee simply said "expect to get half as much accomplished as you think you can."

6) The value of data: Data, although sometimes expensive and time consuming to acquire, speak loudly to potential partners, funding agencies, and the community. Realistically estimate the cost of purchasing data and the labor involved in attaining/analyzing them when preparing budgets. It is also important to recognize the value of both quantitative and qualitative data, as well as data from multiple sources (e.g., police/hospital crash reports and community walkability checklists).

7) Community visibility is important for buy-in, developing trust, momentum: Your effectiveness and momentum will always be minimized unless people know you exist. Make yourself available to the community that you serve and realize that media exposure is a powerful tool in leveraging support.

8) Agency capacity should match program guidelines: In order to minimize bureaucratic delays in the project, it is important to determine that the fiscal and administrative capability of the host agency matches the requirements of the grant program guidelines.

State-level program coordinators' recommendations:

1) No one "owns" Safe Routes to School: While many programs are housed at one agency, SR2S is an issue that rightly belongs to many—public health, law enforcement, education, community design and development, and transportation planning, to name the obvious. The success of a SR2S program at the state and local level hinges upon the ability to identify resources and build relationships with a wide range of public agencies and nongovernment organizations. A single agency does not have the breadth of resources to mobilize a community around SR2S.

2) Prepare a pro-SR2S climate: Local projects would have benefited from state technical support that laid the groundwork for them to recruit partners, gather data and identify funding to continue working on SR2S. Technical assistance for project staff and coalitions might include: access to language translators for community letters and flyers; presentations to state agency staff who liaison with local schools and traffic safety personnel; template presentations to orient school administrators and community members to the importance of SR2S, the project and its methods, e.g., data-driven decision making; and already prepared materials for the projects' early-win events, e.g., Walk to School Day.

Conclusion

Some components of the SR2S projects continued in nearly all of the eight communities after the grant period ended. Several sites successfully acquired operating funds from another source and/or found another entity to host the coalition. Project staff felt that successful relationships had been built with city staff, leading to funding for pedestrian and bicyclist safety projects as well as opportunities for SR2S to thrive in the future.

The Safe Routes to School movement believes it is possible to promote physical activity, safety, sustainable transportation practices, and a sense of community through a focus on education, enforcement and engineering that is supportive of walking and bicycling. The Safe Routes to School through Safe Communities grant program was an experiment in providing people the financial support to develop strategic plans to improve the neighborhoods around schools for children to walk and bicycle more safely. This grant program successfully demonstrated that even a small amount of financial support can afford communities the time to stop, think, and work together toward the best solutions for a safe and active

community of the future.

Appendix: *Two Featured Grantees of the Safe Routes to School Through Safe Community Planning Grant Project*

Lead Agency: Santa Barbara Bicycle Coalition (non-profit, transportation), Santa Barbara, CA

Project Length: 15 months

Project Overview: The Santa Barbara County project focused on: 1) pedestrian and bicycle safety education and 2) building program support for Safe Routes to Schools at schools and in the community. A unique and successful project provided mini-grants to schools. Through the project's efforts with the schools, the Parent Teachers Association (PTA) and the community, school safety zone projects have become eligible for local community rehabilitation funds through the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG). Better curriculum materials and trained instructors now exist within the community for the schools to access for bicycle and pedestrian safety education.

Targeted Community: The focus was on the South Coast communities of Santa Barbara County (the incorporated cities of Santa Barbara and Carpinteria, and the unincorporated areas of Goleta, Isla Vista, Montecito and Summerland). The project originally planned to target all 30 schools in the three school districts but narrowed the focus to those schools that expressed interest. Ten schools participated in the mini-grant program and seventeen schools participated in the second year of Walk to School Day (WTSD).

Community Setting: Suburban, with a largely Caucasian and Latino population of diverse socio-economic status.

Coalition Description: South Coast Safe Routes to School Coalition— while initially planned to be a new coalition, logistically and financially it was more beneficial to augment an existing coalition with non-profit status (Santa Barbara Bicycle Coalition). The Safe Routes coalition was made up of representatives from the City & County of Santa Barbara, Traffic Solutions, Air Pollution Control District, local businesses, County Public Health Department, City of Santa Barbara Police Department, Sheriff's Department, Santa Barbara Area Council of PTA, Santa Barbara County Council of Governments, local parents, Cottage Hospital and

Caltrans District 5, with 80 partners overall, with approximately 20 who were active at the monthly coalition meetings.

Staffing: Planned: Two Co-Directors (each 5% FTE in kind), a Project Coordinator (15% FTE in kind), and other public agency staff time (in-kind) were budgeted for.

Reality: The original hope that the project would take root at the school level and lead to shared responsibility and workload did not really occur. Consequently, the workload was much higher than projected. A paid staff position of about 20 hours per week could have reduced the workload of the in-kind staff positions.

Allocation of funding:

Use of DHS funds:

20%—print, mail, supplies; 50%—graphic design, marketing materials; 20%—reimbursements or grants to schools and community groups; 10%—training and curriculum materials

Leveraging of other funds to support project:

Santa Barbara County Emergency Medical Services—$300 to print WTSD posters

Family Services Agency—fee waived for booth at Family Services Festival

Santa Barbara Air Pollution Control District—printed rulers and stickers for distribution at public events

Data used in needs assessment: The coalition decided to be guided more by community/school interest and its awareness of a traffic problem than by the limited data that did exist. Original police crash data did not record all the injuries in the school zone and were too few to identify problem areas. Maps with crash-injury data were produced in the fall of 2001 after the project was underway. School-specific community assessments were also conducted at each participating school to assess potential traffic problems.

Targeted strategies to increase public support:

• Creating a mini-grant program that allowed schools to define their own issues and solutions related to traffic safety and then apply to the coalition for grants of $500 to implement their own programs

• WTSD and Bike to School Day (BTSD) held in conjunction with national programs (WTSD on October 2 and Bike to Work Day in May)

• Utilizing individuals and organizations with established connections to key stakeholders (e.g., PTA with school administration) to spread the

coalition's message

Major project obstacles

• School administration participation: administrators were focused on getting kids to pass tests and sometimes felt that problems off the school grounds were outside their jurisdiction

• Delayed reimbursement from the state threatened the project's credibility with schools and community members who were promised minigrants; local staff used personal funds to pay mini-grantees and waited for reimbursement

• PTA's participation was initially contingent on all schools being included in the project, but this arrangement was successfully re-negotiated

Significant impacts of the project: Children and families/neighbors in project area: increased awareness and empowerment of how to make requests to the city (Santa Barbara) and schools for traffic safety. The project also increased access to information; the county has seen an increase in public participation at traffic engineering public hearings.

Local schools or district: became more sophisticated on public works decision-making and learned who to call for action on a traffic-related issue.

