

CITIES & TOWNS

Communications, competence, and coalitions for complete communities

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Michigan moves forward with place-based investment

The state is implementing programs that steer investment vehicles to high-value locations in mixed-use downtowns and main streets. Walk Score is one criterion that is employed for tax credits.

A new tool for financing place-based development has been created in Michigan — expected to generate \$15-\$100 million in the coming year, and \$100 million a year thereafter, to be used for revitalization of downtowns and main streets.

In April, Michigan created a statewide “EB-5 Regional Center” to attract foreign investors. The center is now up and running. The EB-5 program allows foreign nationals who invest between \$500,000 and \$1 million into the US to gain permanent residency.

Michigan’s program stands out in that it will specifically support mixed-use development in “centers, nodes, and corridors.” Most of the money is going into downtowns in Michigan’s 14 largest metro areas, which generate 85 percent of the state’s economic activity. The framework for that approach is the rural-to-urban Transect, according to Joe Borgstrom, the director of Michigan’s EB-5 Regional Center.

With expedited permitting from the US Customs and Immigration Services in late March, the Regional Center was created by Gov. Rick Snyder as part of the Michigan Community Development Corporation, staffed by the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA).

Michigan is specifically targeting 26,000 international students at 12 public universities including the University of Michigan and Michigan State. Borgstrom anticipates that 100 to 200 people will invest this year. These are highly educated

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People lounge on a “beach” in downtown Detroit last summer, part of a placemaking initiative, Heart of the Community, funded by Southwest Airlines. See page 3.



COURTESY OF SOUTHWEST AIRLINES AND PROJECT FOR PUBLIC SPACES

Local officials will spearhead urban movement, Norquist says

The value and tax base arguments will persuade municipalities to change their zoning and street policies, says John Norquist, who will step down as CNU’s leader after the Buffalo Congress.

ROBERT STEUTEVILLE

During John Norquist’s professional career, the attitude toward cities has flipped 180 degrees, he says. “I was first elected mayor of Milwaukee in 1988, and all of the rhetoric about cities was how much trouble they were in, and could they reposition themselves to be more like the suburbs. People were building heavily subsidized shopping malls in the middle of cities. That has completely changed. The whole argument now is how can you make the suburbs more like urban places.”

After 10 years at the helm of the Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU), Norquist will step down at the end of June, as Lynn Richards takes over as President and CEO (see page 15 for an interview with Richards). During Norquist’s tenure, CNU helped create the influential *Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares* manual, expanded CNU’s local chapters, worked to remove federal barriers to mixed-use development, advocated the removal of urban freeways, and much more.

Prior to leading CNU, Norquist was elected to four terms as mayor and before that served in the Wisconsin Legislature. Norquist talked to *Better! Cities & Towns* about where the urbanism movement is headed and what he, personally, will be doing next.

Outside of Chicago, the older suburbs have compact downtowns near train

SEE ‘NORQUIST’ ON PAGE 4

**BETTER!
CITIES&TOWNS**

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COMMENTARY

Restoring the lifeblood to Main Street

ROBERT STEUTEVILLE

Main streets are arguably *the* most American place. When economists talk about big money finance and multinational corporations, they refer to Wall Street. When they speak of regular Americans, they talk about "Main Street." Where did George Bailey run his savings and loan? What did Walt Disney build when he wanted to replicate the quintessential American experience?

The answer is a classic American Main Street.

Why, then, did America shut off the lifeblood to main streets? From the 1930s on, financial rules put in place by the Federal Housing Authority (FHA), US Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Fannie Mae, and Freddie Mac discouraged low-rise mixed-use buildings — the very type that comprise main streets.

Caps were put on the amount of commercial space allowed in a building — generally 15 to 20 percent — to obtain financing under federal guidelines. With such rules in place, buildings with two to four stories with first floor commercial space did not qualify for easy financing or sale of loans on the secondary market. Local banks might have financed such construction, but it was considered nonstandard and a higher risk. These loan restrictions undermined existing main streets and obstructed new ones.

The underlying assumption was that main streets, by their very nature, were risky investments and likely to be blighted. That thinking became a self-fulfilling prophecy. The lack of available finance for construction — coupled with road widenings that sped up traffic and minimum parking requirements that encouraged building demolition to make room for parking lots — meant that main streets eventually *did* become blighted.

REFORMING FINANCIAL RULES

That's why efforts by the Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU), the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB), the National Town Builders Association (NTBA), and other groups to reform the financial rules are so important. As a result of their efforts, FHA raised its nonresidential loan limits to 35 percent from 20 percent in 2012. Now it looks like HUD is moving forward with reforms in other programs.

Officials from HUD's multifamily unit recently told CNU President and CEO John Norquist, New York Regional Plan Association executive director Thomas Wright and Richard Oram of the Oram Foundation that further reforms are expected in HUD's Sections 221d4 and 220 multifamily financing programs, due for release in September 2014.

"What is likely to happen is that HUD 220 and 221d4 caps will be raised up to 35 percent," Norquist says. "This could vary by project characteristics and location, but allowing up to 35 percent nonresidential is a big deal." The higher FHA mortgage nonresidential caps have worked, Norquist says.

For now, lower restrictions will remain in place at Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac.

"Fannie and Freddie are harder to change. Their leadership has been in flux and Congress has been considering legislation to either abolish or radically change" these organizations. "It is easier to deal with FHA and HUD because they can make the changes we seek without having to go through Congress to change federal law."

Changing such rules means that Wall Street can begin to support Main Street — but that's only one of many reforms needed to restore vitality to town centers. Another critical step will be to change the street standards.

Driving slow is good on Main Street so you can see the shops and wave to the people you know without running them over. Why then do Departments of Transportation classify main streets as "urban arterials" and stipulate lane widths that are the same as those found on Interstate highways, where the average speeds are 70 miles per hour? No cop can prevent speeding on such a street.

The lifeblood of Main Street should be finance — not traffic accident victims.

Main streets are America's family rooms — comfortable outdoor places in which to gather. Now that we are restoring the flow of money to rebuild the walls of these rooms, we need to make them safe again. On Main Street, the biggest danger should be Barney Fife shooting himself in the foot. ♦

Placemaking initiative is a departure for Southwest

Cities enjoy this advantage over automobile-centric suburbs: When the “public realm” is geared to people, not cars, placemaking is possible. Yet city governments are not very good at managing public spaces to maximize their advantages, according to Ethan Kent, senior vice president of the Project for Public Spaces (PPS) in Manhattan.

PPS is working with Southwest Airlines on a multiyear partnership to fund public space visioning, improvements, programming, and management in cities that Southwest serves. Three *pilot* projects over the last year were initiated in Detroit, San Antonio, and Providence.

At first glance, PPS and Southwest seem like an odd couple. PPS, a nonprofit with nearly 40 years of experience in a total of 3,000 communities, has never before had a corporate partnership. Few would have predicted the first such sponsorship would be an airline — airlines are not known to support placemaking or urbanism. Airlines fly globally and are based on airports — often the most “placeless” districts in any region.

But Southwest is not a conventional airline. The company was looking for a cause related to sustainability, that the company believed was about to go mainstream. Placemaking seemed to fit. They called the project Heart of the Community.

“They connect destinations,” Kent explains. “Also, it fits with their corporate culture. They are about individual expression, eccentricity, and connection. We like to bring those qualities out in public spaces as well. They democratized air travel. We are trying to democratize public spaces and the process of placemaking.”

Southwest’s origin story relates to Travis Square, a downtown public space in San Antonio. At a hotel on the square, co-founders Herb Kelleher and Rollin King reportedly sketched the idea of Southwest Airlines on a cocktail napkin. Travis Square is one of the three initial public spaces that PPS and Southwest worked to improve.

