

Urban Action 2005

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It is a privilege and an honor to write this introduction to Urban Action 2005. This year's outstanding group of editors and contributors continue a tradition of excellence that serves many important roles.

First, the act of editing, and producing Urban Action is an important vehicle for Urban Action editors to educate themselves. All of the editorial and production decisions for Urban Action are made by student editors. This requires leadership and teamwork. The editors furthered their own substantive education and learned about many different planning and policy areas as they read and critiqued papers. They learned production skills to produce the journal. And most importantly the editors learned to work together under pressure to produce professional work.

Second, writing for Urban Action is one of the most challenging experiences students experience during their college careers. This year's editors set high standards for the journal and put every selection published through a rigorous peer review and editing process. The authors whose work appears in these pages have every reason to be proud of their work. Their materials were selected from among the very best work produced in Urban Studies courses and in courses in other departments and programs. Responding to editorial comments, doing more in depth research, and revising and resubmitting work is one of the best ways for students to learn critical thinking skills and polish their writing abilities. All of the Urban Action authors will leave SFSU confident that they will excel in their next writing assignment in the workforce or graduate school.

Urban Action serves as a vehicle to showcase the quality of student work within the university and in the community. Students, faculty, and administrators judge the Urban Studies Program and the quality of our students' work by what they see in Urban Action. So do internship coordinators, senior seminar clients, and decision-makers throughout San Francisco and the Bay Area interested in urban issues. Thus, Urban Action plays a vital role in relations between the Urban Studies Program and other actors whose understanding and support is vital to the success of the program and its graduates.

Finally, now that it is on the Web, Urban Action is an essential vehicle for educating a wide range of SFSU students. Each year hundreds of students in URBS 400, GE Segment III courses, and other courses consult Urban Action articles — for information, but also as a model of what high quality writing should be.

So congratulations to this years Urban Action editors and writers for producing such an excellent journal. Thanks to everyone for their hard work and creativity. And good luck in carrying forward what you have accomplished into the next phases of your education and careers.

Richard LeGates

Urban Action Faculty Advisor



Introduction to the 2005 Urban Studies Annual Journal

It is with great honor that the editors of Urban Action present to you this year's journal. We all have worked diligently for the past 9 months on every aspect of the journal. We hope it is the most professionally produced journal at San Francisco State University. There was an excellent group of outstanding people who gave their time and put in an enormous amount of effort to review and edit all of the final materials in this year's journal. Everybody thought that the process was rewarding, challenging, thought provoking, and entirely fun.

The Urban Action writers, photographers, and even filmmakers (check out our website) also contributed a great amount of time to the journal, and they must also be thanked. If it were not for them and their commendable efforts to submit, rework, resubmit and perfect their materials, we simply would not have a journal with such a wide variety of intriguing topics. All the Urban Action finalists have excelled in their respective disciplines and their work covers a wide scope of topics dealing with the ever-changing dynamic of the city.

All of the students who have worked on Urban Action do so because they are interested in city dynamics and for their love of civic engagement. Many will go on to graduate programs and become city planners and policy makers at both the State and Federal level. It is these bright minds that will eventually shape the future make up of the Nation in terms of land use, architecture, policy, and planning.

So, it is with great pride that we present to you this year's edition of Urban Action. Please also see our website at <http://bss.sfsu.edu/urbanaction> for information about our journal.

For the Urban Action team,

Alex May

Staff and Contributors

Alex May is the managing editor of Urban Action and is majoring in Urban Studies. His focus is on sustainable urban development, fighting oppression, and ethnic studies. Alex is a Massachusetts native and came to San Francisco two years ago to finish his undergraduate experience. He is currently studying Portland Oregon and its surrounding hinterland.

Aly Pennucci is an Urban Studies major at San Francisco State University. After graduation in May 2006, Aly plans to pursue graduate work in urban and regional planning.

Charlotte Ely is an Environmental Studies student, double concentrating in Environmental Sustainability and Social Justice, and Natural Resource Management and Conservation. Ever since she wrote a book review on *The Ecological Footprint*, she's been complaining about a giant foot that allegedly follows her around everywhere. She can be seen slinking through the hallways of HSS and ducking behind doorways to evade capitalism's encroaching pedal extremities.

Christina Cherif is an Urban Studies major and plans to graduate in the spring of 2006. Her focus outside of school has been to help support small-scale sustainable agriculture and increased nutrition and accessibility to affordable, organic produce to low-income neighborhoods by operating a weekly produce stand at a non-profit urban farm in south-west Berkeley.

Ellen Keith is a student of Urban Studies. Her interests span promoting livable communities, preserving green space, and encouraging individuals' awareness of their impact on the environment. Next year she will continue her studies at the University of Amsterdam in the Netherlands.