Local government officials and/or staff: increased awareness of existing bureaucratic processes and ticketing policies (e.g., traffic fines in school zones) that may run counter to Safe Routes to School efforts.

Tales of success:

• The mini-grant program: typical projects of the mini-grant recipients were hosting bicycle rodeos, developing an incentive program for using alternative transportation that made students eligible for a raffle at year's end, bike helmet distribution, parent educational efforts and student-teacher assemblies

• The WTSD/BTSD had high value in the community and brought good visibility and media attention to the issue of walking and bicycling to school

• The coalition worked with a local representative who championed an assembly bill to permit jurisdictions within the counties of Ventura and Santa Barbara to adopt double fines in the school zone ordinances

• The development of a community safety marketing plan, including a series of six public service announcements (PSAs) in English and Spanish. Two videos of the series have been prepared and funding is being sought for the remainder

• All school crosswalks were re-striped and signage was upgraded to new fluorescent color
• Traffic operations updated all schools' preferred travel routes maps
• Portable speed trailers were used for schools on high volume streets to prompt drivers to adhere to speed limits

Lessons learned:
• An active volunteer base is important
• Project goals should match project resources
• Identify groups and individuals within the community with similar interests for potential partnerships
• Schools have pressures for children to test well; try to make safety fit within a "testable" curriculum
• Holding meetings in conjunction with another group (e.g., PTA) may reduce meeting demand on individuals but could reduce attention being paid to the SR2S topic
• Optimize existing resources-housing the coalition at an umbrella organization with a diverse base of volunteers and a matching but broader topic area may be a better use of resources and can eliminate possible redundancy (real and perceived) of non-profit topic areas
• It is optimal to have a host agency that has the financial and administrative capacity to handle a reimbursement-based grant program

Sustainability:
• SBCAG (Santa Barbara County Association of Governments) made the Safe Routes to School project eligible for local community rehabilitation funds
• The Safe Routes to School coalition merged with an existing coalition in the community (Coalition for Sustainable Transportation-COAST) more broadly focused on sustainable transportation
• Applications for funding through the Caltrans Bicycle Transportation Account were made twice in 2002, with an emphasis on creating projects relevant to the trip to school
• The project directors and coordinators continue to seek grant funding from local benefactors for the public service announcements, helmet distribution and promotion of safe routes to school

Lead Agency: City of Palo Alto Department of Planning & Community Environment (public agency), Palo Alto, CA
Project Length: 7 months
Project Overview: Through grassroots efforts involving residents near

a problem intersection, this project was able to resolve street/sidewalk visibility problems (i.e., overgrown vegetation), resulting in a safer corner for all forms of traffic (especially pedestrian). In addition, they were successful in conducting Walk to School Day events, increasing police enforcement, and increasing crosswalk safety (signage and red curbs).

Targeted Community: Five schools in two neighborhoods (Ventura and Barron Park), separated by El Camino Real, a state highway. There is a high rate of youth injury (30% of reported pedestrian/bicycle crashes in the area) crossing the south El Camino Real corridor and adjacent streets.

Community Setting: Barron Park neighborhood, a recently annexed area, is somewhat rural, with no sidewalks. Ventura neighborhood is suburban, has a large minority population, and is higher density and lower income than Barron Park.

Coalition Description: A new Safe Routes to School (SR2S) coalition was formed with broad-based representation of community members, representing all the schools in the area, community groups, and residents who do not belong to community groups. Only a few formal meetings took place, but participants felt they had an informal, participatory atmosphere, which facilitated input and communication. E-mail was helpful in facilitating ongoing communication among coalition members, since it was hard to convene on a regular basis.

Staffing:
Planned: Project Manager (15% FTE) and Project Assistant (15% FTE)
Reality: Project Director (~ 5% FTE) and Project Coordinator/Intern (~100% FTE, but moved on to another job before the end of the project)

Allocation of fundung: Use of DHS funds: 79%—Staff; 1%—Office Expenses (printing/duplication); 20%—unexpended

Data used in needs assessment: Statewide injury database (SWITRS); traffic counts (speed and volume); block maps; field surveys (e.g., walkability checklist); aerial photography to evaluate infrastructure along school route; Parent Teacher Student Association and School District enrollment data

Targeted strategies to increase public support:
• Door-to-door contact to resolve street/sidewalk visibility problems (i.e., overgrown vegetation)
• Walk to School Day (WTSD) (including walking school busses)

- Increased police enforcement of parking and visibility rules (emphasizing warnings and increased awareness rather than punishment)

Major project obstacles:

- Limited staffing; difficulty recruiting and retaining part-time staff
- Getting people to attend coalition meetings on a regular basis
- NIMBYism (not in my backyard) regarding red-painted curbs and pruning bushes along sidewalks
- Disagreement among coalition members regarding bike lanes
- Disagreement with another community group regarding desirability of (a) moving cars vs. (b) accommodating bikes and pedestrians along this stretch of the state highway
- Difficulty institutionalizing "walk days" or "way-to-go days" (promoting biking, walking, carpooling), because Walk to School wasn't a priority for school administrators
- Local data was central to project's strategy; but some data were hard to obtain (e.g., enrollment, demographics, trip-to-school by mode)

Significant impacts of the project: Children and families/neighbors in project area: improved traffic safety resulting from visibility improvements; recommended/suggested school commute routes for a new middle school opening 2003; raised collective awareness via press from statewide program

Local schools/district: increased awareness about SR2S and related issues/programs

Local government officials/staff: involvement at events (e.g., Walk to School Day); increased advocacy for visibility legislation; new partnerships among City departments will facilitate future inter-departmental Collaboration

Tales of success:

- Project staff encouraged neighbors to take initiative with traffic safety improvements (e.g., removing overgrown vegetation on the property) and to rally community buy-in for safety issues and awareness of the City's Visibility Project
- Constant and in-depth communication brought together partnership of appropriate City departments (e.g., public works, utilities, and city arborists)
- Support of law enforcement and elected officials (e.g., parking enforcement and WTSD involvement)

- Attainment of funds to post fluorescent signage and paint red curbs near crosswalks

Lessons learned:

- Need to allocate more time within the project timeline for event planning and communication
- Begin communication across City departments earlier in the process of preparing an application, in order to foster collaboration and select project objectives that meet each other's departmental goals

Sustainability: Funded application for SR2S grant from California Department of Transportation SR2S construction program

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Acknowledgements

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Tracy E. McMillan is a transdisciplinary assistant
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ECONOMIC INCENTIVES: WHAT DO CITIES REALLY WANT TO PAY?

