



SURFACE TRANSPORTATION POLICY PROJECT

Another Batch of Books for the Beach!

Slather on the sunscreen and pull up a beach chair! In this issue of *Progress* we review the latest books that touch on transportation policy and politics. We also profile some enticing communities around the country for your next weekend jaunt, and offer some advice to the university community on teaching students about transportation choice.

The Power of Place: Tipping Points for Livable Communities

Despite major societal challenges, the world of public policy is mostly inhabited by incrementalists—people who talk earnestly about “turning the battleship.” I admire these people for their persistence and faith, but I’ve noticed that they almost have an aversion to thinking big—figuring out how to spark rapid change or setting highly ambitious goals. Ironically, their favorite stories are not at all about incremental shifts. Whether they’re expounding upon the Republican Revolution, Jesse Ventura, or the Berlin Wall, the talk of the town swirls around sweeping change.

Of course, big ideas are risky. But what’s equally important is that few people understand how momentous change occurs, much less how to cause it. Which is why a new book by *New Yorker* writer Malcolm Gladwell is so remarkable. In *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference*, Gladwell argues that the best way to understand swift societal changes is to liken them to outbreaks of infectious diseases. In other words, regard them as *social* epidemics in which something new “tips” and becomes contagious.

Gladwell introduces an analytical framework that has immense explanatory power. At the core of his thesis are three rules of human behavior that drive social epidemics. The first is the notion that a small number of specially gifted people tend to be responsible for causing a new sensation. Gladwell calls them Connectors, Mavens and Salesmen, each of whom plays a critical role in determining the value of a new product or idea, selling it, then spreading it. His

prime example is Paul Revere, who was not only one of those people who knows everyone (a Connector), but also someone who knows everything (a Maven). The second rule is the Stickiness Factor, or how well something captures peoples’ attention and influences their actions. Here Gladwell discusses the exhaustive research and techniques employed to make childrens’ television programs like *Sesame Street* and *Blue’s Clues* memorable enough to be valuable educational tools.

Gladwell devotes the longest discussion to his third rule of epidemics, The Power of Context. Gladwell contends that behavior is strongly influenced by one’s surrounding environment and current exigencies. He illustrates this point by exploring how during the 1990s the New York City transit police started winning the fight against rampant crime only after attacking what some considered to be minor problems—removing graffiti and arresting fare-beaters. Gladwell argues that making transit stations feel safer and more attractive also reduced the perception of lawlessness, discouraging people from committing crimes.

For those of us in transportation policy, examples of epidemics are everywhere. For example, after years of stagnation, public transit ridership is suddenly booming, growing 4.5% last year—over twice as fast as growth in driving and 50% faster than growth in air travel. How did this happen? Especially after a decade in which Americans enjoyed the lowest gasoline prices in history, the pace of sprawl doubled, and the average adult transit fare increased by nearly 70%. Understanding why transit has been so successful in certain places is tremendously important if communities hope to spark transit epidemics of their own. Gladwell’s book offers a compelling method of analysis for that task—one that affirms the notion that transportation enhancements aren’t just cosmetic add-ons. For community livability, they make all the difference in the world.

Don Chen

A Review of The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference, by Malcolm Gladwell, 2000. Little, Brown and Company (279 pg, \$17.46)

Transportation Spending Bill Advances in Congress

On June 16, the U.S. Senate passed S. 2720, the transportation appropriations bill for FY 2000. The bill funds highways at \$30.7 billion and transit programs at \$6.3 billion, levels that are identical with the House bill passed on May 19 and with the increases guaranteed under TEA-21. Although details of the bill remain nebulous, it appears that appropriators have earmarked the lion's share of the TEA-21's competitive grant programs, leaving small levels in discretionary funds for programs such as the Transportation and Community and System Preservation Program. The bill is expected to come up in conference committee later this month.

For details on the legislation, see <http://thomas.loc.gov/>

USDOT Proposes New Planning, Environmental Review & ITS Rules

On May 25, USDOT published its proposed rules for updating several existing regulations related to transportation planning, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and Intelligent Transportation Systems. Although the planning rules are intended to bring existing regulations into line with TEA-21, they do little to clarify how TEA-21's seven "planning factors" should be applied as plans are developed or how states and MPOs should develop funding estimates for metropolitan areas in a cooperative fashion. The public has until August 24 to comment.

The text is available at <http://www.fta.dot.gov/new>

Administration Reports on Livable Communities

On June 9, the Clinton-Gore administration announced a new 30-point Livable Communities report that includes proposals for expanding transportation choices, creating parks, protecting the environment, increasing public safety, and investing in education.

For details on the Livable Communities proposal, see <http://www.livablecommunities.gov>

HUD Reports on Major Trends Shaping Cities

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development released its annual report last month, citing four megafactors shaping cities in the coming years: a new high-tech, global economy; changing demographics; lower housing affordability, and decentralization. These four factors are expected to have severe consequences for the quality of life in both cities and suburbs - eroding

environmental quality and increasing traffic congestion, while increasing pressure for new infrastructure at the edge.