Elmer Tosta majors in Urban Studies at SFSU. His focus is on land use and transportation.

Originally from Rotterdam, the Netherlands, **Fredrick** Schermer is a student of Urban Studies. His interests center around urban forms of organization, public transportation, helping create a world in which we can all live well.

Jason Henderson conducts research on the politics of urban transportation and land use. He teaches Geography of Urban Transportation and Land Use Planning and will be teaching a course titled Bay Area Environmental Problems in the fall of 2005. He lives in San Francisco and bikes to work regularly.

Jaclyn Gault has always been fascinated by big cities, and the Urban Studies major has given her a chance to study them and potentially change them for the better. Jaclyn is focusing on design, housing, and is very interested in urban sustainability issues. Along with the Rincon Hill Plan, she has studied the Transbay Terminal redevelopment, Vancouver Style design, and is currently interning at the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency.

Laurel Muñiz is a graduating senior in the SFSU Urban Studies program. Her interests are in community-based, sustainable land use planning and public policy. After graduation she intends to work in the field of urban planning and to pursue a graduate degree in Public Administration.

Narges Gardizi is a 22 year old American born Afghan Muslim woman. She is currently a senior at SFSU, and is majoring in History. Narges is interested in the Islamic World, and hopes to go further in studying the history of the area and its people. Her goal is to one day be able to show the world the true essence of the "Middle East".

Richard LeGates is a professor of Urban Studies and the faculty advisor to Urban Action. He is the author of Think Globally, Act Regionally, a GIS textbook, co-editor of The City—an Urban Studies anthology, and co-series editor of the Routledge Urban Reader series. His teaching specialties include land use law, research methods, and interdisciplinary approaches to understanding cities.

Rocco Pendola is an Urban Studies major, who plans on graduating in spring 2006. He intends to begin pursuit of his PhD that fall. Interests include the relationship between the built environment and public health, environment-behavior studies, the debate over big-box chain stores, New Urbanism, and temporary urbanisms, such as Critical Mass. He is currently conducting research on sense of community in San Francisco.

Sanra Ritten is a first year senior at San Francisco State. Her special major is Bilingual Environmental and Urban Photojournalism. She will graduate in the spring of 2006 and hopes to travel around the world, documenting environmental conditions.

Stephanie Brown is a graduating senior in the SFSU Urban Studies program. Her studies have focused around Bay Area land use and its impact on rates of local business ownership and success.

Stephanie Ruddy is a graduating Urban Studies major. After graduation she plans on moving to New York City to pursue a career in policy. She is passionately drawn toward the arts, and is eager to apply her skills within the social framework of sustainable urban development.

Tony de Jesus has always been fascinated by moving images. His first love was of swashbuckling action-adventure movies, but his intellectual and emotional growth eventually led him to documentaries.

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The Future of Housing in San Francisco

Jaclyn Gault

The future of San Francisco housing has become a heated debate due to new controversial developments in the Rincon Hill district. The area's newest plan lays out the model for the city's first planned high-density residential neighborhood. Although many developers and political figures advocate for the benefits high-density housing has to offer, they have yet to convince many citizen groups and current residents into believing that San Francisco is truly ready for such a sudden and extensive undertaking. Because Rincon Hill would be the first planned high-density neighborhood in the city, many people believe planners need to make a greater effort in considering the implications of such a massive project. Others argue that developers need to follow through on promises that were made to residents regarding previously implemented plans for the very same area. Arguments both for and against these developments are extremely convincing, but in the end it seems as though the Rincon Hill Plan will go forward regardless of any potential consequences that the city and its people may encounter. The question remains, what will San Francisco's newest project mean for its residents?

Specifics and background of the area

First, we need to know a few specifics in order to get an idea of what this area's appearance would be if the Rincon Hill project became a reality.

Rincon Hill is a 12 block district directly next to the bay bridge that was a formerly an exclusively industrial area. Consisting mainly of parking lots and warehouses, it was viewed as a prime spot for development, but being isolated from the rest of the city by the bordering Transbay terminal and the Embarcadero freeway entrance, it was deemed virtually unusable by most potential developers. In 1985, the "Rincon Hill Special Use District" was created to "transform an unattractive and under-utilized environment into an urbane residential neighborhood," (King, June 2003) but the area was still considered undesirable. Then the 1989 earthquake occurred and, although an unfortunate event, opened the area up for new uses by collapsing the obstructing freeway. It was at that point when developers began eyeing the area for their ventures.