POINT /COUNTERPOINT

EDITED BY KATE BUSHMAN AND APRIL GERUSO

Abstract

In order to facilitate economic growth, some cities give economic incentives to entice companies to relocate into their area. The incentives are applauded by many for their ability to create more jobs and tax revenue for a city. Conversely, economic incentives have been seen as negative for cities because the companies do not always live up to their promises. And the final economic benefit does not always match original expectations. In this year's Point/ Counterpoint, the central themes of economic incentives are discussed. Six professionals who are closely tied to the field but very diverse in nature and skill are asked their thoughts on how to approach and manage economic incentive policy- a topic both very complex in nature and one that greatly concerns many US cities today.

Timothy Bartik

Timothy Bartik is Senior Economist at the W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research. He is responsible for developing and conducting research on state and local economic development and local labor markets. Dr. Bartik received his Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1982 and was Assistant Professor of Economics at Vanderbilt University prior to joining the Institute in 1989. (http://www.upjohninst.org/staff/bartik.html)

Frank Fernandez

Frank Fernandez is Director of Programs for the Austin Community Development Corporation (CDC). He is a Harvard alum as well as a graduate of the LBJ School of Public Affairs at The University of Texas at Austin. Before coming to the Austin CDC, Mr. Fernandez was a research specialist for the Texas Association of CDCs where he helped develop a new revolving loan fund for Texas CDCs and performance measures for assessing the economic impact of CDCs. (http://www.austincdc.org/about_austincdc/staff.php)

Susan Moffat

Susan Moffat is a board member for LivableCity, Moffat is a graduate from Tufts University as well as a former legislative researcher and journalist. She is a long-time community activist working on issues related to neighborhoods, education, the local economy and affordable housing. Additionally, Moffat is a founding member of Austin Full Circle, a volunteer coalition focusing on the economic impacts of increased big box development in Austin. (livablecity.org)

Joe Newman

Joe Newman is President and CEO of the Bastrop Economic Development Corporation. The corporation's commitment is, "to enhance the quality of life in Bastrop, by providing appropriate infrastructure and by promoting and assisting the kind of economic development in our community which will provide the people of Bastrop meaningful and rewarding employment opportunities and greater access to desirable goods and services." (http://www.bastropedc.org/)

Michael Oden

Dr. Michael Oden is Assistant Professor in the Community and Regional Planning department at The University of Texas at Austin. He received his Ph.D. from the New School for Social Research in New York. Dr. Oden's teaching and research areas include local and regional economic development, regional growth dynamics, program evaluation methodologies, and affordable housing policy. (http://web.austin.utexas.edu/architecture/people/faculty/odenf.html)

Dave Porter

Dave Porter is Vice President for Economic Development at the Austin Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber's mission is to provide leadership that will help create regional economic prosperity and success for its members in Central Texas. (http://www.austin-chamber.org/TheChamber/index.html)

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QUESTION 1
Who do economic incentives benefit, and who do they harm?

Bartik

Incentives potentially benefit: the businesses receiving the incentives; local property owners and local property developers as the value of local property increases; local retailers and other businesses whose profits are tied to local growth, for example local news media; the local unemployed and local non-employed who may get some of the new jobs; local workers who may get higher real wages on the same job or opportunities for advancement to higher paying occupations; local taxpayers if the area has underutilized public infrastructure and the incentive-induced business activity attracts relatively few in-migrants . Incentives potentially harm: local renters who pay higher prices for housing; local residents with fixed incomes; local export-based businesses that must pay higher wages and higher prices for other local inputs; local taxpayers if the induced business activity leads to extensive in-migration and need for expensive construction or renovation of local infrastructure.

Fernandez

It depends on how they are structured. Unfortunately, many incentive programs are structured to benefit the company being recruited without sufficient accountability measures in place to ensure that the proposed community economic benefits (i.e., job creation, increased local purchasing) materialize. If these benefits do not, in fact, materialize, then these incentives are harmful to that community because they are giving the company incentives that come directly out public funding that could otherwise be put to public benefit (e.g., better roads, more social services, better schools, etc.). Furthermore, these incentives also often lead to the displacement of jobs and families from the communities that the companies are moving from.

Moffat

As currently applied in Austin, economic incentives primarily benefit large private corporations, which increasingly use incentives to create bidding wars between would-be host communities. Incentives harm local taxpayers and businesses who must make up the difference in lost tax revenues or live with that loss to the city budget. In cases where national corporations compete with local businesses, economic incentives for the national player can further skew an already uneven playing field.

Newman

Incentives should ONLY be used to entice someone who has other choices. That is, if they are trying to decide between city A & city B, an incentive might be used IF they produce a desirable good or service. In Bastrop, we are very "picky" about incentives.

Oden

Local government officials are typically under strong pressure to attract business investment and do tend to "overpay" for jobs so that the costs of forgone tax revenues and other expenditures exceed the economic benefits for residents. Many economists would say that the way that most deals are structured lead to a redistribution of income from taxpayers to company shareholders. Moreover, incentive deals are used most frequently to attract large company facilities and create market distorting competitive disadvantages for small and medium-sized firms.

This being said, the answer to the "who benefits" question depends entirely on how specific incentive packages are structured. Theory and empirical evidence show convincingly that under certain conditions tax incentives can yield net benefits for localities and can lead to improvements in the distribution of opportunities and income to local citizens. For a tax incentive deal to yield net benefits for local residents, a number of conditions must be met.

First, it must be shown that the investment in question would not have occurred in the absence of the incentives. If incentives are offered and taken by entities that would have made the same investment without the subsidy this is simply a transfer from taxpayers to company owners--a deadweight loss to the community.

Second, the investment induced by tax incentives must generate new economic activity for the region versus displacing existing business. New investments in industries that sell most of their products in the local market will likely displace sales of other regional firms. A simple principle can help identify incentives likely to generate net jobs and income: goods or services that are sold to firms or residents from other regions ("tradable" goods) are more likely to generate net economic activity.

Third, the actual net income gains to employees of a new (or expanded) enterprise must be significant given their other options in the local labor market. If a new or expanding facility hires a number of entry level workers at good wages, in a high unemployment region, net income benefits could be significant. A business employing workers in higher skill occupations common to the region would yield modest income benefits unless for some reason they were offering large wage premiums.

Finally, for benefits to exceed the tax incentive contributions made by current residents a significant share of the jobs from the induced investment must flow to local residents rather than new migrants to the region.

Porter

Incentives benefit the community and company receiving incentives in several ways. First, the community benefits: Good paying jobs; increased tax base; and new wealth generated for the community. Benefits for the company: lower cost of doing business which helps the company to remain competitive in the global economy. Who do they harm? By forgiving a potential revenue stream (taxes) a community's infrastructure could become stressed – police & fire protection, schools, etc. There is

also a perception that incentives could give an unfair business advantage over similar companies in the community.

QUESTION 2
What stakeholders are essential to involve in the process of developing an economic incentive program?