To read the HUD report, "The State of the Cities 2000: Megaforces Shaping the Future of the Nation's Cities," visit <http://www.hud.gov/pressrel/socrpt.pdf>

New Business

Markets Commuter Choice

A new Internet start-up company called Pre-Tax.net will soon be helping companies offer pre-paid transit benefits to their workers. The company will help employers and employees take advantage of new tax laws that allow people to receive tax-free transit or van-pool service to aid their commute rather than employer provided parking. For details on this service, click on the "Take the Tour" icon at <http://www.commutersavings.com>

MEAN STREETS 2000

Pedestrian Safety, Health and Federal Transportation Spending

STPP's latest report analyzes federal safety and spending databases and finds that per mile traveled, walking is 36 times more dangerous than driving. It also finds that in 59 percent of cases for which information is available, pedestrians died in places where they could not find a crosswalk.

The most dangerous metro areas for pedestrians were Tampa, Atlanta, Miami, Orlando and Jacksonville.

In addition to ranking large metro areas, the report also examines the relationship between health and walking, and points out the neglect of pedestrian safety by transportation agencies. On average, states spent just 55 cents per person of their federal transportation funds on pedestrian projects, less than 1 percent of their total federal transportation dollars. Average spending on highways came to \$72 per person.

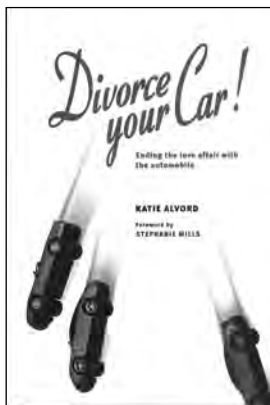
The full report, as well as state specific fact sheets, are available from our website at: <http://www.transact.org>

Transportation and Sustainability

Divorce Your Car! Ending the Love Affair with the Automobile

Katie Alvord, 2000. New Society Publishers (320 pg, \$14)

Divorce Your Car! isn't just a self-help book for the car co-dependent, but a terrific resource for transportation reform advocates, planners, decision-makers, and other experts. The book is divided into three sections: Part I ("Love's Been Blind") gives an historical account of how the private automobile came to be the dominant mode of transportation; Part II ("Grounds for Divorce") thoroughly examines the environmental, social, health and other costs of our marriage to the car; and Part III ("How to Divorce Your Car") describes just about every possible alternative to the car (including kayak commuting), and provides readers with suggestions for making the big break. *Divorce Your Car!* is very well-researched; from cash-out parking to street reclaiming, Ms. Alvord seems to have captured the entire spectrum of innovative transportation practices. A helpful list of resources and an exhaustive bibliography can be found at the end of the book. Written in a light-hearted, personal style (the book's preface is a letter written from the author's ex-husband), this book is truly a joy to read.



Michelle Garland

Toward Sustainable Communities – Transition and Transportation in Environmental Policy

Daniel Mazmanian and Michael Kraft, eds., 2000. Massachusetts Institute of Technology (308 pg, \$25)

This book examines environmental policy over the past three decades. It documents how the U.S. environmental movement has grown from a period of federal environmental regulation, to regulatory reform in the 1980s, and to today's "third epoch"--sustainable development at local and global levels. Excellent case studies on air and water pollution control, land use, transportation, urban redevelopment, and regional ecosystem management are profiled, along with an assessment of how fully developed or comprehensive they are from a policy outlook. The chapter on national transportation policy, written by Hank Dittmar of the Great American Station foundation and Thomas A. Horan and Daniel R. Jordan of Claremont Graduate University, makes the argument that transportation reform is one of the first examples of a holistic approach to environmental policy and one that recognizes local needs.

Nancy Jakowitsch

Transportation for Livable Cities

Vukan R. Vuchic, 2000. Center for Urban Policy Research Press (\$24.95).

One of the most difficult things for transportation reform activists to do is to argue knowledgeably with technocrats and engineers. Sometimes the discussions sound like the two sides are speaking different languages – and they often are. Professor Vuchic's new book, *Transportation for Livable Cities*, provides an understandable text, and some important and original concepts, to allow us to argue more persuasively for changing the way transportation is provided in the U.S.

Vuchic's original mind, exhaustive research, extended circle of academic contacts, friends and students have produced a work that is at the same time highly readable, and groundbreaking. Stepping back from the mundane arguments over "widening this" and "expanding that", he views the global ideas of just what transportation should be about, weighs the strengths and weaknesses of various modes, and then makes the case for public transportation in a way that has never been more clearly stated.

Chapter 5 alone – "Common Misconceptions in Urban Transportation" is worth the price of the book. Arguing that even the attempt to pit one mode against another is futile and misguided, Vuchic mows down misconceptions about transportation, and the impacts on land use, like a house of cards. No one who is asked to appear in the media, does interviews, or is asked to debate on transit should be without this indispensable companion. The often-heard arguments of libertarian economists come in for special scrutiny, and are debunked in unambiguous and convincing terms.

Ed Crawford

Public Liason Officer

Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority

Green Urbanism: Learning from European Cities

Timothy Beatley, 2000. Island Press (380 pgs, \$30)

Timothy Beatley, an Urban and Environmental Planning Professor at the University of Virginia, has written an engaging and comprehensive book on the sustainable cities movement in Europe. Without pretending to be exhaustive of the whole continent and every program, *Green Urbanism* takes an inspiring snapshot of cities implementing both government and community-led projects to promote sustainable development in Europe.

The book is roughly separated into four sections: Land Use and Community, Transportation, "Organic Cities" and Governance and Economy. His examples range from the relatively complicated, "ecocycles and the metabolism of cities" in Stockholm, to the simplicity of government support, which in turn leads to

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cultural acceptance, of bicycling as a common mode of transportation in Holland.