Along with the earthquake, a desperate need for housing fueled plans forward. Although people had the somewhat vague idea that this was prime land for

developing, only in the late nineties did people begin talking seriously about a high-density residential community being built there. Only recently has this idea started to truly be implemented. John King, the SF Chronicle's Urban Design Writer, researched the history of the area and found that "planners have talked about tall buildings with developers and small groups in Rincon since 1999" (King, June 2003). Of course, buying the properties and re-zoning the land takes time, as does getting the various proposals heard and approved. In March of 2003, the Folsom and Spear Street projects were proposed; by September, they were granted initial approval by the city. Then in December of 2003, the San Francisco Planning Department released an updated plan for the Rincon Hill district, adding more open space and requiring cooperation between the several different developers in order to keep the area cohesive. By early February of 2004, the SF Board of Supervisors approved (10-1) the Folsom and Spear Street projects and, to accommodate the new construction, instituted new height limits and zoning codes to include high rises in the area. Towers that had a limit of 250 feet previously could now be constructed over 500 feet.

Currently, there are about nine different projects within the Rincon Hill Plan in various stages of development. They range from 59 to 820 units apiece; altogether totaling over 3,000 new units. (See Table 1) Along with the units that have already been built in the area before the new plan was initiated, the area will have over 5,000 units of housing available.

If all the proposed projects are approved and constructed, they could house from 9,000 to 12,000 residents when completed. The income of the residents may range greatly, but a majority of units will be on the “higher end” of the income bracket. In *The Metropolitan* for example, condominiums can cost up to \$1 million; but in some of the other buildings, condominiums could be purchased for around \$300,000, which is more reasonable, yet still costly. The rental units proposed to be built will also range in pricing quite a bit, but exact costs are not yet set in stone since construction has yet to begin. The 201 Folsom and 300 Spear Street projects offer studios, one, two, and three bedroom units, and it is guessed that they could range from \$1600 to over \$3000 a month.

Since the Folsom and Spear Street towers are two of the most controversial projects within the Rincon Hill Plan and have exposed people to several pressing issues that may also come up in future projects in the area, they should be examined in greater detail to get an indication of the entire area’s potential character. Both buildings were designed by the same firm: Heller-Manus Architects, yet developed by two different companies: Union Property Capital and Tishman Speyer Properties. Each building consists of two towers, one 35-story tower and one 40-story tower apiece, and together will create over 1600 units. These towers will be easily visible from the bay bridge and many other viewpoints within city. The bases of the towers will house parking structures with about 900 spaces, which indicate that street parking should be available for non-residents that come to visit the area. The street aspect of the area is also addressed by the architects; they call for open space, a pedestrian walkway that is off the main street, retail space on the ground level of the residential structures, more lighting, and the widening of sidewalks.

Arguments against the projects

The plan that has been laid out for Rincon Hill is extremely different from anything San Francisco has seen before. Many people have their doubts about the course that it is taking. One of the strongest arguments for rethinking the developments before beginning construction is the fact that the previous neighborhood plans were not followed through. They also called for wider sidewalks, open space, and several other benefits that the area desperately needs, but those aspects of the projects were never completed. The new plan also has all of these features, but who is to say that they will not be forgotten as well? After developers construct the buildings that they desire, what is to stop them from leaving the rest of the neighborhood as is?



300 Spear/Rincon Hill

Another problem many people have with the Rincon Hill Plan is that zoning was drastically changed for the Spear and Folsom Street towers to be built. The new approved towers are more than twice the height of anything that could have been built there earlier. This will significantly alter the San Francisco skyline as viewed when coming over the Bay Bridge and obscure many people’s view from downtown and the bay. There is also the risk that building high-density housing close to a major freeway and to the financial district will create more traffic in the area, causing the Fremont St. exit off the Bay Bridge to become even more congested, exacerbating already existing traffic problems on the bridge. The towers are also closer together than previously allowed, meaning that there is less light and viewing space between them. Architectural critics state that low architectural quality is to blame for these problems and that narrow towers with larger bases are being utilized incorrectly, and will lead to high winds and too little sunlight. The architectural style of the buildings is borrowed from the high rises in Vancouver, but there the bases are about half the size of those proposed in the Rincon Hill Plan. The “Vancouver Style,” as it is known, has lower bases and widely spread towers, which make the skyline uncluttered and does not create the wind tunnels that the Folsom and Spear Street buildings may produce.

Alongside physical problems with the landscape and architecture of the towers, there was debate over whether or not proper regulations were followed in approving them. The San Francisco Land Use Committee never reviewed any of the projects before they went to the Board of Supervisors, allegedly due to intense political pressure to move the projects along.



201 Folsom Street

Affordable housing became a tensely debated issue early on. In San Francisco inclusionary housing is mandated by the General Plan, which means that every new residential complex has to allocate a certain amount of the housing stock as affordable units. If the developer builds the affordable units on the same site as the market rate units, the law requires that 12% be affordable housing. If the developer decides to build the affordable units off-site, then an additional 5% is added. Many believe that more affordable housing should be created, and that the current standard of 17% off-site housing is not enough. There was also the question of whether the affordable housing being placed off-site in an entirely different neighborhood of San Francisco does not defeat one of the purposes of the Rincon Hill Plan, to bring together a mix of incomes and families within the area.