Bartik
I believe it is important to get non-business and non-property owner interests involved with incentives, in particular local workers and local residents who are not employed. Incentives are unlikely to pay off for all interests in the area as a whole unless they yield extensive labor market benefits. If the incentive decision-making process is dominated by local business and property interests, incentives may be authorized even if there are few local labor market benefits. Finally, it is essential that incentive decisions must involve all local governments within the local labor market area. Ideally, decisions about incentives would be made by some labor market spanning economic development organization.

Fernandez
Stakeholders involved in the development of the incentive program need to be representative of the community as a whole. To limit participation to only those directly involved in economic development is myopic, in my view. As alluded to earlier, there is a direct cost to incentives that ramifies beyond the business community. As a consequence, affected communities need to be included.

Moffat
At the city level, stakeholders should include trained economists, as well as representatives from local businesses, environmental groups, neighborhood associations, social service and health care providers, lending institutions, and city and county government. Ideally, stakeholders would also include representatives of surrounding communities, with the goal of establishing a regional compact for economic incentives.

Newman
Basically, all public officials, utilities and key players such as bankers or developers. Also anyone that is "giving-up" some tax base or other incentive should be at the table

Oden
Unfortunately many tax incentive deals are typically cobbled together behind closed doors and are then put to a hasty vote where a local official must choose between offering an incentive (pro-development) or opposing the incentive (anti-development). Any incentive deal that will clearly benefit the community would stand up to the more serious of an open meeting and discussion involving labor community and environmental groups. Quick final votes on deals that are poorly understood even by public officials are likely to be losers.

QUESTION 3
What degree of transparency is appropriate in economic incentive programs?

Bartik
I believe that the public has a right to know exactly what dollar value and types of incentives are being offered for each year of the incentive package, and exactly what conditions and clawbacks are attached to the incentive offer. In addition, ideally the incentive decision-making process would include a benefit-cost analysis of the predicted economic effects of the incentive on the local economy, and this benefit cost analysis would be available to the public prior to the final incentive award decision being made. If this is impossible for competitive reasons, such information should be available after the decision is made. Finally, the actual jobs created and wages paid by firms awarded incentives should be regularly reported.

Fernandez
Clearly, it is important to balance the need for transparency when dealing with public funds with respecting company's right to protect their competitive advantages. Incentive programs should disclose the financial value of the incentives, as well as the accountability provisions in place. Beyond that, there needs to be a compelling public interest to justify further

financial disclosure.

Moffat

As with any expenditure of public funds, the process by which economic incentives are awarded must be totally transparent.

Newman

Almost all incentives are negotiated in private until the deal is accepted. That way, our competitors don't know our strategy.

Oden

The idea that negotiations and company records must remain highly confidential is typically a ruse. Very detailed information on company financials and business strategy can be gleaned from public records (such as SEC filings). The community needs to know information that helps answers the key questions: how many jobs for local residents; wage rates and benefits of jobs; type of product or service being produced and environmental implications of the local site and firm activities.

QUESTION 4

Does Central Texas have any particular characteristics that make incentives more or less likely to be effective?

Bartik

I do not know anything about Central Texas. In general, incentives are likely to be more beneficial in local economies that have underutilized local labor or local public infrastructure, as such conditions result in more benefits for local labor, and less need for costly infrastructure upgrades due to in-migration.

Fernandez

The thrust of the question should be more oriented to what type of incentives are more effective in Central Texas. The City of Austin is not well regarded as a City that it's easy to business in, especially with respect to development. This stems partially from the strong community value Austinites place on the protecting the environment. Incentives that

facilitate the rapidity of development -- which is not to say development that is detrimental to the environment -- would probably be well received.

Moffat

Central Texas has enough attractive qualities that additional economic incentives should not be needed as a lure to businesses. Communities must begin to work together to develop regional compacts so that we can stop draining our own revenues through incentive wars.

Newman

In Central Texas we are blessed with so many advantages that our incentives are usually much lower than say West Texas. We have an outstanding quality of life and an abundant, educated workforce. All the incentives in the world doesn't make sense if the workers aren't available or happy.

Oden

If a region offers land and labor costs, hard and soft infrastructure, and important amenities that are either clearly superior or clearly inferior to competing locales, then tax incentives are unlikely to yield net benefits. They will either be unnecessary, or if they have to compensate for major cost disadvantages, inordinately expensive.

The Central Texas region has a number of location factors that are very attractive for business investment; a highly educated workforce; relatively low costs of doing business; strong technology base; and attractive local amenities from the music scene to lakes and springs. Without any incentives, Austin would capture a healthy share of business investment. So incentives should be used very selectively in this area.

Porter

Yes, the fact that the City of Austin now has in place an official incentive policy will only help in making incentives more effective.

QUESTION 5
Are there other measures a city can take to increase employment opportunities, aside from economic incentive programs?

Bartik
Improving the quality of local human capital will in the long-run also increase employment opportunities, both for the individuals whose job skills are improved, and for the area as a whole. This can be done through improvements in education quality from preschool up through post-secondary education, increases in educational attainment, and improvements in local job training programs.

Fernandez
The City of Austin needs to do a better job of promoting small business development growth. Currently, the City does a poor job. It can do much more. The City's small business taskforce came up with various strong recommendations that have yet to be implemented.

Moffat
Cities should focus on quality of life issues - great parks, excellent schools, varied transportation options, a vibrant cultural scene - to continue to attract national businesses without the need for economic incentives. Beyond that, cities should focus on incubating and supporting local businesses, since a much higher percentage of their revenue stays in the community, compared to national corporations.

Newman
Sure. We often get involved in "Clean Sweep". That's where citizens and city workers get together and clean-up our city. We paint, fix, and generally improve the look of Bastrop each year. Our chamber of commerce conducts free seminars to train wait staff, gas station attendants, hotel clerks, etc on how to treat visitors.

Oden
The best evidence suggests that tax incentives have at most a very modest influence on business investment and are much less powerful than other factors that might also be effected by state and local policy (like education and quality infrastructure).

Porter
Yes, create a business friendly environment, one where it to navigate through the permitting processes and is conducive to business start-ups. Also effective marketing of the community strengths can help.

QUESTION 6
Is there an effective way to evaluate the success of an economic incentive program?

Bartik
I think it is almost impossible to tell whether "but for" the incentives, the activity awarded incentives would have located elsewhere. However, I do think it is possible, with the right data on the jobs created, the wages paid, and who gets the jobs (e.g., the local non-employed vs. other local residents vs. in-migrants), and some readily available models of local labor markets, it is possible to measure the benefits of incentives under the assumption that the incentive is decisive. It is then possible to calculate benefits and costs under alternative scenarios for what percentage of incentives offers are decisive.

Fernandez
The City needs to ensure that economic incentives have clawback provisions that clearly articulate its accountability (e.g., expected job growth, local purchasing) measures and benchmark points where it will rescind its incentives for non-performance. In addition, the City needs to keep these issues in focus over time. Often, these incentives are doled out over a longer period of time that extends beyond the lifetime of the politicians who approved them.

