CIVIC DESIGN ASSOCIATES





Dealing with Density

Presented by: James D. Hill, AIA, AICP

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TOWN PLANNING REDEVELOPMENT ARCHITECTURE

Dealing with Density

- Creating codes that allow for a variety of housing types
- Overcoming political or public resistance to density

Growth in Texas, 1990 - 2000

- population grew from 17 million to 20.8 million
- 22.8% increase 8th among 50 states
- 2nd after California in added population
- passed New York to become 2nd in total population

• Sun belt state, business friendly, no state income tax

Growth in Texas, 1990-2000



Growth in Texas, 2000 - 2020

- Projecting past rate of growth = 10 million more people (Assume that 8 million is a more likely number)
- Current population density in metropolitan areas is
 3000 people per square mile
- At that density, 8 million people would require an additional 2667 square miles of undeveloped area
- The great majority of these people will concentrate around three metropolitan areas

Growth and sustainability issues:

- Economic activity concentrates in cities
- Population lives outside the city
- Mobility connecting the dots
- Infrastructure, roads, schools, utilities
- Erosion of greenspace and farmland
- Resource management air, water, waste

Growth patterns

We don't grow by incrementally densifying - we build out at low density, then move on

Two key factors:

- Dependence on cars
- Land development regulations

Growth Patterns in West Houston



Brief History of American Cities





B.C. - Before Cars

A.D. - Always Driving

Brief History of American Cities



Zoning - the great segregator



Cities used to be compact and dense.



Now, they are widely dispersed.

"If you ask me, the best GT/sports car over 3000cc is Corvette." -6.815 readers of <u>Car and Driver</u> magazine

In the 1967 Car and Dever Reader: Choice Polit 6,819 automobile allocatudos doras Convette as the Dest GT/scort mathem ver 3000c; Quite an honory when you consider Corvette was in competition with the growter marbure of Europe. Not really surprising though, when you consider the fong lot of Convents attributes, Like four wheel until lated thic bakes, an exclusive independent suspannicy action, Vila with up to 435 horseptive on order and lines posh then you'd expect to find even in a GT ce. What she can very bay, when almost leven thoses of the fundament out as the work's level in its class, except to complement there on the pool table ?

Corvette





Maybe it's just a coincidence that so many Pontiacs get left out in driveways. Maybe,

Probably not. When you own a car that looks this good, there's no use hiding it in the gatage. At least not during daylight, What's still better than looking at Poretacs, though, is driving them, You'll agree, once you sample Trophy V-8 power. It's invigorating, as you would expect—expectally versions ⁴ writinging as much as 370 blay out of 421 rable inclus? And try our Wide-Track ride, (It's even emoother than you could imagine). As if you hadn't noticed by new, Posttace come as invarious as you'd want or as sporty as you'd care to go. You can see them, every out, at your Posttac dudee. "Note: "MIDE-TRAC SciPPID COM

Cars promise a romantic vision...



...but deliver a more prosaic reality



We spend money on cars...



...and money on roads, as well.



Unintended Consequences: Stability or Stagnation?



Development is forced to the periphery

What kind of places do we like?

The Community Image Survey

- Rate a series of images of city and street scenes
- Score ranges from "Awful" to "Outstanding"
- Provide an honest, "gut" reaction
- Use as a gauge of community attitudes about various forms of development

The Community Image Survey



The Community Image Survey



The Community Image Survey: Summary

- We don't like the majority of what gets developed
- The things we do like are remarkably constant across geographic, social, and economic differences
- How can we get development that we like?

Elements of Good Urban Development:

- Street Network
- Good Streets
- Density
- Mixed Use
- Parking
- Public Open Space



Street Network and Traffic Patterns



Good Streets

- Pedestrian friendly
- Buildings define a street wall
- Landscaping provides shade and buffer
- On-street parking
- Traffic calming
- Mixed use







These are not Good Streets.

Density

Myth:

Increased density means more crime, pollution, congestion, and is generally less desirable Reality: Density is directly proportional to property value

- Manhattan
- San Francisco
- Monte Carlo
- Hong Kong
- London





Density can be done well, or it can be done badly.

Density



The same can be said for low density

Mixed Use



Stacking other uses over ground level retail increases the yield and the value of the development



But... density means more cars, as well.

Parking Cost



Parking

Garage placement

 has a dramatic effect
 on the street
 frontage





Limitations of Conventional Codes

- Reinforce land development patterns we don't like
- Accommodate cars rather than people
- Focused on abstract numbers rather than qualitative characteristics
- Biased against development intensity and urban, mixed-use environments

Limitations of Conventional Codes

- Segregation by Use
- Low Density / Coverage / FAR
- Bulk and Massing Regulations
- Large Setbacks
- Parking

Amending the Zoning Code

- Code is a documentation of an urban vision
- Code is redevelopment-oriented and incentivebased
- Code is highly visual and user-friendly



Georgetown Mixed Use Code



Georgetown Mixed Use Code



Georgetown Mixed Use Code

- Applies to mixed use nodes at major intersections
- Allows conventional highway frontage
- Incentives for mixed use subdistricts:
 - Higher densities and intensities
 - Regional stormwater detention
 - City participation for infrastructure
 - Parking management area



Sub-District Standards

Section 4.11.050

Mixed Use District Zoning Amendments

Stuart Urban Code

- Promote residential in the downtown
 - Additional story permitted if > 50% residential
- Ease parking requirements
 - "Old Downtown" exempt
 - Reduced parking ratios
 - On street parking counts toward total
 - Residential in mixed use: one free floor
 - Payment in lieu of parking for up to 50%

Stuart Urban Code



Urban Transformation

• Downtown Plantation, FL







Plantation: Intent







Suburban Retrofit

• Downtown Plantation, FL





Plantation: Incentives

- Bonuses increase allowable lot coverage and FAR
- Incentives were tied to creating quality street frontage



Pearland Town Center



Pearland Town Center



Pearland Town Center