There was a fight regarding the Bank of America digital clock tower, which has been standing for over fifty years, being torn down by Michael Kriozere, a developer who bought the structure and is planning to replace it with two residential towers. It can be seen from several parts of the city and is considered a visual landmark by many.

One of the most vehement challengers of the projects is supervisor Tom Ammiano. When the Spear and Folsom projects received the final approval by his own board, he responded to developers: “you have won the battle, but you are going to lose the war” (Herel, Jan 2004). He believed that the presentation done by the architects and developers was an “orchestrated, fairy-tale, Disneyland presentation” (Herel, Jan 2004) that is far too unrealistic and is simply a ploy for developers to get the authorization for whatever they wanted. The fear that developers could be ruining the cityscape for a fantasy that will not come to fruition is a substantial one, and could be enough to stop the Rincon Hill project from evolving past its current point.

Arguments for the projects

San Francisco has a housing dilemma that has been present for years, decades even. While there are downtown apartment high rises, there is a serious demand for an extensive project like the one in question. The area will be a completely new neighborhood created from scratch, unlike many other improvement efforts where they must tear down

former residential structures to “fix” the area. It is one of the only places left within the city where such a project can be done. Moreover, the location is ideal, next to multiple forms of transportation such as MUNI, BART, SamTrans, Transbay Terminal, CalTrain, Golden Gate Transit, AC Transit, and the ferry service. It is within walking distance to downtown, which encourages people to abandon their cars and walk to jobs or entertainment. Along with that, the parking supply is relatively low, supposedly encouraging foot traffic, bicycle use, and public transit rider-ship.

As for benefits to the city, these projects theoretically will supply an annual revenue of \$11.2 million in property taxes and generate over \$3 million to the San Francisco Unified School District. Developers claim the projects will “help generate the critical mass to support grocery stores and other neighborhood-serving retailers. Millions will be paid in housing taxes that will support the construction of new schools” (Union Property Capital, Inc. and Tishman Speyer Properties, 2004). Construction may employ up to 3,200 union workers and, once opened, over 250 permanent jobs could be available.

Many visual and neighborhood improvements are outlined in the new Rincon Hill plan, and architects as well as developers have actually gone above and beyond the requirements in order to make the area a comfortable and attractive neighborhood. They have agreed to remove lanes from the wide main streets in order to expand sidewalks up to 32 feet. They have created several dozen areas for open space such as plazas, dog runs and play areas, as well as a new three-acre park. They changed their initial design for the pedestrian walkways in order to make it more accessible to the public by lowering the stairs and facing them towards the street directly on the sidewalk. Previously, they were placed half way between the

blocks and were barely visible when walking by. They are putting in retail on the lowest level of the buildings and adding new lighting in order to make street life more inviting. They are attempting to bring the massive structures down to human scale at street level, so you do not feel overwhelmed by tall, blank tower walls. In response to the arguments regarding the “Vancouver Style,” architects argue that the narrow towers still let in plenty of sunlight, decrease view obstruction, and give apartments in the high-rises great city views.

The most important aspect of the Rincon Hill Plan is the low/middle income affordable housing that is to be built off-site, required by the General Plan. Affordable housing is a top priority for San Franciscans, since housing prices continue to increase and fewer and fewer people can afford to live in the city. For housing to be considered “affordable,” it is not to exceed 30% of a household’s income. You can qualify for affordable housing if you meet the requirements of being middle, low, or very low income. Middle income is below 120% (sometimes quoted as 100%) of an area’s median income, low income is below 80% of an areas median income, and very low income is below 50% of an areas median income. The properties built in tandem with the Spear and Folsom St. projects will be available to people earning up to \$77,000, 100% of San Francisco’s median income. They are going to be constructed in the Bayview/Hunters Point area, using extra space provided by the True Hope Church of God in Christ, at no cost to the church. Originally, about 235 units were to be built in accordance with the law, but when placed in front of the Board of Supervisors, Chris Daly made an agreement with developers for them to build an additional 106 affordable housing units. Daly stated that he believes that “we don’t have a housing crisis in San Francisco, we have an affordable housing crisis” (Daly, 2004) and that the developers need to take that into account when building new structures. Since the developers immediately agreed with the newly requested total, Supervisor Chris Daly backed the projects from that point on.