The 2.6 acre park occupies a key location between the Alamo and the city’s famous Riverwalk. The park has tremendous history, but it had fallen on hard times. Based on feedback received during a series of public workshops, new physical amenities were added including games, umbrellas, and movable tables and chairs. New programs were organized such as fitness classes, historic tours, live music, free movies and game tournaments.

CAMPUS MARTIUS

After a fire in 1805, a new plan for Detroit was centered on a public space called the Campus Martius. This remained the city’s most important public space for a hundred years, until it was commandeered for cars by 20th Century road widenings.

By the early 2000s, when the city’s population was dropping like a rock, Detroit had little but excess pavement. PPS worked with the city, foundations, and citizens to reclaim the space 10 years ago. Since that time, more than a billion dollars has been invested in the area. Compuware and Quicken Loans have moved their headquarters to the square. “The rest of Detroit is still a big challenge, but downtown has a lot of momentum. We needed to build on that momentum,” Kent says.

The plan involved activating the space using what PPS calls a “lighter, cheaper, quicker” approach. A seasonal beach was



Travis Park in San Antonio, above, and Kennedy Plaza in Providence.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF SOUTHWEST AIRLINES AND PROJECT FOR PUBLIC SPACES

installed by Southwest in response to public input.

“That idea was inspired by what is going on in Paris,” Kent says. “They close the highway along the Seine and bring out the beach chairs for a month in the summer for those who can’t afford the Riviera. In Detroit, it is a similar idea — the people who can’t afford to go to the lakes of northern Michigan now have a beach right there in the center of Detroit.”

Detroit doesn’t have money, and this can be an advantage, he says.

“This allowed for a grassroots culture, and a culture of resourcefulness. Some of the best public spaces in the world are created in spite of funding, with lower cost amenities and programming. It’s amazing what people in Detroit have helped make happen.”

ACTIVATING A SPACE WITH CHILDREN

In Providence, the major public park, Kennedy Plaza, had likewise hit hard times. Near the bus depot, the plaza was known for loitering and drug dealing, Kent says.

“Our approach is not always to push it out, but to bring in other, positive activities, and not let any one use dominate,” Kent says. “So the idea was to bring children downtown and showcase them.” Southwest funded something called an “Imagination Center.” This is essentially a kiosk to store play equipment, games, books, beanbag chairs, and other fun apparatus that is brought out when the weather is nice. Pro-

SEE ‘SOUTHWEST’ ON PAGE 5

Norquist

FROM PAGE 1

stations. “That’s what people want,” Norquist says. “Newer suburbs that are struggling, like sprawling Orland Park, want to be like the older suburbs—the ones that have village centers. That’s really the cutting edge. Suburbs are seeking more valuable, walkable, urban centers. Attitudes are changing very quickly.”

DON’T LOOK TO THE FEDS

As the President and CEO of CNU, Norquist spent a lot of time and energy getting US Housing & Urban Development (HUD), Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac to reform their financing guidelines to make mixed-use development easier. Yet he advises urbanists: Don’t look to the federal government to solve the problems with the built environment.

“The federal government’s perspective is heavily weighted by rural perspectives,” he says. “Wyoming, South Dakota, and North Dakota (combined population: 2.1 million) outvote New York and California (combined population: 60 million) in the Senate.”

The Department of Transportation’s (DOT’s) TIGER grants program has been effective, but it could be corrupted over time, he says. “I remember when the Council of Environmental Quality (started by President Carter) became the ‘council of anti-environmental quality’ (under presidents Reagan and Bush). The same thing could happen to the Partnership for Sustainable Communities.”

Many Smart Growth advocates have been sounding the alarm that the nation’s primary transportation funding mechanism, the Highway Trust Fund, is running dry. The lack of funding is good, Norquist says.

“Cities get almost nothing to help them with their streets. Michigan has almost nothing in local road aid. You go around the country, and it is either little or nothing,” he says.

“You have the communities with beautiful main streets, like Traverse City, Michigan, which has a state highway designation on it, and so they haven’t been able to design the street the way they’d like.”

More infrastructure funding could keep sprawl alive, he believes.

“The only thing that will save sprawl,



Bayshore Town Center in Glendale, Milwaukee

COURTESY OF STEINER ASSOCIATES

or keep it going a while longer, are guys like my old friend (former Pennsylvania governor and mayor of Philadelphia) Ed Rendell, who works for that consortium (Building America’s Future) demanding more infrastructure.” Norquist imitates Rendell’s raspy voice: “ ‘We need more infrastructure!’ Well, what infrastructure? If you keep feeding these giant road-building machines that the big road builders have, you can keep sprawling for a while. The federal government never paid for much infrastructure that was beneficial to cities.”

A substantial part of urbanism involves the design and layout of streets — usually determined by traffic engineers and DOTs. These are notoriously impervious to market forces and difficult to influence politically. Norquist cites the Town of Hamburg, New York, which prevailed in a fight against a state DOT plan to widen its main street. “But they had to fight like hell,” he says. Nevertheless, Norquist is optimistic about transportation engineering.

“I think that is changing pretty fast. ... Engineers will build you the Taj Mahal or San Quentin prison. The freeways mentality is imbedded in the profession, but they will let it go, if people above them — the mayors and governors — change the direction of the policy.”

TAX ARGUMENT IS KEY

Towns like Hamburg “will become the rule because local officials are desperate for tax base. That’s the way to do

it — it’s not to save the environment. The motivating factor is what adds value. I heard somebody from Littleton, Colorado, talk about how their little strip of main street is really starting to yield tax revenue because it is coming back to life. That’s what drives it.

“Joe Minicozzi (of Public Interest Projects) is going around the country like Johnny Appleseed and giving this message. There are a lot of people like that. That’s what will win the day. The only way for sprawl to survive is to have a higher level of government subsidize the hell out of it.”

The cities themselves must spearhead the movement toward urbanism — not the federal governments or the states, Norquist believes.

The reform of the suburbs — making them more urban — will be based on the fact that urbanism drives value, he says. Just north of Milwaukee, in the first ring suburb of Glendale, a former enclosed mall was converted to the 1.3 million square, mixed-use Bayshore Town Center. “Gross retail sales went up more than 300 percent from the last year of the mall to the first year of the town center. It’s very successful. It’s built in the form of streets and blocks. Glendale is very happy, because they are seeing retail revenues go up,” Norquist says.

THE FUTURE OF CNU

The Charter of the New Urbanism had its 18th birthday on May 5. He calls it a “core document” of the urbanism

movement. "I don't know that it will ever be amended ... mainly because it is so well written, and it covers so many really important issues. It's not just about design, it's about the impact of design, social justice, and the economy."

The future of the Congress for the New Urbanism is in great hands with Lynn Richards, he says. "Lynn will do a great job. She is somebody who is really interested in urban design. Some people might say she is not a new urbanist, she's more of a smart growth person, but she has really been intensely interested in New Urbanism, even before she sought the job. She will bring a great new perspective to the organization."

After CNU, Norquist plans to write a book on urban freeways and move into academia, he says.

Starting in the fall he will have an adjunct teaching job at DePaul University with the real estate school, focusing on how public policy can impact real estate. Norquist hopes to have the students take on projects that could have a real impact.

"One of the projects I hope to do is have the class look at redeveloping I-55 between Dan Ryan Expressway and Lake Shore Drive (in Chicago). That highway is coming up for a rebuild in the next five to eight years. What would happen if you took out the freeway and put in a boulevard, and how would that affect real estate values? I'll basically try to propagandize students into my way of thinking, but I wouldn't rule out giving an A to somebody who made a strong case that I was wrong."

Norquist is also in contract negotiations for a position as a nonresident fellow at a large southern university, also focusing on real estate. This position, he says, "sounds like heaven compared to working at a nonprofit."