Despite the much-discussed differences between Europe and the United States with respect to historic attitudes regarding land use, perceptions of private property and prevalence of older, pre-automobile cities, many of the projects do not seem as unrealistic in an American context as one might think. In fact the imports have already begun, from car-sharing to co-housing, our much abused cities are starting to look a bit greener already.

John Bailey
Research Analyst for the
Sprawl Watch Clearinghouse

Car-Free in Cleveland

Alt-Trans Cleveland, 2000. EcoCity Cleveland (108pg, \$6.95)

Car-Free in Cleveland is the essential guide to transportation choices in the Greater Cleveland area. Written by Alt-Trans Cleveland activists and modeled after *Car-Free in Boston*, *Car-Free* maps out the region's rail and bus options and bicycling routes, and describes how to access neighborhoods and attractions throughout the region via transit. It is part guide and part advocacy piece, providing information needed to get a handle on a region's transportation system (route descriptions, frequency of service, intermodal connections, maps, and phone numbers) and reminding readers that places with transportation options tend to be desirable and more affordable places to live. Ready to go *Car-Free in Cleveland*? Bring comfortable walking shoes and this book!

Nancy Jakowitsch

Planning and Design

The Charter of the New Urbanism

Congress for the New Urbanism, 1999 McGraw Hill (160 pg, \$49.95)

The Charter of the New Urbanism is both manifesto and textbook. It takes the groundbreaking charter adopted by the Congress for the New Urbanism — which is a manifesto for re-civilizing city, suburb and town — and provides detailed examinations of each of these principles for town planning and design. In response to those who criticize the new urbanism as being an overstatement of the power of design and a willful ignorance of social and racial issues, *The Charter* includes a thoughtful essay by Jacky Grimshaw of the Center for Neighborhood Technology stressing the application of new urbanist principles to community led transit oriented infill. A powerful essay by Jonathan Barnett answers the critique directly, amplifying *The Charter's* direct statement that physical design is but an essential part of a solution to social problems and calling for a new coalition to put place back into social and economic policy. G.B. Arrington, Walter Kulash, Milwau-

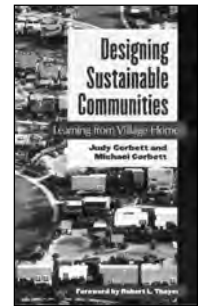
kee Mayor John Norquist, Doug Farr and Victor Dover each elaborate separate elements of the transit oriented, pedestrian friendly town planning and design philosophies of the New Urbanism. The CNU's founders all weigh in with strong contributions as well, effortlessly blending architectural theory with practical knowledge about the relationship between design and livability. This is a useful and well-written book.

Hank Dittmar
President of the
Great American Station Foundation

Designing Sustainable Communities – Learning from Village Homes

Judy and Michael Corbett, 2000. Island Press (256 pg, \$30)

This book is a refreshing, ecologically-centered approach to smart growth and presents an alternative model distinctly different from New Urbanism. Written by Michael Corbett and Judy Corbett, Executive Director of California's Local Government Commission, it chronicles the creation of Village Homes decades before anyone came up with the term smart growth. Village Homes was built in the 1970's to save energy and foster community. Its 242 passive solar homes often have prominent two car garages and most streets end in cul-de-sacs. But the roads are so narrow they are almost alleys, and the back yards are actually common areas where walking paths provide direct access to neighbors, the community garden, and the community center where office space can be rented. The Corbetts make a good case for this cul-de-sac design, as well as for the idea that new growth should be accommodated in new, modestly-sized, "garden cities" that offer single-family homes in a bucolic and sustainable setting. In fact, several chapters detail everything from the benefits of planting fruit trees, to creating natural, open drainage systems.



But the most powerful and hopeful argument they offer is the difficult creation but ultimate success of Village Homes itself. The struggle to get permits to create features such as an open drainage system and narrow streets has faded into ancient history. Today the community is a resounding success. I was especially interested to read this book, because my brother lives in Village Homes (and walks to work in one of its offices). I have seen how its design fosters neighborliness and lets his young son roam without fear, but its outward appearance and ranch-style homes would make it a comfortable place for people more used to traditional suburbia. This book reveals the careful planning that created that atmosphere, as well as the potential for re-creating it elsewhere.

Barbara McCann

CarFree Cities

J.H. Crawford, 2000. International Books (324 pg, \$29.95)

If you have ever dreamt of urban life without automobiles you will enjoy this wide-ranging and informative text. J.H. Crawford takes us on a journey of the imagination, starting with a discussion of tools useful for comparing cities (his examples are Venice and Los Angeles) and the impacts of transportation choices on the design and quality of life in the modern city. Though some have criticized Crawford's comparison of these two cities as unfair, Crawford responds that the comparison is simply meant to highlight "the extreme deterioration of public spaces characteristic of auto-centric cities".

Crawford also discusses the design parameters of a city built around human needs instead of the needs of automobiles. All elements are considered, from individual buildings, city blocks and districts to personal and freight transport. In the final section, Crawford discusses the transition to a carfree urban environment including public policy and support. Also mentioned are Christopher Alexander and Leon Krier, whose planning tools are "highly suited to the design of carfree cities". These discussions will be of interest to planners and designers building the cities of today and tomorrow.