My opinion on the implications of the proposed plans

When considering both sides to this argument I think I have to side with Jim Chappell (president of the San

Francisco Planning and Urban Research Association), who he said that in San Francisco “any new housing is good housing” (Fletcher, 2004). It may seem extreme, but it is true; San Francisco has a housing crisis and things need to be done in order to help the current and future residents of the city. Many people do not like the idea of radical change, but sometimes that is exactly what needs to be done to get the problem fixed. The Rincon Hill projects are backed by the San Francisco Planning Department, Chris Daly, Gabriel Metcalf (deputy director of SPUR), City CarShare, the Faith Based Coalition, several labor organizations, the San Francisco Small Business Commission, and the Urban Solutions Company. It seems hard to deny that these projects are intended for the good of the city and the community. Over 100 community meetings with citizen representation have been held in regards to Rincon Hill, and the outcry against them has mainly consisted of people not wanting their views obstructed or by people who fear that plans will not be followed through. While



Affordable Housing

I do not think the first argument has any significance in this matter, the latter is indeed an important issue. However, one must realize that the previous plans failed because the neighborhood was not established and there was no call for the plans to be put into effect. When these projects are completed, there will be a demand

by all the people that have backed the projects from the beginning, for the open space and other improvements to be made.

As for the change in skyline, I agree that it is dramatic; these high rises are not hidden by any means. They accentuate the hill they already rest on and will make the cityscape completely new. However, I have driven across the bridge since the two newest towers have been put into place, and I know where the future ones are to be built; they do not obstruct anything other than views of other towers behind them. You can still see Telegraph Hill, downtown, Alcatraz, the ferries, and all the other sites that are uniquely San Francisco. When you are coming off the Bay Bridge the high rises are the things that make the city beautiful. People need to remember that San Francisco is an ever-changing city. It adapts and molds to its people throughout the generations. Keeping such an important new endeavor from taking place because the city may look different is ridiculous.

There are a couple arguments against the projects that I agree with. Locating the affordable housing off-site seems to indicate that developers and even city officials wish this to be an upscale neighborhood. It refutes the idea that San Francisco is a city prides itself on diversity. It would be ideal if all housing could be made available for all members of the public and that a mixture of incomes could coexist, but in reality, it is easier and more profitable for developers to put low-income housing off-site. On the bright side, the affordable housing units will be built and in this case, even more than usually called for.

The architects involved may have misinterpreted their Vancouver contemporaries' original ideas. It seems highly plausible that the wind factor will kick up, especially right off the bay. As for the complaint about being cold and shady, that is San Francisco, towers or no towers. In addition, on those rare sunny days, when tourists and residents are out, the shade may be a nice break. Vancouver's design would need to be adapted regardless, due to the strict building regulations of San Francisco as well as this particular area's larger lot size. The idea is not to copy Vancouver, but to utilize some of the most beneficial aspects of their style, such as less view obstruction and a more walkable urban area.



Rincon Hill Street Scape

Finally, as for the “landmark” Bank of America tower, the digital clock built in the late 50’s, designation as a landmark for architectural or other historical value is not probable. Although normally I am not an advocate for destroying any type of city landmark, I hold no sentimental value for this particular structure.

It seems to hold no other benefit than the convenience of knowing exactly how long you have been in traffic. The two towers to be put in its place will both have clocks in “fond memory” of the old Bank of America tower, and this is adequate for me.

The developers and other people involved have gone beyond what is mandatory in local legislation in an attempt to make the majority happy. They have listened to what citizens would like, to what supervisors requested, and have offered their own ideas for improvement. The open space and landscaping proposed looks appealing. I think that it was admirable that they agreed to build more affordable housing than regulations called for. I think that developers are not the all-encompassing evil that many people believe them to be. I think that high-density housing is an excellent solution to the housing problems of San Francisco. I think we are on the right track.

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IMAGES

2,3,4. 201 Folsom Street Affordable Housing. Rincon Hill Street Scape courtesy of Heller Manus Architects.



Christina Cherif

Each morning in Tunis I wake up to the call for prayer from the 12 century old Zitouna Mosque. The echoing Arabic words declaring Allah's greatness as the only God, Mohammed as his prophet and the beckoning of all to pray gradually evolve into crowing roosters, and finally the rising din of conversing men who have returned to the cafes they left only hours before. As I walk through the winding, cobbled streets of the medina (the traditional, old city), it looks like business as usual - shopkeepers unfolding impossible amounts of goods from seemingly tiny spaces onto their storefronts, deliveries being made by either hand cart, motorbike or three-wheeled truck, schoolchildren getting on their way, and the women - arms full of long baguettes from the bakery, head and body covering white hejabs, held between their teeth.