Could universities become more influential in planning in a practical sense? "I think it is already happening. At University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, when Peter Park was a professor there along with Larry Witzling — they basically took over the planning department in Milwaukee. They did the form-based code, all of these things that we talk about at CNU, because I was open to this stuff (as mayor). John Ellis is a professor at Berkeley and he has a studio. His students are planning the dismantling of the remainder of the freeways in San Francisco." ♦

Southwest

FROM PAGE 3

gramming such as readings, sing-alongs, and performances activate the center, and the children are given popsicles in the summer.

"Our job is to bring together the different sectors and build the management capacity for public spaces," Kent explains. The initial three projects were all major public spaces downtown, but Southwest and PPS will branch out to other settings. "We're looking at projects in lower income neighborhoods that are lacking in activity and places to gather," Kent says.

Ultimately, the goal is to explore ways to help cities become better at managing the public realm.

"Currently the management of the public realm in cities is very 'siloed' with public works departments, parks departments — the planning department doesn't have much to do with placemaking," he says. "We see a recentering of city governments around public space management."

PPS and Southwest are working on where to bring Heart of the Community next. That decision has not been announced, but it will be in one or more of the 90 cities served by Southwest. ♦

Atlanta's untapped potential for creating a thriving aerotropolis

GARRETT HYER

Around the world, cities have historically had their beginnings at crossroads — places where travelers meet to exchange information and trade goods. To facilitate the movement of people and products into and out of the city, a means of transport was crucial, and it often grew in tandem with the city: Ports in the 18th century, railway stations in the 19th, highways in the 20th and now, international airports.

Although airports have always functioned as gateways to the regions they serve, they were once considered barriers to nearby development. Today, however, airports are evolving into viable commercial centers, attracting nearby manufacturing and distribution

concerns, businesses, hotels, convention centers, retail, housing, recreation and other organizations that benefit from proximity to the airport. The developing area around an airport is called an aerotropolis, or an airport city, where workers, suppliers, executives and goods are connected to the global marketplace.

In recent years, globalization has exploded at an unprecedented rate. With information, products and people moving around the world 24/7, the airport's role in a region's commerce cannot be understated, and many businesses consider locations at or near the airport as a significant advantage. As industries such as healthcare, technology, advanced manufacturing and logistics become more efficient, proximity to international airports matters. Many

Asbury Park, a mixed-use community near Hartsfield-Jackson airport



COURTESY OF TSW

also seek to engage the daily influx of air passengers who arrive and depart. As businesses move in, their workers generate the need for housing, services, schools, hospitals, retail, etc., providing the genesis for an aerotropolis.

New aerotropoli are being established at an increasing rate around the world, ranging from those that have grown spontaneously due to demand to those that were thoughtfully created using the principles of urban planning and sustainability. Airport managers, working together with city and regional government officials, business leaders, planners and developers can insure airport-area growth is cohesive, and includes the right mix of uses, along with the infrastructure to support it.

Some airport developers are incorporating commuter and light rail transit operations to generate Transit Oriented Development (TOD) opportunities that connect residents and workers to the airport as well as existing metro transportation systems. TOD creates compact, walkable communities centered on high-quality train systems, making it possible for residents to live without complete dependence on automobiles.

In Atlanta, Georgia, many community leaders have rightly identified Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport as ideal to fuel the growth of a highly successful aerotropolis. First, it's the world's busiest airport, both by passenger traffic and by the number of take-offs and landings. However, despite some areas being ripe for development, much of the growth around the airport has been piecemeal, failing to leverage the airport as an economic engine, or to seamlessly connect to the airport or welcome visitors to a world-class city and region. Local residents and workers desperately seek a higher quality of life, better access to transportation options and more livable communities. Complicating the area's development is the fact that three counties and several municipalities including Atlanta, Hapeville, College Park, East Point and Forest Park all have strong, and often competing, interests in regard to airport-area growth.

Seeking to reverse the existing disconnected land use pattern near the airport, the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) has convened local leaders for over a year to discuss existing conditions and potential visions. The ARC recently announced its intention to

form the Atlanta Aerotropolis Alliance, bringing together major area businesses and property owners, elected officials, local chambers of commerce, colleges and universities and other nonprofits to brainstorm how to create a unified urban airport center and to enhance the appearance and safety of the area.

Private sector parties have started to engage to create self-taxing Community Improvement Districts (CIDs) immediately adjacent to the airport. Their goal is to brainstorm and implement gateway signage, cleaner aesthetics, improved safety, more planned development and new jobs.

Thriving aerotropoli demonstrate

that the key to successful development is to garner stakeholder input to identify shared goals and develop a shared vision. From there, public and private partnerships need to be formed to generate both initial capital and long-range planning that will be beneficial to both public and private sectors. With the Atlanta Aerotropolis Alliance in the wings, Atlanta is poised to create an aerotropolis worthy of a world-class airport and a world-class region. ♦

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Finding the right path through design review

Municipalities — searching for ways to better shape development — must tailor their approach to the community's size and professional resources.

KAIZER RANGWALA

Formulaic buildings and generic places are a particularly American blight. They have eroded the physical character of many cities and towns. In some communities, they have spoiled the appetite for growth and development.

What's to be done? Municipalities increasingly recognize the downside of bad development, but many struggle to come up with a better alternative.

Will more regulations and reviews deliver the distinctive, vibrant places that communities want? Not necessarily. We are surrounded by places that are highly regulated yet badly planned and poorly designed.

Crude regulations and protracted review processes can make walkable places difficult to build. Too often, the local zoning code and development review process lean heavily toward reducing the negative effects of land uses, while offering little direction that *enhances* the quality and character of development.

Many cities lack an institutionalized design review process. Applicants and their design teams frequently are outraged by the vagaries of untrained planning commissions or political interference

from elected officials. "Designing from the dais" seldom results in good design.

To steer municipalities toward a more productive approach, in this article I discuss the potency of design review, the varied people involved in the process, and different options and formats that can be used.

WHEN AND HOW TO USE DESIGN REVIEW

Every development has the potential to preserve and enhance its built and natural environment, stimulate the economy, and improve the quality of public life. Design review can be an efficient, cost-effective way to improve the spatial and functional quality of buildings and of spaces—largely shaped by buildings—that give character to a place.

A typical design review focuses on site and building design issues. In historic districts the design review may include more detailed regulations and/or a set of discretionary elements that control scale and massing, materials and detailing, roof forms, and openings.

In recent years, new urbanists have in many cases used form-based codes to provide direction about the intended character of a place. These codes provide clearer, more specific guidance, quicker approvals, and more predictable results than had been available through conventional zoning codes. However, even the most prescriptive form-based code cannot eliminate the exercise of judgment.

Common concerns about design review

Design review is not without its dangers. Here are some of the problems to be avoided:

1) Overreaching or biased review

The task of the reviewer is not to redesign the project but to enhance the design, based on principles of sound design and professional judgment. Design bias, such as preference for a particular architectural style or material can stifle creativity. Subjective judgement is minimized when the review is focused around the community-supported criteria established in a form-based code and findings of fact.

2) Vague Direction

Design review should provide clear and specific direction. Vague phrases like “consistent or compatible” or “in harmony” leave room for subjective interpretation. The town architect, design staff, or head of the design review committee should synthesize and summarize the vague and disparate comments and provide specific and lucid direction at the conclusion of the review, based upon the code standards. Staff can follow up and provide a written synthesis of comments to the applicants.

3) Extra time and expense

A common complaint is that design review is an extra step in the approval process that consumes time and money. If done early in the process, following clear standards in a good form-based code, design review can streamline the approval process so that it results in an approval that entitles the applicant to apply directly for a building permit. When approval from multiple bodies is necessary, joint meetings may allow advisory and approval bodies to combine their public review process, saving everyone time and money.