Illustrated throughout with lovely photographs and diagrams, *CarFree Cities* is valuable as an educational text as well as a tool to stimulate discussions of urban design and possibility. As an unreconstructed pedestrian myself, I found it quite rewarding and inspiring.

William Peters

Parking Spaces—A Design, Implentation, and Use Manual for Architects, Planners, and Engineers

Mark Childs, 1999. McGraw-Hill (289 pg, \$59.95)

Few alternative transportation advocates consider parking spaces when they argue for reform of the transportation system. Mark Childs seems out to change that in this book. While advocates may not like to admit it, parking spaces and parking lots are here to stay, at least for the next decade or so. But Childs makes the point that parking lots need not be an ugly sea of cars. Instead, through careful planning, car parks can be almost pleasant places, reminiscent of true parks. Childs argues for accommodating the pedestrian, thoughtfully noting that even motorists are pedestrians when they step out of their vehicles. He also advocates sharing parking lots, not just with neighboring business and residences, but also with farmer's markets and public festivals. With plenty of examples and detailed engineering schematics, *Parking Spaces* should be required reading for transportation planners.

Michelle Garland

Cities and Society

The Wealth of Cities – Revitalizing the Centers of American Life

John O. Norquist, 2000. Perseus Books (256 pg, \$12.80)

Anyone who has been to Milwaukee lately knows that John Norquist, who is that city's mayor (just reelected to his fourth term), is well qualified to write a book about urban revitalization. A champion of transit, public art and architecture, and the opening up of the public domain, Norquist has done much to bring Milwaukee back during his tenure as mayor. His book is both a lively recounting of some of Milwaukee's success stories and clear analysis of some of the government policies that almost destroyed the City. Norquist reserves the most approbation for federal highway policies and public housing programs — he's been a vocal proponent of removing two of Milwaukee's freeways and replacing them with boulevards. Mayor Norquist's Rx for urban America may surprise some who think that big city mayors are always looking for a handout. He is one of the new breed of American mayors who instead see an entrepreneurial future for America's cities. Norquist calls for an end to government subsidies for sprawl and the reform of zoning policies that inhibit the market for new urban development as a way of allowing the natural advantages of cities to once again flourish. This is a practical book written by one who has practiced what he preaches.

Hank Dittmar

The Old Neighborhood – What We Lost in the Great Suburban Migration: 1966-1999

Ray Suarez, 1999. Free Press (264 pg, \$25)

Ray Suarez, formerly host of NPR's *Talk of the Nation* and now corespondent with *The Newshour with Jim Lehrer*, has written a highly personal, though well researched story that covers the story behind the suburbanization of our population. Ray Suarez writes folk history focusing on the great neighborhoods of great cities like Chicago, Philadelphia, St. Louis and Brooklyn and the way they've changed over time. He chronicles the stories of people who stayed in the cities and the battles they've fought to preserve their neighborhoods and the people who've moved into the cities and the battles they've fought to improve their neighborhoods. Without demonizing or making undue value judgements, he looks at public housing and those who've fought to save it and those who've sought to demolish it; and he confronts charged issues of race and ethnicity head on. This isn't at its heart a policy book, though it touches on policy. Rather it's a book about people and places written by an unabashed urbanist who nonetheless looks at the world with 20/20 vision.

Hank Dittmar

Sprawl City—Race, Politics, and Planning in Atlanta
Robert D. Bullard, Glenn S. Johnson, and Angel O. Torres,
eds., 2000. Island Press, (218 pg, \$30)

As almost everyone has heard, Atlanta has become a “poster child” of sprawl; a city known for its rapid growth, traffic congestion, and poor air quality. It is also getting plenty of attention as one of the few regions to be seriously seeking a regional solution, through the new Georgia Regional Transportation Authority. *Sprawl City* provides a good base of knowledge for anyone who wants to track Atlanta’s remarkable story. This book is a compilation of essays by Atlantans, who have lived through and studied its growth problems. Many of the authors are advocates who have been on the front lines of trying to shift the region’s transportation and growth policies. Edited by Dr. Robert Bullard of Clark Atlanta University’s Environmental Justice Resource Center, the book emphasizes the impact of sprawl on the region’s African American community and on the dispossessed. It includes a clear explanation of Atlanta’s air quality conformity lapse, as well as essays on housing and environmental impacts. In fact, this book appears to contain every sprawl-related statistic on the region.

Barbara McCann

The Nature of Economies

Jane Jacobs, 2000. The Modern Library (208 pg, \$15.36)

Jane Jacobs’s seminal work, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, changed the way people understood cities. Her timely critique of urban renewal projects and separate use zoning policies also provided a voice for the organic qualities that make a city work, that of sidewalk traffic, urban parks, and other quality of life indicators that are still mined today.

In her latest work, *The Nature of Economies*, Ms. Jacobs offers her readers a glimpse of the universal principles of development that have shaped the natural world and specifically human beings and their economies. Drawing from a rich synthesis of evolutionary history and economic theory, she states that healthy economies and healthy ecosystems share the same traits, including opportunities for innovation and self-correction, interdependency, and enough diversity to survive periods of instability.

Written as a didactic dialogue between four friends, *The Nature of Economies* is rich in descriptions of human settlements, monocultures, pheromones and much, much more. Readers will especially enjoy the references to traffic congestion as an unchecked feedback loop and the role aesthetic appreciation may play in habitat preservation.