Moffat
Certainly there are some obvious benchmarks for evaluating economic incentives, both before and after the fact. Does the company pay livable wages and benefits for every job it creates? If not, how many of its employees will require public assistance for food, housing, medical care and other essentials? What charitable contributions or other resources does the company bring to our community? What is its environmental record?

Does the project's location or size cause problems to nearby residents or the environment? What additional roads, infrastructure or maintenance are required? Does the project create additional demands for public safety or other city services? Does the project produce new tax revenues or simply shift revenues from existing businesses?

These are basic questions that must be answered to know if our community will merely break even on a proposed project. A successful economic incentive program would require that the candidate demonstrate significant concrete gains for the community - over and above these benchmarks - to be considered for incentives.

Newman

We measure our success by the unemployment rate, the new property being put on the tax rolls and the additional sales taxes being generated.

Oden

Any incentive deal that has any possibility of generating a good return on foregone tax revenues should include the following:

- A statement demonstrating how proposed tax incentives relate to broader local economic development strategies.

- A rigorous, standardized estimate of the direct and indirect benefits that would accrue to local residents from the incentive induced investment.

- A full disclosure of all incentive costs associated with a particular deal. This disclosure should include the costs of all taxes abated, training subsidies, and promised project specific infrastructure improvements.

- A formal cost benefit estimate should be made based upon the above two points to demonstrate that the project yields positive net benefit

- A plan to ensure that if the company does not live up to the agreement that tax abatements will be adjusted. Such a "clawback" agreement guarantees that portion of incentive funds would be recovered if the firm makes fewer hires or investment expenditures than promised.

If an incentive based project is going to make a net contribution to a region's economy and citizenry, it must be carefully and honestly evaluated before the money goes out door. In other words we need to keep the horse in front of the cart.

Porter

Incentives today are what is called "performance based", meaning companies no longer receive up-front the incentive from a community. The company now must make the investments they said they would and create the jobs they said they would before they can receive an incentive this is much more effective. Incentives are a necessary "evil" in today's World, without them we would not have the Home Depot Data Center (600 jobs), Samsung Semiconductor (1,000 jobs) and many more. Incentives play a very important role only when the company has narrowed their site selection down to several communities.

Frumkin, Howard, Lawrence Frank, and Richard Jackson. 2004. *Urban Sprawl and Public Health: Designing, Planning, and Building for Healthy Communities.* Washington, D.C.: Island Press.

Review by Tommi Ferguson

The recent book, Urban Sprawl and Public Health by Frumkin, Frank, and Jackson, represents an important contribution toward the bridging of the urban planning and public health disciplines, an attempt to "reunite the perspectives" of the two fields. In the past several years, there has been a growing interest in the consequences of sprawling urban development patterns as they relate to health effects on the general public. The topic is important to academicians and public officials alike.

The authors begin by offering a working definition of sprawl. The term has entered the mainstream American lexicon and, more often than not, is used derisively in conjunction with vague associations to traffic jams, large subdivisions of green field development, 'big box' retail and strip malls. The first chapter starts with a concise definition from the Vermont Forum on Sprawl: "dispersed, auto-dependent development outside of compact urban and village centers, along highways, and in rural countryside". However, the authors are careful to note that a better definition of sprawl, and an estimation of its consequences, must incorporate clearer understandings of urban form, density and land use mix, as well as transportation and connectivity. They briefly cover each topic in turn, in such a way that makes the material accessible and germane.

Introductory chapters are devoted to condensed summaries of the two fields from which the material is based: a brief history of urban development over the last century and a half, and public health (noting history and trends dating from colonial times). These sections are brief but provide a compelling introduction to each field. The authors conscientiously pursue their stated goal of making the text meaningful for urban planners interested in "the health implications of their work" and public health professionals
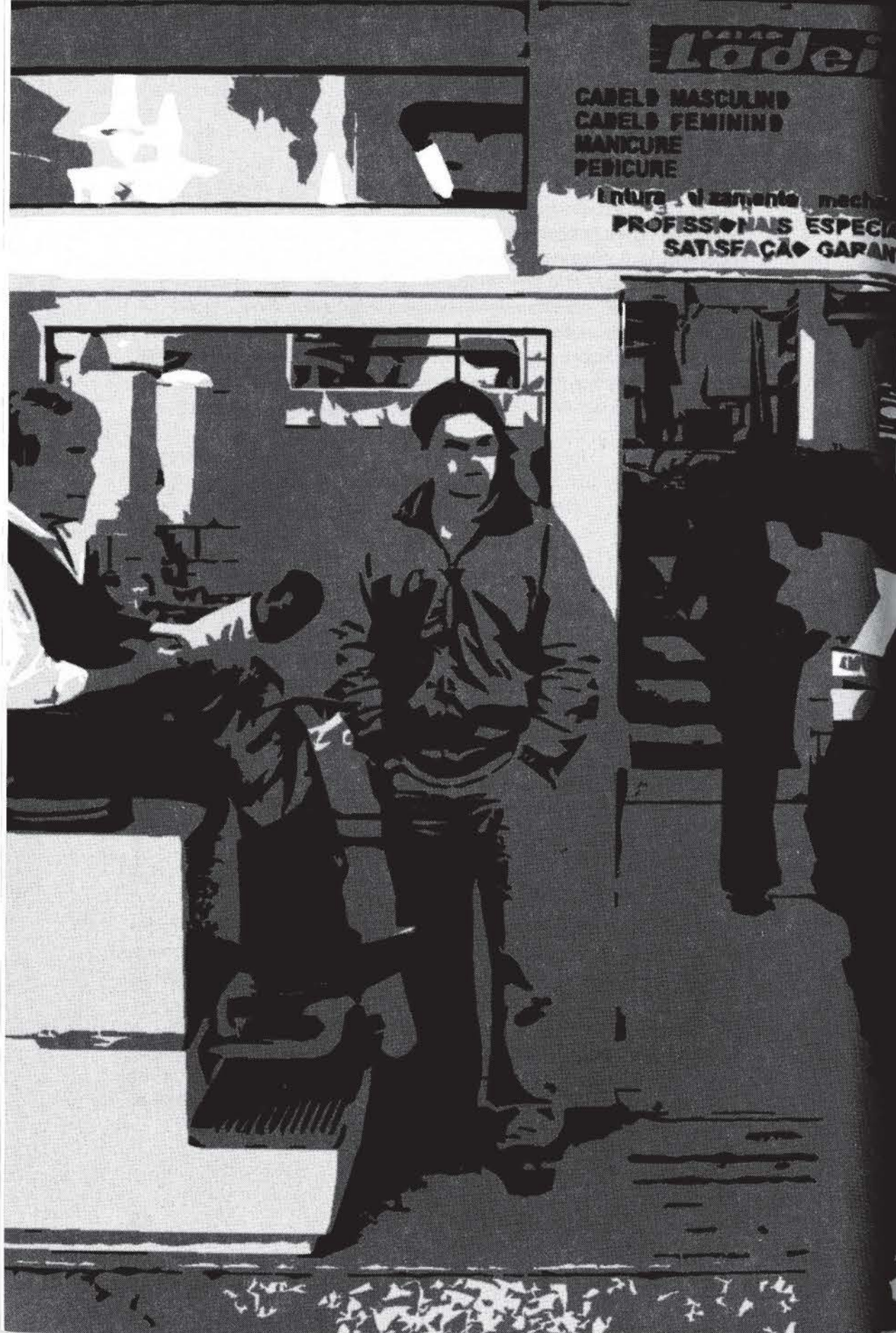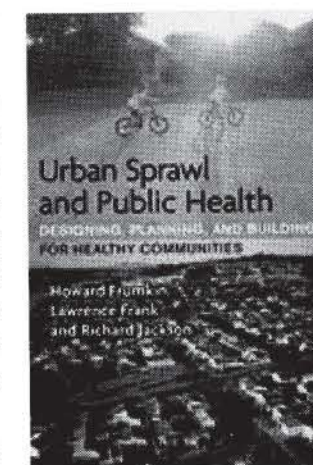
with an interest in the "effects of the built environment".