While the medina's design serves many purposes including keeping inhabitants cool, channeling rain-water downslope, and utilizing every inch of space; the maze of streets is daunting and easy to get lost in as most have grown organically around the many mosques, zaouias (holy men's tombs), medersas

(Quranic schools), funduqs (traveling merchant's inns), and Ottoman palaces. The only way to tell where you are is by recognizing that you have left one souk (market) and entered another. I know I have missed the alleyway to the Youth Hostel if I find myself in the Souk el-Berka (goldsmith's market) or the Souk el-Attarine (perfume market). I know I'm really lost if I find myself in the area of the blacksmith's souk, which is relegated to the medina's outskirts as it is a lesser refined craft. I also know that to leave the medina for the Ville Nouvelle (French for "new city") I must pass through the overbearing section of clothing boutiques - extreme with bright fluorescent lights and music, which ranges from Egyptian or Syrian pop music to 50 Cent to Marvin Gaye, blaring from the sound systems. Before this, however, the sweet smell of chichias (flavored tobacco) emanating from a narrow doorway beckons me and I enter the old Turkish Coffeehouse. Characteristic of the medina, this narrow door of a dilapidated building is simply the veiled entryway into a world of elaborate tilework covering the walls of two floors of ornate rooms. My presence as the only woman in the place is met first with surprise, followed by a nod of respect, although, this is certainly not the case in every café I enter. While Tunisia, and Tunis in particular, is quite progressive with

a good number of women in the workforce and many in public office, this is the medina - the traditional old quarter, not the more cosmopolitan Ville Nouvelle where the cafes are almost always mixed.

As I leave the medina's 270 hectares and 15,000 inhabitants through the Bab Bhar at the Place de l'Indépendance I stand at the boundary of the typical pre-colonial Islamic maze street design and the defined Western, colonial grid. The Ville Nouvelle was built during the 19th century by French colonizers on the filled in land of Lake Tunis. Avenue Habib Bourguiba serves as the main artery for the city leading east towards the eastern bus and Metro Léger (light rail) stations, and then across a causeway to the Mediterranean coast. The wide sidewalks and tree-lined pedestrian median make a perfect stage for the beautifully ornate architecture and design including the National Theatre and the eclectic Gothic, Byzantine, and Moorish elements of the Cathedral of St. Vincent de Paul. The north-south running streets are narrower except those along which public transportation runs to the western and southern stations. Public transportation is easy, efficient, and very cheap here (although the Metro Léger is much better than the bus) and from any three stations one can access all parts of the fairly compact city, the surrounding wealthier suburbs, or the beaches and seaside villages. There is also the SNTRI (regional bus) and countrywide train system by which one can access the Atlas mountains in the west or the coastal towns and major urban hubs, such as Sousse and Sfax in the south, easily and affordably (but again the train is much better than the bus).

To get around the central city however, most people opt to walk and sometimes bike. There are a good amount of autos, even though gas costs the Tunisian Dinar equivalent of around \$2.50 per gallon, and certain intersections do become congested at rush hour. But the auto certainly does not rule as it does in the urban centers of many other developing countries and the streets seem to belong to various mobility modes. Masses of people often walk in the middle of the street, slowly parting for an approaching car, then returning after it passes. In the evening, places that might be considered prime parking spaces here in the States are filled with street vendors setting up impromptu tables selling anything from socks to fruit. The pace of life here simply does not warrant rushing or angst - students, and businessmen and women move leisurely along always taking time for the handshake and four-kiss greeting and conversation which is cus-

tomary upon meeting acquaintances or friends. Much time is also spent in rotation between the many sidewalk cafes which are home to the many unemployed.

The Ville Nouvelle is also comprised of the embassies, consulates, government buildings, banks and hotels which stand as testament to Tunis' place as the capital of the country. They also denote the importance of the tourist industry, as well as, an economy based on petrol products, phosphate mining, agriculture (much of which is subsidized family farms), and craft manufacturing, which is considered one of the most stable and successful in the developing world. Upon gaining independence from France in 1956, President Bourguiba set out to de-emphasize religion's role in society as a means to achieve modernization and economic competitiveness. Social and political reforms such as the removal of religious leaders from their traditional areas of influence, the abolition of Quranic law courts, and the emancipation of women from Islamic regulations, such as, donning the hejab and arranged marriage contract were enacted. This political and social progressivism, which did not go uncriticized, continued with Bourguiba's successor, Ben Ali in 1987 and Tunisia's becoming the 1st southern Mediterranean country to enter into a partnership and cooperation agreement with the European Union, primarily in the form of a free-trade zone. Despite this and the fact that 18% of Tunisia's economy is spent on education, the unemployment rate still hovers at 15%.