Nancy Jakowitsch

The Livable City—Revitalizing Urban Communities
Partners for Livable Communities, 2000. McGraw-Hill (208
pg, \$39.96)

Here at STPP we are constantly asked for examples of places that are doing things differently. *The Livable City* provides such examples, in spades. This large format book by Partners for Livable Communities starts each chapter with an outline of some of the primary challenges facing cities (such as providing affordable housing, attracting good jobs, or stopping sprawl), then presents extensive profiles of places that have answered those challenges.

The book profiles cities large and small, from Pueblo, Colorado, to Memphis, Tennessee, to Philadelphia. One of the most interesting parts of the book is the subtext; it is clearly aimed at debunking the notion that a viable downtown can be created through the single “megaproject” that so many city officials seem to be drawn to. While the book’s format is comprehensive, the most energetic chapter is “The New Downtown: City as Living Room, Playground, Nightclub.” It includes many inspiring examples of how city life can be just plain fun.

Barbara McCann

Sprawl Busting: State Programs to Guide Growth
Jerry Weitz, 1999. American Planning , 1999. 376 pages,
\$47.95

Sprawl Busting is a highly technical review of state-sponsored growth management programs in Florida, Georgia, Oregon, and Washington. Although the evolution and local government experiences with these programs are described, the book does not reflect the subtle but real shift in emphasis within the planning field from growth management to smart growth. It also does not address new developments such as the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority or the growing skepticism about the effectiveness of regulatory approaches to growth management, at least when used exclusively rather than as part of a coordinated program of sticks, carrots, and direct public action.

After so many years of theory and hype, a realistic assessment of growth management, what works and what doesn’t, is needed. The difference between theory, as embodied in the laws and regulations summarized by Weitz, and practice, as observed on the ground, is stark. If you are looking for an overview of growth management initiatives, both state and local, and how successfully they’ve been implemented, I would recommend *Growth Management Principles & Practices*, written by Chris Nelson and Jim Duncan in 1995, as the most practical and coherent of the current offerings.

Reid Ewing

Rail Stations

Great American Railroad Stations

Janet Greenstein Potter, 1996. Preservation Plus, Wiley & Sons (570 pg, \$29.95)

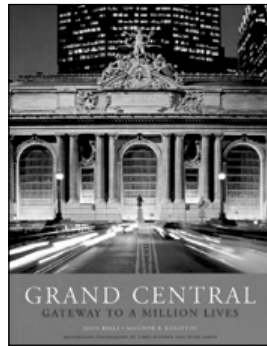
Ms. Potter's book is a state by state guide to railroad stations of the United States. For each station included in the book, she provides a profile including year of construction, name of the railroad that built it, designer style, materials and current status. It serves as a resource both for those interested in railroad history and architecture. It also can be a great traveling companion, as great stations are often at the heart of great downtowns and great main streets across America. The book is full of beautiful photographs, and sprinkled with interesting historical tidbits.

Hank Dittmar

Grand Central – Gateway to a Million Lives

John Belle & Maxinne R. Leighton, 2000. W. W. Norton & Company (288 pg, \$39.95)

The saving of New York's Grand Central Terminal in the seventies has been called the battle that gave birth to the modern historic preservation movement. Its subsequent \$200 million restoration by the Metropolitan Transit Authority is one of preservation's (and urbanism's) great success stories. This book chronicles both stories. Written by the principal architects



of Grand Central's award winning restoration, John Belle and Maxinne Leighton of the architectural firm Beyer Blinder Belle, the lavishly illustrated book tells the history of the station and its preservation and restoration from both a political and architectural point of view. Importantly, the book also explains the philosophy behind a restoration that improved the functioning of the terminal as a transportation artery as well as the programming of the space to make a useful and vital civic market. The restoration photos of the terminal are also fascinating, as is the fact that the brown grime that covered the cerulean blue of Grand Central's sky ceiling was composed largely of nicotine, not exhaust. This is a great book about a great project.

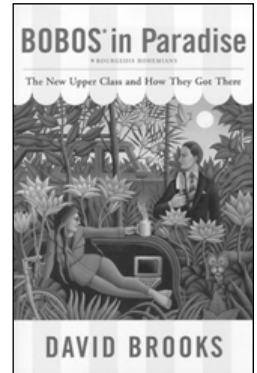
Hank Dittmar

Popular Culture

Bobos in Paradise – The New Upper Class and How They Got There

David Brooks, 2000. Simon & Schuster (288 pg, \$12.50)

What do Bobos (Bourgeois Bohemians) have to do with sustainable transportation or urban planning? According to author David Brooks, Bobos, the latte-sipping and texture-loving new establishment, will dictate more than just popular culture, they will spur an urban revitalization like none we have seen before. Bobos have a predilection towards urban life and are already putting up their Pottery Barn curtains in such two-syllable hotspots as LoDo in Denver and NoMa in Washington, DC. In fact, Jane Jacob's *Death and Life of Great American Cities* is cited as "the most influential book on how Bobos view organizations and social structures...(and) the good life."



In one hilarious passage, Brooks describes his experience as a pedestrian in the socially enlightened town of Burlington, Vermont. As he approaches an intersection, a motorist stops his car to let Brooks cross. Not being accustomed to this civilized local more, a dazed Brooks waits for the car to pass. But in this very Bobo town, the motorist is ethically inferior to the pedestrian and "to demonstrate his civic ideals, he is going to make damn sure that [Brooks] gets the right of way."