4) Conflict of interest

The design review process should be free of financial and political influence. A reviewer who has professional or financial interests in the project being reviewed or in another project by the same applicant compromises the integrity of what should be an independent review. In small cities where conflicts are unavoidable, objective third-party talent from outside the city can bring balanced views and a wider perspective to the committee.



COURTESY OF KANZER RANGWALA

Peer review in Dallas

That’s where design review comes in. The design review process allows cities to ensure compliance, use informed judgment on the aesthetic aspects of a proposal, consider creative interpretations, and respond to nuances and dynamic conditions found within an area. Design review offers early feedback and observations that could lead to an enhanced scheme. It also strengthens the spine of decision makers to say no to poorly designed schemes, while supporting innovative and high-quality designs.

Timing matters: Design review is most effective when it’s integrated into the early stages of the development review process. It is both easier and more cost-effective to make changes when the development is not too far along.

Ventura, California, offers a **conceptual review** process to provide early direction on concept sketches, before an applicant develops a complete set of drawings for final approval. A conceptual review reduces risk and expense by exposing weaknesses and providing direction early in the process.

THE PLAYERS

Design criticism is a delicate matter that is best received from professional peers possessing recognized expertise. In bigger cities, reviews are conducted by a committee of inde-

pendent and multi-disciplinary experts in design and development. A well-rounded assortment of related perspectives is made possible when the review committee includes architects, urban designers, landscape architects, and engineers as well as citizen design advocates.

Most review committees are advisory, providing impartial advice to planning commission, though some have the legal authority to make binding decisions on design matters. **Advisory review** can be more subjective than **binding review**, which must follow more precise standards. Planning offices, local universities, and not-for-profit agencies in some communities have set up urban design studios or engaged a staff designer to assist in spatial aspects of design review.

First in schools and then while working in studios, designers become accustomed to the culture of pin-up design review. The review gives the designer an opportunity to appreciate how different people with differing perspectives perceive designs. Constructive comments can add significant value to the education of the student and work of the professional. Design review offers the same advantage in a public setting.

Rural regions and smaller cities that have a limited pool of expertise rely on trained city staff or retain the services of an architect to comment on proposed buildings.

DIFFERENT STROKES

Here are examples of the varying organizational methods of design review that governments use:

- In the mid-Hudson region of New York State, Dutchess County has a **development and design coordinator**, a trained urban designer who provides advisory site plan design review and planning services upon request to 30 municipalities.
- In older cities with a historic preservation program, the staff person is often the city architect.
- In Flagstaff, Arizona, the city architect also assists the planning staff with design review of development applications.
- Nashville has an in-house design studio with trained staff that assist with design review.

- Seattle employs a trained staff to review smaller projects, and also has several entities that are responsible for design. The Seattle Design Commission reviews design of public projects. Private development projects are reviewed by seven design review boards that cover different geographic districts.

- In Vancouver, British Columbia, a peer review panel provides urban design advice to planning staff. Similarly, in Dallas a peer review panel provides feedback on projects within tax-increment financing districts and designated planning areas. The city manager or a willing applicant can also request design

review of a project.

Cities can define the scale and significance of projects that require some form of design review. Design review is conducted on behalf of the public and therefore should welcome public involvement. The formality of the podium-and-dais setting and a public hearing format constrains the creative flow of ideas and dialogue. A charrette pin-up setting or desktop review is more conducive to a productive discussion and exchange of ideas.

FUNDING

Cities usually charge a fee to recover procedural costs. For review by the

town architect, developers can be required to pay the architect’s fee. This fee is a small fraction of the total development budget; developers are usually happy to pay for the expertise that builds on the skills of their design team.

Over all, design review has many advantages, and the concerns can be easily addressed. ♦

Kaizer Rangwala, AICP, CEcD, CNU-A, is the founding principal of Los Angeles-based Rangwala Associates and a member of the board of directors of the Form-Based Codes Institute, which seeks to advance the knowledge and use of form-based codes.

Urbanists thrilled that Caltrans endorses NACTO guide

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) will officially adopt the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) *Street Design Guide*, it was reported April 11. Advocates for complete streets responded enthusiastically to the announcement.

“This is HUGE!” wrote John Anderson, an urban designer and developer based in Chico, California. “After 15 years in California I had to check and make sure this was not a leftover April Fools’ Day post. (It is not). This should open the way for more common sense street design in towns and cities all over California.”

The 2013 NACTO guide represents best practices for walkable, urban streets.

California is the third state, after Washington and Massachusetts, to officially endorse the guide, notes *People For Bikes*. Caltrans is the largest state transportation agency in the US.

Dealing with state departments of transportation (DOTs) and traffic engineers, impervious to market forces and difficult to influence politically, has been a long-term problem for urbanists. Street design is just as important for placemaking and livability as compact, mixed-use development patterns. While the strong market for urban place has motivated developers to change, transportation planners and engineers feel no such pressure.

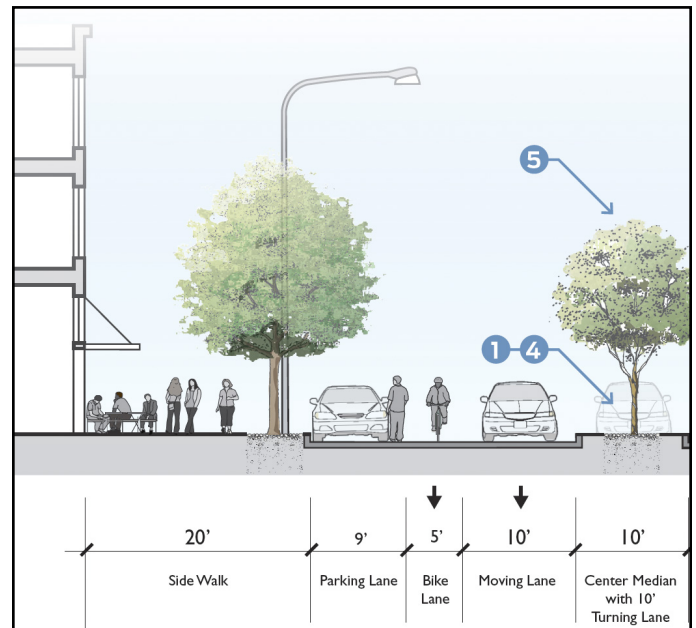
A TOUGH PIECE OF MEAT

The transportation engineering profession can be thought of as a very big, very tough piece of meat that urbanists have been pounding on for a couple of decades, trying to soften it up.

Renegade traffic engineers like Walter Kulash, who was profiled on page 1 of *The Wall Street Journal* in the mid-1990s, forcefully argued against automobile-dominated street design. In the early 2000s, the context-sensitive design trend exposed the DOTs to more progressive design, followed by the political success of the Complete Streets movement starting in 2005.

Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares, a manual by the Institute of Transportation Engineers and the Congress for the New Urbanism, was a step forward in 2006.

More recently, the success of progressive city DOT leaders, like Janette Sadik-Khan under Mayor Bloomberg in New York



A street section from the NACTO Street Design Guide

City, also primed the profession for change.

Yet to date the changes have been confined to the margins of most DOTs.

Now we have the NACTO guide and its acceptance by the influential Caltrans. It appears that the “softening up” may finally lead to real reform.

Caltrans was pushed to act by a blistering report from the State Smart Transportation Initiative in January 2014, which charged that the department is out of step with the best practices in the transportation field. SSTI recommended a series of reforms, including the adoption of the NACTO guide.