While Tunisia is officially a democracy, the government exercises complete control. The period of political and religious repression in the early 1990s, during which members from opposing groups and parties were jailed or exiled, ended with the abolition of the State Security Court and the limitation of police powers of detention. However, elections are a joke as opposition is squelched and barely existent. Ben Ali's visage, by mandate, is found everywhere - on billboards, banners strung above the streets and in every public and business establishment throughout the country. However, it is strictly forbidden to speak publicly about this ever-present icon. There is a frustration among Tunisians about the political situation, but most feel fortunate to have what they do have. In particular a deeply rooted and effortless pride in their culture which is a mixture of the Berber, Bedouin, Touareg, European, and Arab people living there, as well as, their history which spans 3000 years of successive Phoenician, Roman, Byzantine, Ottoman, and Islamic civilizations. These elements, coupled with strong

family bonds and community-mindedness, enable Tunisians to weather their evolution towards modernity while at the same time retaining a sense of themselves

as a society bonded in traditional cultural and religious values. It is also for these reasons that, I believe, they are the warmest and kindest people I have ever met.



The Always Changing Dogpatch

Emmet McDonagh

Many people in San Francisco haven't heard of or don't know where a neighborhood called "Dogpatch" is located. Dogpatch is a little 5 block by 5 block historic neighborhood on the flats east of Potrero Hill. The neighborhood is considered to be bounded roughly by Mariposa Street on the north, Illinois Street on the east, 23rd (Tubbs) Street on the south, and Highway 280 to the west.

From the 1860s through World War II this neighborhood was a bustling industrial center along with its neighbor, Potrero Point (Pier 70). But, following World War II once thriving businesses began to close down and relocate out of the area causing a sharp drop in population. The population drop in the 2000 US Census tract that includes Dogpatch can see evidence of this exodus. Only 939 people live in this tract, even though the Census Bureau tries to include about 4,000 people in each tract. The neighborhood changed a lot after the wartime economy left after World War II and it is changing drastically once again before our very own eyes. I will tell a story of this neighborhoods' history, present, and future.

The history of San Francisco starts with the Spanish governors dividing up the land in San Francisco into massive land grants. The area currently known as Potrero Hill, including Potrero Point, was deeded to the sons of Francisco de Haro and was named "Rancho Potrero de San Francisco," or simply "Potrero Nuevo". The land was ideal for pasturage, since it needed little fencing due to its isolation and physical boundaries. These physical boundaries made it hard to inhabit the area, but nonetheless industry started moving to the area, which was outside of the city limits by the early 1850s. City residents did not want dangerous industries such as gunpowder manufacturing, which was necessary for street grading in the city and rock mining in the Sierras, to be located too close to residential areas. Maritime related industries joined in by the early 1860s after finding numerous tracts of vacant land and deep-water anchorage at Potrero Point. The first of these companies was the San Francisco Cordage Company, which made

rope, selling it across the Pacific and down the west coast of South America.

The commercial history of Dogpatch, formerly known as Dutchman's Flat, started to boom in 1867 when a wooden stilt causeway called the "Long Bridge" was built from the South of Market area through the Mission Bay tidal lagoon all the way out to the Hunters Point area. The bridge followed roughly the same route as the old Kentucky Street, better known as the current Third Street, and spanned about 3-4 miles.

The area of Mission Bay currently between Third Street and Potrero was eventually filled in and this became the railroad hub of the city, which helped neighboring Potrero Point become the heavy industry center of the city. After the Civil War the Pacific Rolling Mills, which produced rolled steel, moved to Potrero Point and soon after iron mills, a sugar refinery, and even a whaling station became established in the area.

From 1870-1880 the residents of the area were mostly American born. By the early 1880s the famous Union Iron Works moved into the area. This steel mill has had such names as the Bethlehem Steel Yard, Todd Shipyards, Southwest Marine, and currently San Francisco Drydock, which is still in the ship repair business as the oldest operating civilian shipyard in the United States. Many of these businesses were located on Potrero Point and Irish Hill, which was located between the heart of the current Dogpatch and Potrero Point. Irish Hill had numerous boarding houses and saloons that were later bulldozed in an attempt to flatten the area. This is mentioned because most of the people who worked in these local industries lived nearby, many of them in the current Dogpatch (which didn't actually

have that name at the time). The current Dogpatch is actually just a small slice of what is left from the old bustling industrial center that covered a much larger piece of land.

Around 1887 the workers, now mostly Irish and Italian immigrants, got tired of the problem of having to live in tenement housing in the current Dogpatch area. A man by the name of John Cotter Pelton, Jr., a representative of the progressive party and a politically inspired architect, designed cheap, small Victorian cottages for these immigrants who now worked in the factories, warehouses, and shipyards. Thirteen of these homes remain today on Tennessee and Minnesota Streets in the heart of Dogpatch. There a few other Pelton homes (as they came to be called) left in the Haight and Bernal Heights neighborhoods. The San Francisco Evening Bulletin advertised plans for these homes through a “stunt run” on Saturdays. The homes became popular very quickly.