Michelle Garland

Roads – Driving America's Great Highways

Larry McMurtry, 2000. Simon & Schuster (208 pg, \$17.50)

I've been a Larry McMurtry fan since I was a disaffected Texas college kid. He's one of America's great novelists, and with two books of essays — *In a Narrow Grave* and *Walter Benjamin at the Dairy Queen* — one of America's better nonfiction observers too. I was thus excited to hear he'd written a book about highways, expecting a paean to great rural roads, diners and drive-ins, and small towns shaped by two lane main streets. I was initially surprised and disappointed to find that *Roads* isn't about the National Road or Route 66 and that

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RAIL~VOLUTION 2000

Building Livable Communities with Transit

Be sure to mark your calendars for Rail~Volution 2000! Registration is \$325 until September 8th, and \$375 afterwards. A limited number of scholarships are available to individuals and organizations; applications are due on August 4th. For information about the conference and scholarship applications, visit <http://www.railvolution.com> For information on traveling to this year's conference by train, visit <http://www.amtrak.com>

Save the Date!

Denver, Colorado October 4-8

The Other Side of the Road

The Future And Its Enemies – The Growing Conflict over Creativity, Enterprise and Progress

Virginia Postrel, 1999. Touchstone Books. (288 pg, \$10.40)

The Future And Its Enemies is another attempt to tell us what is new about the “new politics” of our time. Ms. Postrel, a writer for *Reason* magazine, argues that the traditional left-right schism is outmoded. Our most important divide, she feels, is between “dynamists” and “stasists.” Dynamists, herself included, embrace the messy results of living in a society based on freedom and individual choice. Stasists, including Pat Buchanan, Ralph Nader, Pol Pot and the Unabomber, are suspicious of technology and believe society should be controlled. It doesn’t take long to see where this is going.

Although the arguments presented are nothing new — think of *Atlas Shrugged* sprinkled with references to the internet — this book is one piece of the larger search by conservative ideologues for new enemies after the collapse of communism. Unfortunately, many are honing in on environmentalists and proponents of “sustainable development” as today’s threats to freedom.

This would be frightening if it weren’t so odd. By large margins, Americans support modest, practical steps to give them a healthier environment *and* a vibrant economy, safer, more pleasant communities *and* the benefits of new technology. Efforts to label proponents of environmental protection, smart growth and community livability as threats to the American way of life will ultimately fail because of Americans’ generally non-ideological approach to life. Practical results trump ideological purity every time, and if smart growth makes life more pleasant, it will be a winner.

Roy Kienitz

Driving Forces – The Automobile, Its Enemies, and the Politics of Mobility

James A. Dunn, Jr., 1998. Brookings Institution (250 pg, \$15.16)

It is no wonder that those who advocate more cars and more sprawl have reveled in this book, whose basic message is that the almost complete auto-dependency of American cities is not a serious problem. The author, James Dunn, ignores or trivializes most of the social and environmental impacts of the car and enthusiastically advocates the continued dominance of the car in our transport systems.

In most respects, Dunn’s so-called “Auto, Plus” policy framework is little more than a resounding endorsement of the policies already in effect in the United States. In some respects, however, he proposes turning back the clock by

McMurtry’s road journeys are almost all about marathon solitary trips on the Interstate. McMurtry rarely stops and when he stops he rarely talks with those he meets. But that’s Larry McMurtry — and what the reader gets instead is an amazing peek at his interior monologues on landscape, on literature and on life. *Roads* didn’t make me like the soulless oversized Interstate system any more, but it did remind me that traveling is a great way to get some thinking done.

Hank Dittmar

Outside Lies Magic – Regaining History and Awareness in Everyday Places

John Stilgoe, 1998. Walker & Co. (187 pg, \$14.70)

In *Outside Lies Magic*, Landscape History Professor John Stilgoe has crafted a whimsical field guide to the less glamorous parts of our built environment, places that aren’t likely to appear on the pages of high brow travel guides anytime soon but nevertheless reveal crucial clues about our historical patterns of settlement, travel and communication. Stilgoe provides fascinating insights to the background noise of the American landscape: abandoned railroad corridors, utility lines, highways, fences, main streets, parking lots, decaying shopping centers, rural postal routes and more. He implores the reader to take to the byways by bicycle, the perfect vehicle for exploration he contends, and learn a new language of the landscape that once mastered can speak volumes about the how and why of place. The brief narrative is an easy and enjoyable read, and is packed full of the type of trivia that will delight anyone interested in U.S. history and culture.

James Corless

Wanderlust – A History of Walking

Rebecca Solnit, 2000. Viking Press (192 pg, \$39.95)

An inveterate walker, author Rebecca Solnit has attempted the first cultural history of man’s oldest form of transportation. She traces walking in history and culture from its biological origins through its current sad state of affairs. The book profiles great walkers and their thoughts about walking, as well as some of the best and the worst places to walk. One chapter of the book is devoted to the post war development of the suburbs and the consequent cultural shift as we moved from the walking scale to the automobile scale. She then traces the development of the new Las Vegas casinos, and the way that congestion on “The Strip” has created a pedestrian environment in a city that celebrates the car. This is a thoughtful and thought-provoking book which has managed to preoccupy me on a number of strolls since I read it.