Subsequent chapters tackle the public health issues potentially tied to urban sprawl including: air quality, physical activity and health, traffic related injuries/fatalities, water quality, mental health, and social capital. One of the concluding chapters focuses specifically on 'special populations' (women, children, the elderly, people of color, and people with disabilities) in order to demonstrate disproportionate consequences of sprawl on these groups. The authors accumulated data from an extensive base of research material from a broad range of fields (planning, transportation, medical/health, and psychology). Though each chapter offers compelling data, the chapter covering social capital (and the chapter on mental health to a lesser extent) seems somewhat weaker than the others. These chapters address some serious concerns but, ultimately, leave the reader with more questions than answers about the role of urban sprawl in these areas.

Overall, the book provides an excellent introduction to the major topics of concern at the nexus of the two fields of urban planning and public health. The book concludes with more detailed discussion and examples of urban development with beneficial public health consequences, namely the 'smart growth' potential for producing healthy places. The authors don't point to smart growth as a cure-all mechanism for reversing decades-old development trends and their results. Rather, they see it as an emerging public health paradigm, one that offers new possibilities for the cities to grow and develop, and to encourage healthy lifestyles for the general public.

Toor, Will and Spencer W Havlick. 2004. *Transportation & Sustainable Campus Communities: Issues, Examples, Solutions.* **Washington, D.C.: Island Press.**

Review by Stacey Bricka

At a time when growing universities are struggling to manage limited space within a land-locked campus, Transportation and & Sustainable Campus Communities provides campus and city planners with techniques and successful examples of how to balance the resulting transportation needs. Based on their own experiences in Boulder, Colorado and

supplemented with extensive interviews of 150 campus planners and parking management officials at colleges and universities from across the United States, the authors not only introduce the concepts but stress the need for planners to carefully consider the unique needs of each institution and to not assume that "one size fits all."

As mayor of Boulder and director of the University of Colorado's Environmental Center, Will Toor can write with authority about the struggle to meet the transportation needs of both a growing university and the surrounding community. His co-author, Spenser Havlick shares this dual perspective, as he is Professor Emeritus in Environmental Design at the University of Colorado and served on the Boulder City Council for 21 years. The book is a reflection of their "longstanding concern about transportation impacts on college campuses" and was an idea birthed out of their "involvement in community service, teaching, and research."

The book begins with a discussion of the importance of transportation, not only from the university perspective but also the basic land-use transportation connection as well as the broader interaction between the campus and surrounding community. It continues in Chapter 1 with a history of how the automobile both shaped campus growth and is serving as the impetus in a search for sustainable solutions. Chapter 2 outlines the transportation demand management (TDM) "toolbox" and presents the options in a way that reinforces the need to develop a personalized solution for each institution. Chapters 3, 4, and 5 delve into the issues of parking, transit, and non-motorized transportation.

The development of a campus transportation plan is the focus of Chapter 6, with an emphasis on asking the right questions. As the authors rightly note, a plan to project future parking demand and identify where the lots should be built will end up focused on an automobile infrastructure. A more successful plan is one that begins with the question of mobility and is designed to integrate with the transportation master plan for the surrounding city or county. Chapter 7 contains eight case studies, selected to represent a balance of locations and sizes and Chapter 8 tackles the
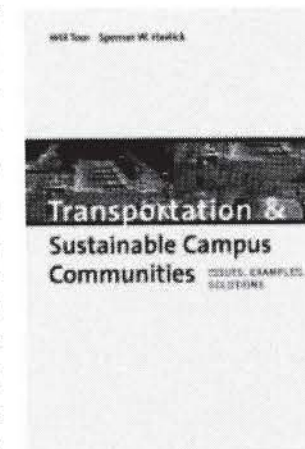
challenge of "greening" the campus fleet through detailed accounts of how several campuses implemented alternative fuel vehicle programs. Chapter 9 tackles the broader issue of TDM strategies for lower-level elementary and secondary schools that are being built increasingly at the outskirts of town rather than being incorporated into the neighborhoods where the students live.

The book concludes in Chapter 10 with some tips for smart campus planning, based on the input from those who were successful in crafting their own sustainable plans. The advice from these seasoned professionals is well worth considering:

- Ask the right questions: don't just look at how much parking is needed but consider the best approach to provide campus access at both the lowest cost and with the lowest environmental impact.
- Be sure you have the administrative structure to support your transportation goals: a broader transportation department is much preferred over just a "parking department."
- Pursue partnerships with local governments and transit agencies: campus growth affects the surrounding community and by working together, a stronger solution can be achieved.
- Seriously consider a transit pass program if one is not already in place: this is one of the simplest and most popular steps a campus can take.
- Don't be afraid to use the power of the market: excess demand for parking can be managed through increased parking prices.
- Take non-motorized transportation seriously: the cheapest type of transportation also has the highest health benefits for the campus community.
- Harness the power of students: student involvement was credited for the success of many initiatives described in the book.

The major themes of this book are what make it a "must have" for any city or school planner's shelf. They include (1) the importance of asking the right questions up front – focusing on mobility rather than the automobile, (2) the recognition that "one size" does not fit all – and the corresponding need to select TDM tools and strategies that best fit the unique characteristics of the university, and (3) a continual yet subtle reminder of how a sustainable campus design will help to sustain the environment for generations to come.