Now we will see whether this move results in substantive changes in the way streets are designed and built in the Golden State — and whether other DOTs will follow in California’s footsteps. ♦

Promoting New Urbanism with parking pricing

JOHN W. DORSETT, AICP

Proponents of New Urbanism often treat parking as “the enemy,” rather than a powerful resource for achieving important planning goals. Because one of the primary focuses of New Urbanism is promoting more walkable cities, it’s not uncommon for planners to undervalue the role that parking can play. But when planners ignore parking, failing to use it as a planning tool, they sacrifice an enormously powerful resource for promoting New Urbanism.

The power of parking lies in its capacity to impact driver behavior. Through parking location, limits on the amount of time drivers can utilize individual spaces, and pricing, planners can influence where drivers park and for how long. Planners can also better manage the roadway grid by reducing traffic congestion and vehicle emissions due to drivers “cruising.” If the ultimate goal of planners is to create more pedestrian-friendly communities, these factors can play an important role in achieving that goal. Cities that have implemented strategic parking planning programs are better able to support local businesses, reduce traffic congestion, cut vehicle-borne pollution, and improve the quality of life for residents.

A PLANNING SOLUTION

The two most common parking-related mistakes communities make in promoting New Urbanism are not providing sufficient on-street parking in downtown areas and not charging enough for the parking they do provide. It can be tempting to limit the bulk of parking to satellite facilities in an effort to encourage drivers to park and walk to their ultimate destinations. The problem with this approach is that drivers will often circle areas with limited on-street parking, searching for open spaces or spaces that are about to open. This can actually increase roadway congestion and create hazards for pedestrians who are forced to avoid circling vehicles.

A better approach is to provide sufficient parking to meet on-street demand, and to charge a premium for that parking, while charging less at nearby satellite facilities. Ultimately, cities should establish a goal of 85 percent occupancy for on-street parking spaces. When cities achieve and maintain this 85 percent threshold, their on-street parking resources are doing their job—providing accessible and convenient parking—while assuring that there will typically be parking spaces available for newly arrived parkers.

So, how can communities achieve this ideal level consistently? The most powerful tool available is pricing. Downtown spaces that are in close proximity to high-demand destinations (such as retail establishments, restaurants, and entertainment venues) are worth a premium, and they should be priced as such. For these spaces, parking prices should be set at levels that will be acceptable to short-term parkers, but too high for long-term parkers. This requires a balancing act of sorts, with prices set low enough to attract parkers, but high enough to encourage frequent turnover. Turnover can be promoted further by limiting how long parkers can stay in a given space.

This market-based approach can only succeed if less expensive parking is available within walking distance, of course. Parkers need to have an attractive alternative available, par-

ticularly if they are planning to park for an extended period of time. If tiered pricing is established throughout a community, drivers are able to make conscious choices about where to park and how much they are willing to pay. When this approach is pursued, employees of local businesses and visitors who are planning to stay for an extended period of time are more likely to use more remote and less pricey parking spaces, leaving premium spaces for short-term parkers.

Even though market-based pricing has gained widespread acceptance throughout the parking planning community, many cities are still hesitant to implement it. Part of this hesitancy is the result of discomfort with change and part is due to opposition from community and business leaders who are afraid that raising parking rates will hurt businesses.

That’s why communication is an essential part of any parking program plan. Municipal leaders need to maintain a continuous dialogue with residents and business owners to educate them about what the parking program entails, why it is being pursued, and how the community will benefit. By educating key constituencies about these benefits, cities can garner the support of local business and community leaders. Fortunately, cities tend to reap the benefits of strategic parking planning very quickly, and opposition to market-based pricing tends to disappear soon after it is implemented.

A VALUABLE RESOURCE

Parking is one of the most valuable resources that any community has at its disposal, and it can be particularly useful for promoting New Urbanism. Unfortunately, it is typically underutilized by communities, which don’t recognize its power or just see it as a way to raise revenues. By establishing strategic parking programs, cities and towns can promote some of their most important urban planning goals, including supporting local businesses, creating a more sustainable community, and improving the quality of life for residents. ♦

John Dorsett is a certified planner and principal with Walker Parking Consultants. He can be reached at john.dorsett@walkerparking.com.

SF Park halves ‘cruising’

SF Park in San Francisco, perhaps the best-known implementation of variable-priced on-street parking, has reduced the amount of “cruising” for parking spaces by 50 percent, according to an academic study published in March. The study by University of California, Carnegie Mellon, and traffic consulting firm Nelson\Nygaard, compared 256 blocks of SF Park with a control group of 55 blocks. SF Park rates vary by location, time of day, and day of the week. They are adjusted monthly, up or down a maximum of 25 cents, with the goal of maintaining 60-80 percent occupancy on the curb. “The goal represents an heuristic performance measure intended to reduce double parking and cruising for parking, and improve the driver experience,” according to the study.

Making multifamily truly urban

The multifamily industry is building more in walkable locations, but developers still need instruction on the manners of placemaking. Here are some hints.

More multifamily units are being built on street grids, which offer important amenities to residents. Instead of density attached to a congested arterial road, urban apartments are connected to culture and walkable to shops, parks, and schools.

Keat Foong, executive editor of *Multi-Housing News*, recently reported:

“While New Urbanist developments are not the only types of multi-housing projects that are being built today, the movement’s precepts have swept the industry over the past 20 years or more, and become common wisdom among multifamily developers, big and small alike.

“If anything, “mixed-use,” “transit-oriented,” multi-housing in “24-7” environments are all the rage in 2014.

“Multi-housing developments sited on a street grid offering storefront retail, entertainment and work options are places in which people, especially the newer generations, want to live, and places where consumers will pay more to live in.”

As the multifamily industry strides forward, challenges arise. Some developers have mastered the craft of building in an urban place and using active frontages. Others are merely plunking down buildings with little change in design from those that previously fronted parking lots.

Most communities still have conventional codes that are oblivious to the things that provide comfort to people on foot or bicycle. These elements include awnings and galleries, active building frontages, buildings that shape the public realm into an “outdoor room,” streetscape elements that provide enclosure and protection, and the screening of parking from the view of people on the street. Form-based codes, on the other hand, pay a lot of attention to these aspects of the public realm that improve livability.

The public realm is rarely talked about — oddly enough, because it comprises everything you see in a community once you step off of your own property or outside of a restaurant or movie theater. It comprises much of

what forms an impression on a visitor who might want to vacation, or move to, or start a business in, a particularly community.