Hank Dittmar

abandoning the enormous progress made in intermodal transport planning over the past two decades. When one carefully examines the ingredients of “Auto, Plus,” it is clear that it avoids any policies that would be unpopular with car drivers. Dunn is willing to adopt a range of “carrot” measures, but refuses to even consider any “stick” approaches. He explicitly states as his criterion that we should only consider policies that would be favored by a majority of car drivers. If ever there were a formula for the guaranteed continuation of the auto’s domination of our transport system, Dunn has surely found it.

“Auto, Plus” is not a step forward; it is a step backward. It would reverse much of the progress made in transport policy over the past two decades. By downplaying virtually all of the problems our current auto-dominated system causes, Dunn makes us complacent and less willing to do anything serious about solving them. By refusing to do anything that would inconvenience car drivers or suburban homeowners, he ensures future growth in car use, auto dependence, and suburban sprawl.

Perhaps the most disappointing aspect of Dunn’s book is his attempt to further polarize transport discussions into pro-auto and anti-auto camps. By attacking auto critics throughout his book, Dunn does a disservice to the genuine contributions they have made to improve transportation systems in the U.S. The two most recent federal transportation laws, the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) and the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), are monuments to critics who have fought for a more humane and environmentally friendly transportation system where walking, cycling and transit also play a role.

John Pucher

Professor in the Department of Urban Planning at Rutgers University (New Brunswick, New Jersey)

(This review is an abridged version of an article by John Pucher in **Transportation Quarterly**, Vol. 54, No. 2, spring 2000, pp. 7-11: “Defending the Status Quo: ‘Auto, Plus’ Means More Cars and More Sprawl.”)

Kid’s Corner

Reading is a popular summer pastime, even among children, so we were sure not to leave them out when putting together our special summer reading issue. Books can teach everyone, even our young ones, to make responsible transportation choices! We took a look at four books that are sure to please the kids this summer.

Busy, Busy Town

Richard Scarry, 1997. Golden Books Publishing, \$14.00 (Ages 4 to 8)

Busy, Busy Town, Richard Scarry’s classic book, takes its young readers on a trip through Busytown, past all the different people (in this case animals) as they go to school, work and play. A great tour of a well planned community!

Window Music

Anastasia Suen, 1998. Viking Press, \$11.19 (Ages 4 to 8)

Window Music follows a young girl on an exciting trip on the train. Along the way, scenery of every kind is illustrated in wonderful detail. A great book for a child before his or her first train ride.

On My Street

Eve Merriam, 2000. Harper Collins, \$7.96 (Ages 2 and up)

On My Street follows a small boy and his mother on a walk down the street they live on. On the way they see everyone from “Suzy Gates on her roller skates” to “Mr. Gore in front of his store.” This book is great for the youngest readers.

Six Hogs on a Scooter

Eileen Spinell, 2000. Orchard Books, \$16.99 (Ages 4 to 8)

This book follows the misadventures of a family of hogs as they try to get to the opera. After a series of mishaps, they finally make the right decision - the bus.



Reviewed by Charlie King



Transit Vote is a non-partisan effort to mobilize transit riders around the country to participate in the political process. Through education and information, Transit Vote hopes to register and get riders to vote, and to vote for transit. Transit riders are one of the most obvious, under-organized bases to vote against highway-oriented sprawl and for the interests of transit-friendly cities and development.

USAction, the Community Transit Association of America, and several other groups are working hard to expand Transit Vote to communities across the country. Transit Vote has developed a comprehensive packet of information

and resources for local grassroots organizations wishing to launch the campaign in their regions. For more information, e-mail Janelle Cousino at jcousino@usaction.org, or visit the Transit Vote website at <http://www.transitvote.org> (this website is expected to be ready by mid-July).

Great Getaways!

Editors' Note: *Planning a late summer getaway? The National Trust for Historic Preservation recently compiled a list of appealing places to live and visit—communities that held on to their downtowns and historic landmarks, are walkable, and located near some of our natural treasures. The following is an adaptation of the Trust's report, "A Dozen Distinctive Destinations."*

San Luis Obispo, California

Located on the state's Pacific Coast, San Luis Obispo is a thriving community in part because its investments in streetscaping, architectural restoration, and unique attractions such as a farmer's market and piazza-style complex of shops, restaurants and theaters.

Boulder, Colorado

Nestled against the Rocky Mountains, Boulder is home to one of the country's few successful pedestrian malls and a growth management ordinance established in the 1970s. While you're there, sample the city's many walking and biking trails, its community-free bikes, and charismatic buses.

Thomasville, Georgia

As a winter resort since the Civil War, Thomasville and its majestic oaks and southern character have been enjoyed for years. The town participated in Georgia's unique statewide Main Street program, which led to Thomasville's evolution into a high-end specialty shopping district.

Lawrence, Kansas

Lawrence was founded by abolitionists in 1854 and was an important stop on the Underground Railroad. Since the 1970's, the city has re-established the downtown business district as the economic and cultural heart of the region, adopted ped-friendly policies, and discouraged sprawl.

Lowell, Massachusetts

Founded in 1821, Lowell has renovated its gritty textile mills and Victorian buildings to include low income housing and university space. Today, there are plans to link the city's resources, including the first national historical park, with an intermodal transit system.

Petoskey, Michigan

On the shores of Lake Michigan, this town of 6,000 is rich in historic buildings, a relaxing central park, and numerous outdoor places to go fishing, swimming and camping.