Swyngedouw, Erik. 2004. *Social Power and the Urbanization of Water: Flows of Power.* Caimbridge: Oxford University Press.

Review by Andy Karvonen

Since the beginning of civilization, water has been intimately related to human settlement patterns. From the engineering wonders of the ancient Roman aqueducts to the flooded Dutch landscape to the perennial sinking issues in Venice, Italy, all civilizations are defined within their specific hydrogeographic contexts. Human dependence on water will continue to be a contentious subject in the future as issues such as water privatization, scarcity, contamination, and rising sea levels due to global warming becoming more fiercely debated in both developing and developed countries. It's no wonder that the World Bank has predicted that the wars of the 21st century will be fought over water.

It is upon this controversial terrain that Erik Swngedouw contemplates the current water supply system in Guayaquil, Ecuador. Swngedouw, a reader in Economic Geography at the University of Oxford, applies a political ecology approach to examine how an estimated 35% of the population in this city of 2 million inhabitants lives with no reliable water service. Instead, these off-grid residents depend solely on a system of 400 tanker trucks (tanqueros) operated by private companies for all of their potable water needs. The water purveyors purchase water from the municipal government at subsidized rates and then sell it to residents at elevated prices, creating a water supply system that is subsidized for middle and upper classes while being prohibitively expensive for lower classes. As a result, water supply issues in Guayaquil are a divisive urban problem on par with housing, crime, and transportation concerns.

Swyngedouw's analysis of Guayaquil brings into sharp relief the economic and political problems faced by urban residents in developing countries while highlighting the potential drawbacks of water privatization efforts that are currently moving forward in various countries (including the United States). Relying on critical theorists such as David Harvey,
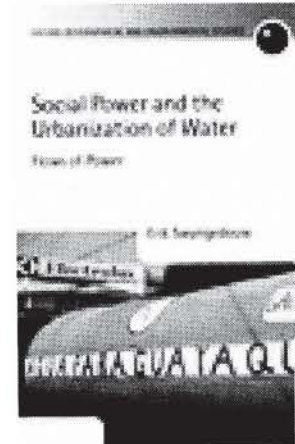
Neil Smith, and Donna Haraway, the author provides an historic account of the development of water services in Guayaquil that is intimately related to the development of international trade, the rapidly growing population of the city, and the municipality's inability to plan for and accommodate urban growth. Of particular importance is the influx of international corporations after an economic recession in the 1980s and the subsequent liberalization and privatization of public services including water supply. In effect, circulation of water in the most recently developed sections of the city is no longer a local public service but rather a privatized marketplace driven by international economic interests.

From Swyngedouw's analysis of Guayaquil, it is clear that provision of water services is not simply a matter of proper management and cutting edge technologies but a question of social power. In other words, urban technological networks are more than a collection of artifacts such as pipes, pumps and filters; these systems also embody discursive practices that are deeply political and highly contested. The study contributes to the discourse of sustainable development by demonstrating that it is not merely a debate about the relationship between human and natural environments but also about power struggles, equity, justice, and control within human populations. Although the book would benefit from further elaboration on potential solutions to the contentious water issues in Guayaquil, this oversight does not detract from the author's main emphasis on the injustices that privatized water and ad hoc infrastructure services have on urban residents. Swyngedouw provides a compelling narrative of how water politics is played out in developing countries and provides an excellent example of how a political ecology approach can be applied to unmask the power relations in socio-environmental contexts such as water management.

McGranahan, Gordon, Pedro Jacobi, Jacob Songsore, Charles Surjadi, and Marianne Kjellen. 2001. *The Citizens at Risk: From Urban Sanitation to Sustainable Cities.* London: Earthscan Publications Ltd. Review by Govind Gopakumar

This book is an important contribution to the literature that attempts to understand sustainability and environmental transformation in the context of less affluent cities of the world. The authors have put together a remarkable collection of threaded essays that while addressing different dimensions of the issue, still combine to present a coherent and complete picture of this enormously complex and critical problem facing humanity. The authors see the book as an attempt to refocus the scope of the sustainability discourse on issues of local concern in light of the ongoing trend in the discourse to downplay the importance of the micro-scale against the planetary. In doing so, the book employs three broad categories in painting the local agenda of sustainability.

The Citizens at Risk

Firstly, it situates the concern over urban environmental improvements in the context of globalization which the book understands in all its dimensions. Global climate change and transboundary pollution introduce a global dimension to environmental concerns. Again economic globalization and the spread and dominance of the interconnected neo-liberal economy is of relevance to environmental improvements. Furthermore social globalization with the increasing interconnections between and homogeneity of civil society add another aspect to the globalized context. The book suggests that globalization is increasing the relevance of cities in the globalized context and the pursuit of sustainable development in an urban setting thus assumes added importance. This is true for both the 'brown' and 'green' environmental agendas for cities (p.5). The green agenda for sustainable development focuses on global environmental problems – ecological degradation, resource exhaustion, global environmental burdens and other extraurban problems – that can be traced to the unsustainably high rates of resource consumption in affluent urbs of the world. The brown agenda on the other hand is usually concerned with local health issues – inadequate water and sanitation provision, urban air quality and solid waste management – that impact urban residents (disproportionately those in disadvantaged backgrounds). The authors argue that the convergence of globalization, the emergence of the city as a site for initiating change, and the discourse of sustainable development presents a unique moment for focusing on intraurban environmental transformations.
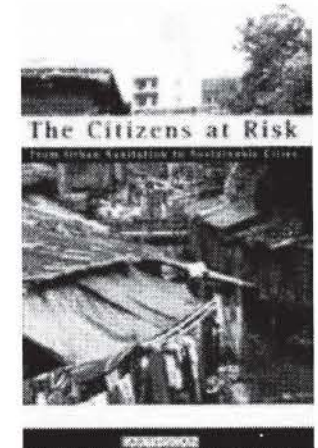
A second important aspect that is presented by the book deals with environmental transitions that accompany the transition of cities from poverty to affluence. With increasing affluence the nature of environmental problems associated with the city changes flavor. Poor cities are more impacted by highly localized environmental problems that affect households or neighborhoods. As the level of affluence climbs, the scale of the environmental problems also increase. Environmental problems become city-wide, and then gradually spread to the local region and finally assume the dimensions of a global problem. The shifting of the burdens in water, sir and waste are highlighted in the book. These conclusions are supported in the case studies of environmental burdens in the cities of Accra, Jakarta and Sao Paulo which represent Southern cities that occupy different positions on the urban poverty-affluence spectrum.