OUTDATED ZONING AND PRACTICES

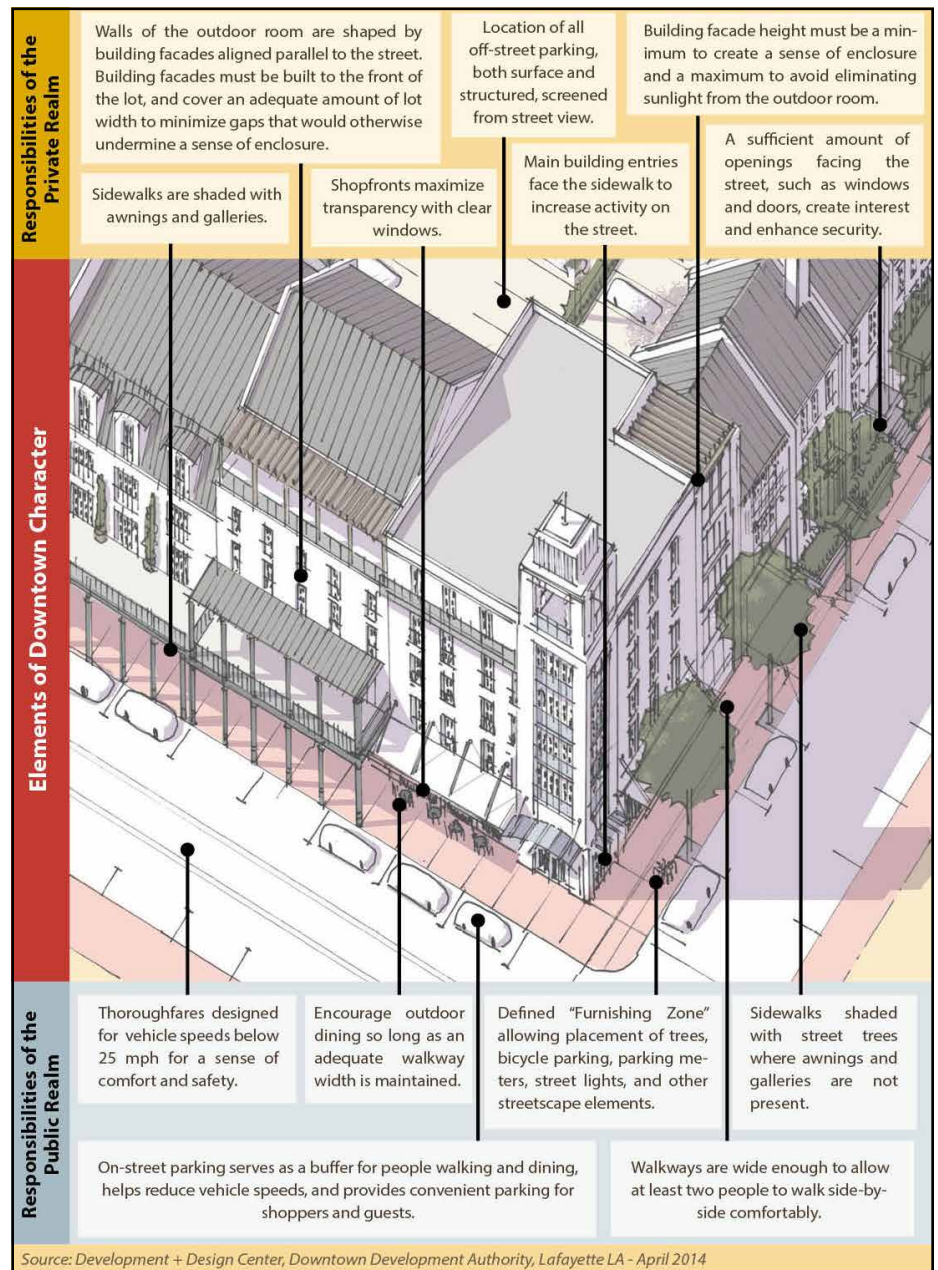
Architect Thomas Low of Charlotte, North Carolina, reports:

“Across the continent these high-density developments are rapidly dropping into urban locations — in many cases with little regard for how buildings connect to the street and public realm. Many cities with antiquated zoning and

out-dated best practices in place are at the mercy of aggressive development speculators and their designers that have other priorities and/or do not understand basic urban design principles.

Nathan Norris, chief executive officer at the Downtown Development Authority in Lafayette, Louisiana, provides an illustration “that our office created recently (through the leadership of urban designer Geoff Dyer) that tries to summarize the ‘essential rules’ or key elements for urban character for downtown Lafayette.” **See illustration below.**

The elements are quite simple, and none are terribly expensive. Half of these are part of the building itself (shown at the top of drawing), and the other half aspects



to the street (at the bottom of drawing). Some are out of control of the developer, including the street designed for speeds below 25 miles per hour. Yet they all add up to a “place,” something that is not achievable in the isolated, conventional suburban model that multifamily developers followed 15 or 20 years ago.

A final note: Not every urban place can be excellent. Urbanists distinguish between “A” streets, where the urbanism is excellent, and “B” streets, which may be functionally walkable, but not ideal. In a form-based code, the standards are tighter for “A” streets. The illustration provided by Norris is meant for “A” streets.

Developers of multifamily buildings have taken the first, big, step by recognizing that urban place outside the building adds to quality of life and value. Achieving true sense of place is not that difficult. Better codes will reward developers that are now seeking urban locations for improving their urban manners. ♦

Michigan investment

FROM PAGE 1

young adults from wealthy families, mostly associated with universities, who want Green Cards — and many would like full US citizenship. Although Borgstrom doesn’t use the term “creative class,” these investors share a taste for urban living and the high education of that demographic.

Foreign-born entrepreneurs represent a quarter of US patents. “The benefit to Michigan is to acquire more foreign capital, to

create jobs, and to retain these folks as residents,” he says.

The EB-5 financing program is part of Michigan’s comprehensive place-based initiative, which is guided by Transit-based planning and development. The state is working with nonprofits and private firms in a program called MIplace, directed by a public-private consortium called the “Sense of Place Council.” The goal is to focus public *and* private investment in areas with the highest economic development return.

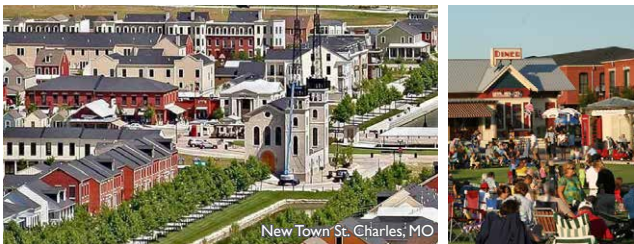
The research shows that the highest returns come from place-based development in centers, nodes, and corridors, according to James Tischler, director of MSHDA’s community development division.

Since 2012, MIplace has developed a comprehensive curriculum on placemaking that has trained 9,000 people across the state including multidisciplinary professionals, elected officials, appointed officials, trade organizations, and even citizens. Now the state is moving into implementation with EB-5 and other programs.

Michigan has more than enough willing investors in EB-5, who are mostly motivated by the permanent residency benefits. “The primary type of project is mixed-use development in downtown Detroit and other urban markets, usually within two to three miles of a university campus,” Borgstrom says.

Due diligence is more time consuming than finding investors. MSHDA, which has been involved in community development for a half century, must ensure that the developer has site control, that the pro-forma “pencils,” and that the capital

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is adequate. Additionally, each project is analyzed to make sure that infrastructure is in place, entitlements are likely, and that the form and structure of the buildings are appropriate to the Transect zone.

Each investor must create at least 10 jobs. “As regional center, we are allowed to count indirect jobs. If the first floor of a building has a restaurant or a coffee shop, we count those jobs — but we can also use an economic model based on how many dollars are pumped into this area because of the development.”

HOUSING TAX CREDIT TIED TO WALK SCORE

Also in the area of place-based finance, Michigan has been using Walk Score (walkscore.com) as a criterion in qualifying projects for Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC). Michigan was the first state to do this starting early in 2012 and Illinois recently followed suit. Now Michigan is proposing to increase the weight of Walk Score and add other place-based criteria.

Walk Score currently represents 5-10 percent of the point system for qualifying projects. According to the proposal, Walk Score would rise to 20 percent of points while other place-based criteria — such as location in a central city, proximity to transportation, and location in a neighborhood revitalization zone — would account for an additional 30 percent of points. Place-based criteria would amount to half of total points for qualifying projects.

Walk Score is a website that applies a score of walkability to any location nationwide. It is a “dashboard of urbanism”

that is correlated to good urban form, Tischler says. In fact, it measures the “affects of urban form,” which is increased economic activity in a concentrated area.

Low Income Housing Tax Credits determine where subsidized low-income housing is built — across the US such housing is often built in drive-only locations with no transit service. That can add many thousands of dollars to a household transportation budget, negating the cost savings from subsidized housing. Michigan’s program, run by MSHDA, steers LIHTC units toward mixed-use centers, nodes, and corridors.