Cooperstown, New York

Settled in the late 18th century by William Cooper, father of novelist James Fenimore Cooper, this town is home to the National Baseball Hall of Fame, historic craft shops, an old-fashioned trolley system and is surrounded by working farms.

Pittman Center, Tennessee

Bordering the Great Smoky Mountains in eastern Tennessee, the Pittman Center has pursued its own vision for the future. And unlike nearby gateway communities, it has limited development in environmentally sensitive areas and prohibited billboards.

Fredericksburg, Texas

Founded by Germans in Texas' Hill Country, Fredericksburg was connected to San Antonio by rail at the turn of the 19th century. It has 300 traditional bed and breakfast inns, many of which were "Sunday houses" for farmers and pioneers who came to town for commerce and church.

Lexington, Virginia

This Shenandoah Valley town restored its sprawl-affected downtown, renovating historic buildings and adding brick sidewalks and old-fashioned street lamps. Visitors can take a Civil War driving (or biking) tour to fourteen locations in an area surrounded by natural beauty.

Port Townsend, Washington

This Victorian seaport town's economy is fueled by marine trades, tourism and industry. It is planning to preserve one of the last pieces of open space along the Puget Sound, boasts 100 percent occupancy in its downtown storefront area, and has two mountain ranges as its backdrop.

Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin

Located in western central Wisconsin, this small town is rooted in the lumber and logging industry. It boasts some of the country's purest drinking water, a healthy Main Street and numerous trails for biking and hiking.

For more information on these communities, read the National Trust for Historic Preservation report at <http://www.nthp.org>



San Luis Obispo, on the central coast of California is a walkable surf and college town, and also the birthplace of the Motel.

Back-to-School-Back-to-the-Future Multi-Modalism

Editors' note: This is a form letter that Barbara Flanagan, a writer and transportation multi-modalist, would certainly send, during her summer vacation, to each and every university president in America. Except that activists don't take vacations.

Dear University President:

You have a captive audience.

There are thousands of strong and healthy young people in your moral thrall, and you could change their lives if you wanted to. You could also transform the life of the whole nation by molding those students. What you could do is this: give those kids real transportation choices. There is no place in the United States more delightfully compact and conducive to remedial walking than a college campus—that dense village of fledgling adults who've just left their childhood homes to look for adventure. Why not give students a push. Stop building those costly parking garages and offer racy alternatives like transit. Turn those young drivers into multi-modal Americans who will lead new generations of multi-modalists into a cleaner, quieter, muscular, fuel-independent future.

Announce the start of a nationwide campus movement. Call it the “LoCO₂motion Project” with the letters for carbon dioxide in red—after all, the kids have many more breathing years ahead of them. Collaborate with the State Department to show America's environmental critics around the world—the ones who berate us at Global Warming summits—that we are trying to make headway. Import and incorporate new locomotion ideas (free public bikes and beyond) from all over the world and prove that America can learn after all.

Persuade those college freshmen to abandon their brand new Suburbans in exchange for a slice of civilization. Connect students with the area's transit system via shuttle buses like American University in Washington, DC did, arrange for complimentary transit service as was done by Pennsylvania State University, and link the university to the town's bicycle grid like the University of California at Davis. Hire students or a transportation advocacy group to develop a U-PASS program like the Chicago Transit Authority recently did. Fifteen colleges and universities are currently participating in the Center for Neighborhood Technology-designed program. These universities and others have had positive results, including an increase in transit ridership, an expansion in the regional transit network, a decrease in demand for parking, and the building of a more attractive campus and town environment.

In effect, the task for saving the planet has fallen to you, the president of a university, a spokesperson for progress and inspiration, the captain of a manageable ship. Why not take all those campuses nestled in ancient towns: Berkeley in Berkeley, MIT in Cambridge, CalTech in Pasadena, Yale in New Haven, Penn in Philadelphia, Lehigh in Bethlehem. Ban all the bulky gas-guzzlers and space-hoggers; lower the speed limits; bring in lots of lean, sexy alternative vehicles and introduce radically intimate new ways of using them—say, European-style car-sharing. Give your students the chance to stroll or rollerblade through your campus and around the host town—a place that's probably rife with exotica like strangers on sidewalks.

Thank you for considering this proposal. September is nigh.

Sincerely,

Barbara Flanagan
Writer and Multi-modalist

Universities Taking the Transportation Challenge

Improving Transportation Options. At the University of Washington in Seattle, the U-PASS has provided participating students and staff with unlimited rides on the area's two primary transit agencies at reduced costs. With more than 44,500 participants in 1996, Seattle's pass program led to a 68 percent increase in campus ridership on Metro.

Saving the University Money. Cornell University's Transportation Demand Management Program (TDMP) has reduced the number of vehicles brought to the campus each day by 26 percent. It has also helped preserve more than 13 acres of campus green space and averted the need for a 1,200-space parking structure, saving the university more than \$3 million a year in construction, debt service, and maintenance costs.

Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions. In Boulder, the University of Colorado pass program has increased annual student transit ridership from 300,000 to a startling 1.5 million trips. In addition to providing weekend bus service to major ski areas and support to local bicycle advocacy efforts, the program has contributed to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions up to 3,300 metric tons per year.

For more information, visit http://www.crest.org/environment/renew_america/

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