A third focus of the book is on the relevance of broad models that suggest means to socially organize and solve water and sanitation needs in cities. Here the discussion centers around three models – the planning model, the market model and local collective action model. The statist planning model requires expert control over the system of infrastructure provision. The objective is to ensure all details of the system functioning be brought entirely under expert control. The market model is based on individuals who by purchasing water or sanitation services exert demand pressures that regulate the price and availability of commodities. The local collective action model develops a local perspective on responses of local inhabitants to their water and sanitation needs. These separate models have their own drawbacks and recent thinking attempts to integrate these three models into a hybrid model that builds upon the complementarities of the three models. The book however makes the case against any one particular model of hybridity but emphasizes the importance of diverse local practices engaged by different actors in addressing the issue. By introducing the gender and age dimension in environmental impact and management, the book attempts to disaggregate the unit of improvement from the household to the individual. This is justified in light of the differential impact of economic opportunities for men and women. In addition to a review of existing literature that focuses on gender in the local environment, a qualitative and quantitative analysis of households in Accra is also included.

This book is refreshing in that it reveals the evolving arena of local environmental transformations in the contemporary context of globalization,

discourse of sustainability and genderized development. This book will be of use to students from a range of disciplines like urban policy and planning, environment and international development, gender studies, and technology studies who are interested in the intra-urban environment.

Jamison, Andrew and Harald Rohracher (eds.) 2002. *Technology Studies and Sustainable Development.* **Munich: Profil Verlag.**

Review by Dr. Ralf G. Brand

Although it is not indicated explicitly anywhere, the book Technology Studies and Sustainable Development functions in large parts as the proceedings of a conference. Twelve of the 16 chapters result from this event, some are even available for download from the conference website in not identical, but very similar versions. Eight articles were previously published in the journal Technology Analysis and Strategic Management (with an overlap of six between the journal and the conference) and two contributions are available from other websites.
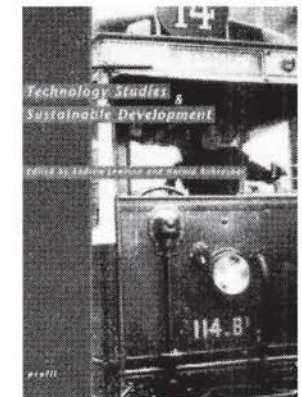
This situation makes it doubly important for the reviewer to answer the question whether or not roughly US$ 30 would be well invested in this book. I intend to tackle this issue further below because it is highly dependent upon a second question: Is the time spent reading a book about technology studies at all well invested for a planner? Strategic procedures like this might sound familiar to planners as does the answer: It depends. It depends upon individual interests.

Certainly everyone with an interest in the European sustainability discussion is well advised to give these articles a closer look because European (esp. Northern-European) authors contributed three fourths of the articles; three more are from Australians and one from a U.S. author. This geographical prevalence shows through as a slight left tint of some articles that question the compatibility of sustainable development with

the neo-liberal ideology.

Readers with an interest in well-established positions as well as those curious about cutting-edge theories will find something in the book. No wonder, the authors represent a lively mix of luminaries and younger fellows. But there is no compelling congruence between an author's renown and the innovativeness of his or her article. In particular, the second of three sections, "Greening the Industry" does not abound in revolutionary insights but, to be fair, this might be the impression of a reviewer with a professional history with environmental management and it does not matter anyway for readers of a planning journal. This is not to imply any negative statement about the academic quality of these or all articles.

Planners specializing in the social aspects of sustainable development might not find much material for enlightenment at first sight when looking for issues like unemployment, inequality, ethnicity, criminality, etc. The titles of the three sections signal a clear ecological bias with keywords like "environmental technology policy", "greening the industry," and "energy and transport." This is not to say that the book gets sustainability all wrong because it makes an excellent contribution to the environmental sub-discourse. Still, the title of the book could have reflected this a little more. At second sight, there are many social issues of sustainable development in a procedural sense like democratic control and participation. The full title of the first section is "Participation in Environmental Technology Policy." Behind this stands a central tenet of a research tradition called Science and Technology Studies (STS)--which all authors probably subscribe to: Technological innovation, institutional arrangements and social practices always and inherently influence each other. This is exactly where planners can learn a lot from what is regrettably narrowly called Technology Studies: if one sees cities as "enormous artifacts" (Rosen p. 262) one can easily replace "technology" with "infrastructure." Then, a key statement from the book's introduction would read "successful infrastructure policy requires social innovations" (Jamison and Rohracher p. 9). The articles by Schot, Rosen and Russel & Bunting make this translation most explicit, describing the expansion of a Dutch harbor, a land use dispute in Cambridge, UK, and the privatization of the Australian electricity market respectively.

Taking on this perspective, the planner-reader can also learn a lot from other articles that deal with technology in the more narrow sense of tools and machinery. Such a re-interpretation on-the-fly makes the rich knowledge base of Science and Technology Studies accessible and it becomes almost self-evident that any literally "sustainable" planning process requires participation not for normative reasons but for very pragmatic ones. It also demonstrates that only participation can achieve what STS authors--and three of the authors in this book--call co-evolution, that is, the strategically synchronized development of artifacts and human behavior like transport infrastructures and mobility choices. In this sense, planners can learn a lot from analyses of how artifacts (including infrastructures, cities, etc.) are produced, used and reproduced in the interplay between designers, experts, politicians, and citizens. This book is a great source for such examples, especially in its third section "Case studies from the energy and transportation sector," which provides seven occasions to play with this expanded notion of technology and to conduct guided reflections about one's own local conditions. The articles cover issues like urban transport, engine technology, green buildings, solar energy, and household devices. If you are willing to translate the findings of a number of articles from the level of tools and firms to the level of infrastructures and cities, you should definitively read the whole book because it provides an enlightened position in, or better, above the debate of technical fixes versus heroic social choices. For this reason in particular you should make sure to tell your colleagues in the engineering and sociology department about this publication. If they are financially better equipped ask them to buy it and borrow it from them. But either they, you, or your library should definitively have it, which is the answer promised above whether or not to buy the book.

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Submission Guidelines: Suggested length in 5,000 to 10,000 words, including notes and references. Please indicate the number of words on the cover sheet. Authors should follow the style and spelling requirements of the Chicago Manual of Style, 14th Edition. Authors should use the paranthetical author-date style of references, and should include only those works actually cited in the text. *Planning Forum* cannot accept papers that include footnotes. Papers are reviewd anonymously, authors should therefore refer to themselves in the third person in text and notes. Each illustration, chart, table, or graph to be included in the text should be submitted on a separate sheet, with desired text locations clearly indicated. If the manuscript is accepted, the author will receive detailed instructions regarding the proper format of non-text elements. Submission of black and white photographs to accompany the article in encouraged, but publication of these will be at the editor's discretion.

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Deadlines: *Planning Forum*, Volume 12, will be published in late spring 2006. Abstracts (250 words max) may be submitted via email until October 1, 2004, indicating that the author intends to submit a full manuscript. Full manuscripts prepared according to the guidelines above are due no later than November 1, 2004.

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