So far, the experience using Walk Score as a criteria for the tax credits has been positive, says Andy Martin, LIHTC analyst with MSHDA. One problem is that Walk Score is not totally accurate. There might be a new restaurant or grocery store that the website has missed — usually, these inaccuracies do not affect the score enough to change whether a project qualifies, Martin says. To correct such problems, Michigan developers can work with Walk Score directly.

Most states have statewide criteria for LIHTCs, and could use a system that incorporates Walk Score, Martin says. Some states already have some kind of place-based criteria.

Developers who are awarded the credits sell them at discounted rates to investors, who can apply these tax credits to any part of their federal tax bill, wrote Matt Lerner of Walk Score.

Hearings were held on the expanded criteria in April 2014. They were scheduled to go to the MSHDA board in May. ♦

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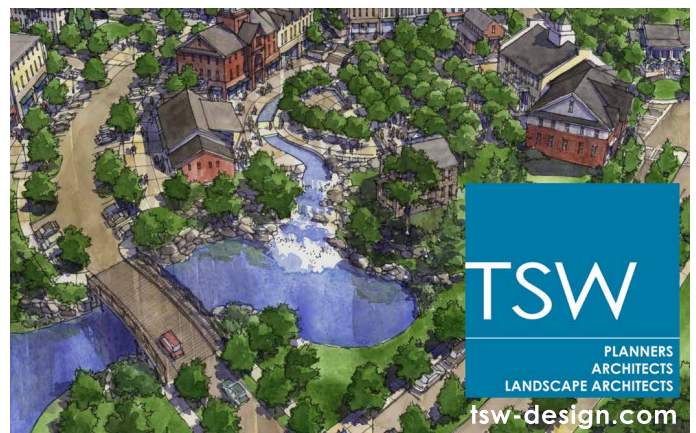
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UPDATE

Virginia new town taps into rental market

Daleville Town Center in Daleville, Virginia, is a 117-acre mixed-use traditional neighborhood development that was planned just prior to the housing crash. The project is about 15 miles from Roanoke, Virginia.

Fralin & Waldron, the developer, limped along after the crash with a sale here and there – but nothing close to the envisioned village of stores, restaurants, office space and 300 residential units including a variety of single-family houses, townhouses, and apartments.

The developer’s plan was to build the single-family housing first, while constructing a single, two-story town center building with the Town Center Tap House, “a restaurant with a seemingly endless beer list, on the ground floor, and the developer’s offices on the second,” reports *The New York Times*.

“The little center is starting to bustle, with residents attending concerts at an open pavilion or popping into the Tap House for beer and a \$12 lobster mac and cheese. But it’s not because Andy Kelderhouse (of Fralin & Waldrin) sold many houses,” the *Times* reports. “At the end of 2012, he broke ground on three buildings with 120 rental apartments. It seemed an unconventional step to take in the rolling hills of southwestern Virginia, where the default domicile is a detached single-family home. But apartment demand has proved surprisingly strong, especially for

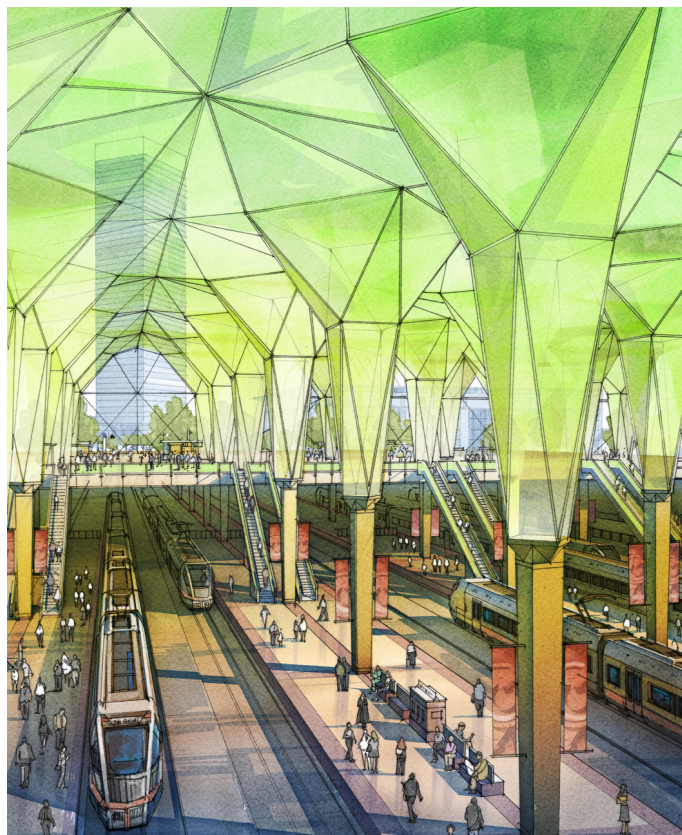


Daleville Town Center

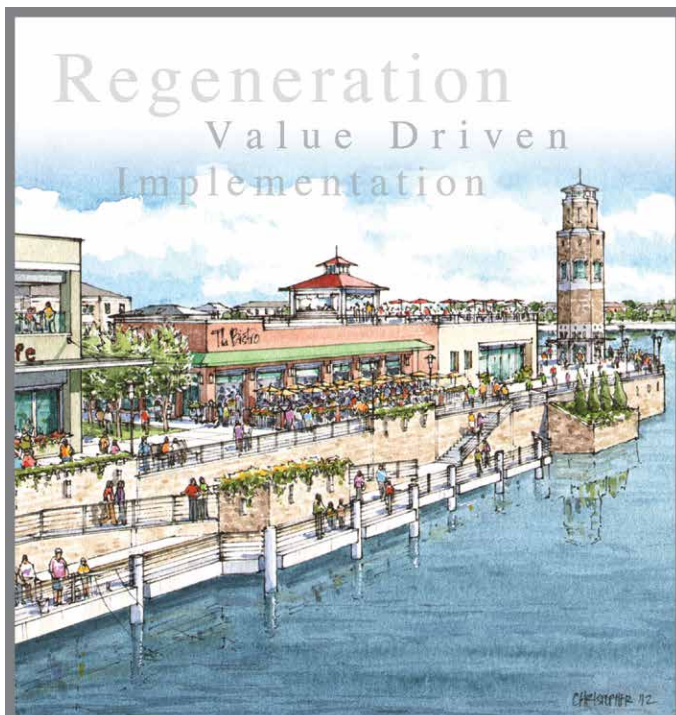
larger units. The 83 units that were complete as of early April were all leased — some with higher rents than the company had projected. It has already raised the rent on three-bedroom units from \$1,250 a month, when they first went on the market last year, to about \$1,500 today.

‘It’s not just for young professionals or young families,’

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UPDATE

Kelderhouse said of his rental units. "We've had a lot of retirees as well who don't want the hassle of a house."

From his office, Kelderhouse surveys the fields that were supposed to be blocks of single-family housing, the *Times* reports. A cluster of five houses stands built. He hopes that by 2017 the single-family market will have recovered to make that happen. In the meantime, he will have to make do with rental units and a mixed-use town center with a central square and special events.

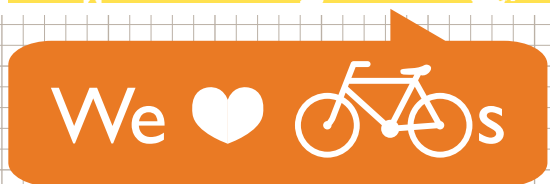
■ **Dan Burden**, the co-founder of the Walkable and Livable Communities Institute and a pioneer of the country's walkability movement, is a 2014 the "White House Champions of Change" honoree. The award was presented May 13.

Burden and 10 others were recognized for "their exemplary leadership to ensure that transportation facilities, services, and jobs help individuals and their communities connect to 21st century opportunities," the White House said.

According to the Walkable and Livable Communities Institute: "In a typical year, Dan spends more than 300 days on the road, visiting communities of every size, type and geography. He leads scores of walking audits, which often function as mobile workshops, to reveal opportunities in neighborhoods and engage community members to develop solutions—anything from painting low-cost crosswalks and bike lanes, to building a big-ticket roundabout as a community gateway with street art,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

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Richards will lead CNU: ‘We are at a tipping point’

Lynn Richards will take over as President and CEO of the Congress for the New Urbanism on July 1 after John Norquist steps down. Richards has worked in the Environmental Protection Agency’s Office of Sustainable Communities — known as EPA’s smart growth office — for 14 years.

She has served in a number of leadership positions, including acting director and policy director. In 2012 -2013, she was awarded a Loeb Fellowship at Harvard’s Graduate School of Design. She has worked on White House initiatives with Congress and the Office of Management and Budget, and on strategic planning in the area of community design and development.

To get Richards’ views on her upcoming leadership of CNU, she was interviewed by *Better! Cities & Towns* editor Robert Steuteville.

How close are the EPA’s smart growth program, where you worked for so long, and CNU in terms of their goals?

CNU and EPA’s smart growth program share a common purpose: to create great places with vibrant economies, people walking and biking on the street — places that people love. While EPA is a policy shop, CNU clearly is a design shop. Members are constantly identifying and designing the innovative design and development approaches. CNU defines the cutting edge in terms of community design.

Tell me about your short term plans, how you would like to begin your time at CNU?

I am in listening mode. I’ll be working part-time, meeting with the local chapters and then the board as a whole in June and talking with members. By Friday, June 6, at the Congress for the New Urbanism in Buffalo, I plan to state a little more clearly the direction I think the organization will go.

Why do you want this job — what opportunity does it present to you?

Across the country, we are at a tipping point. People are choosing to live in walkable places with a mix of uses. Demographics are supporting this trend, and local governments are responding. But more needs to be done. Local land use regulations still largely support large-lot development. CNU can play a dramatic role in moving the conversation around community design and development. That’s why I’m excited about it, and that’s why I applied for this job.

CNU is poised to provide dramatic leadership in community design and development. How do we provide that leadership? How do we reactivate our base? How do we capture the momentum that all our members have created? I don’t know, but they are good questions and good conversations to have.

How do your connections in DC influence all of this thinking? You have been in DC working with this national power structure for a while.

I bring to CNU a well-developed national network of contacts. I have colleagues that have been working around these issues, and I maintain a national set of networks. I want to make those connections stronger so we can all work together to achieve more than we could alone. I’d also like to see CNU

strengthen the role of chapters to help us partner with groups at the local, and regional, and state levels. .

What are the areas where CNU has been successful and you would like to see more of an augmentation of their efforts?

CNU has had some impressive victories recently, such as the adoption of the *Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares* manual (co-written with the Institute of Transportation Engineers) by the Federal Highway Administration, the partnership with HUD to create design guidelines for the HOPE VI program, joining together with US Green Building Council and the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) on LEED-ND and working with HUD and the FHA to raise the cap on commercial in mixed-use buildings.

CNU also supports twelve member-led initiatives that we can build on. I’d like to see CNU become more proactive and hire its members to work directly in communities to road test its innovative policies. Let’s raise the money and get in the driver’s seat. Put out an RFP where we want to dive deeply into a technical issue around which our members are excited.

Second, we need to continue to address the barriers to good development, but I would like us to look more at the state level. I can use my network to connect CNU with statewide organizations. You have the ped-bike people, the health initiatives,

and community development organizations. These are all local, regional, and state organizations that are advocating for places people love, and we will benefit by bringing them all to the table.

To what extent do you see CNU expanding its partnerships with other organizations?

Strengthening existing partnerships and creating new ones will be one of my priorities for the next 12 to 18 months. As a movement I believe we have the technical solutions. Creating the momentum to implement these solutions, that’s the nut that we haven’t cracked.

I think Smart Growth America is one of our strongest collaborators. They are building a structure to address the political challenges and political will. If EPA is the policy shop, and SGA is creating the political shop, then CNU can really provide the technical expertise. And it is not just those organizations. Shelley Poticha just recently joined NRDC as part of an urban solutions team. Shelley is really interested in working with those communities that received HUD grants: How do we move them from plans to implementation? Harriet Tregoning just went from DC’s Office of Planning over to HUD’s Office of Sustainable Communities which is now Resilient and Sustainable Communities. The exciting thing is that across the country, major organizations are all getting new leadership. Local Government Commission has a new director. The American Planning Association is going to have a new director. HUD has a new director. CNU has a new director. That presents a unique opportunity in the movement for all of us to step back and say, we are carrying no baggage from before, how can we leverage each others’ efforts and strengths?

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16



Lynn Richards

FROM PAGE 15

Which really enables people to start anew and strengthen their joint efforts?

Yeah. And then you also have the newcomers coming to the table — particularly in the health field. You have people at the state and local area who are now engaged in community design from a public health perspective. This is what I mean by a tipping point. If we can't get something done, right now, we're never going to be able to.

Do you see CNU expanding its members in this way?

Absolutely, and that goes at two levels. My hope is that as we expand our partnership base, the membership will naturally expand. I also think it is important for CNU to provide opportunities for members at all level — the fresh out of college, the mid-career, and the more experienced members. At every level, you need a place to give and receive your support. The giving part is important. The good news is that not only does everyone want to make a contribution — they have great contributions to give. We need to provide a platform. By focusing on that, we will naturally swell the membership base.

Does the CNU have an image problem that it needs to address?

During my interview I was asked by board members whether I considered myself on the inside or outside. The fact that that question was asked goes directly to the image problem. There shouldn't be an inside and outside. Why would we want anyone to think that they are on the outside? Yet, that is the image that people perceive. If we push people out and say no, your voice doesn't matter, only this narrow perspective of great design matters, we begin to lose people and limit our role.

That's not to say that good design isn't important. I would go so far as to say I think it's critical. I'm tired of seeing a new town center that looks just as generic as the next town center. What are the unique attributes of this particular neighborhood? What are the unique design elements that create a place that makes people feel welcome and happy?

One idea I have is for us to run a competition and ask people to send us a video, drawing, or picture of unique design elements that they love. Not the whole place — that's what the Charter Awards are for — but let's look at this particular corner or this particular street. I was at Belmar (a shopping mall redeveloped as a town center in Lakewood, Colorado), and architect Tim Van Meter had this great idea. Affordable housing was facing the back of a garage. He said 'we can't do this.' He ended up taking up about 40 parking spaces on the first floor and turning them into small shop spaces where tenants pay a reduced rent. I think it's \$400 for the whole space. These micro-shops breed local businesses that support broader community activity. The only requirement is that you activate the space.

Design is important to what we do, but we should expand that conversation and talk about more of these moments that really activate spaces.

Can you give people any sense of where you would like the organization to be in four or five years?

CNU has made an incredible contribution over the last several decades. I believe that CNU has even bigger contributions to make going forward. By working together — CNU headquarters, the board, current and future members — we can make a bigger impact on community design and development for creating better places. ♦

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UPDATE

FROM PAGE 14

signage and landscaping.”

Burden was the Florida Department of Transportation's first Bicycle Coordinator, starting in 1980. During the 1980s he pioneered the concept of the walking audit as a way to assess conditions and set priorities. Later, in the mid-90s, he and Peter Lagerwey coined the term “road diet” and started popularizing this method of removing non-essential lanes to slow vehicles to safer speeds, reduce crashes and create more pedestrian and bike facilities. Road diets are now considered by the Federal Highway Administration to be “proven safety countermeasures.” ♦

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