The Dogpatch area was one of the few in the city that survived intact following the quake and fire of April 1906. Because of its geographical isolation, the fire never reached Dogpatch, resulting in the survival to this day of many historical buildings. The area remained viable for the first half of the 20th century, due in part to migration of large numbers of people leaving destroyed areas of the city.

World War I was a great time for Dogpatch, but World War II was the neighborhood’s zenith. The shipyard at Pier 70 seemed to work around the clock, with many of the almost 100,000 industrial workers in the city working in the area. The population in Dogpatch was still dominated by European immigrants, but the numbers were changing. By 1920 the Italians accounted for over 30% of the population as the Germans began to dwindle to about 5% of the population after accounting for almost 20% in 1910. The Irish still accounted for over forty percent of the people in the neighborhood. This would change by 1940 as two out of every three people in Dogpatch were born in America and the remaining immigrants were predominantly Italian. The other immigrant groups at the time were coming from Russia, Yugoslavia, and Mexico.



Lone Bridge

There were many major industrial employers in the area during the first half of the century employing local residents. The San Francisco Gas and Electric Company employed about 10% of Dogpatch residents while the Western Sugar Refinery employed about another 15%. The most important employer, however, was the Union Iron Works industry, which at any given time employed between 25% and 50% of the residents. From the late 19th century until World War I it was the most important manufacturing industry on the entire West Coast. By 1918 the re-named Bethlehem Steel shipyard employed over 10,000 people, but saw declines until 1938 when the industry surged with the growth of the Merchant Marines. During World War II the shipyard employed 18,500 people during round-the-clock shifts.

The neighborhood had many local small businesses so that the neighborhood was quite self-sufficient. This is ironic, considering that the whole point of moving industry into the area in the first place was to isolate it from residential areas. Due to its amenities, the neighborhood became a desirable place for the workers to live. The safety issue surrounding now-departed gunpowder manufacturing no longer existed. One of the keys to the housing during the first half of the 20th century in Dogpatch was that there was an extremely healthy balance of homeowners and renters. This was important because neither landlords nor developers could have the chance to really control the housing market in the area. There is a legend that the former Dutchman’s Flat area got a new name in a simple way according to local retired construction worker Gene Knox. “Some say it was named for packs of wild dogs that lived there, others say that its gritty look made it seem like the hillbilly town “Dogpatch” where Li’l Abner lived in a comic strip. It was just 22nd and Third Street you know, then one of the dudes came up one day and said you know if anybody asks, this place is called Dogpatch. That’s the name.” The man who said this was Knox’s friend, Curtis Brown. The name seemed to stick.

After World War II, people began to leave Dogpatch as the shipyard’s jobs moved to bigger and more modern ports across the bay in Oakland, Los Angeles, and Seattle. Other wartime employers also left, factories closed,

and many residents left for employment opportunities elsewhere. The neighborhood now had trouble as the wartime economy dwindled and became a dangerous place to live. The potential cost of bringing newer industries into the area would have been enormous, and companies opened up elsewhere. After the workers moved away many of the homes and warehouses were demolished. By the end of the 1960s Dogpatch had turned from a proud working-class community into a physically blighted area. By the early 70's the downtown extension of the 280 freeway had been built, isolating Dogpatch from neighboring Potrero Hill. By the late 1970s arson, decay, and demolitions were reaching epidemic proportions in the area. But towards the end of the decade something new came to the neighborhood that would begin a transformation.

In the late seventies creative professionals and artists began to purchase the run-down, yet affordable, Victorian cottages and Edwardian flats in the area. Not only did they purchase them, but they also started to fix up the dilapidated properties. Somehow, newer businesses and industries slowly discovered the special charm that has existed in Dogpatch in previous years, bringing a return of jobs to the area. Muni established a bus yard in the neighborhood and the John M. Woods Motor Coach Center, which is a repair center for buses. This yard is located at the edge of the neighborhood, on Indiana bordering the freeway, without dividing the residential part of the neighborhood. When I walked by the bus yard I saw some bus drivers going to get lunch on foot after their long shift, showing how jobs support the local economy.

Two city laws passed in the late eighties are having a significant effect on the way the current Dogpatch is dealing with some of its biggest issues. The first is Proposition M, passed in 1986 as a growth control measure with a priority of preserving neighborhood character through city planning. This has become crucial in the last few years as the district gained status as a historic landmark area. Technically, this means that people trying to develop in the neighborhood have to go through numerous governmental hurdles in order to develop or change property. The other law has been met

with mixed reactions. In the late 1980s the city passed a law legalizing conversion of industrial spaces into live-work lofts. Subsequently, this allowed many new live-work lofts to be built in Dogpatch, some of which are seen by many as a blight on the landscape. In 1999 George Cothran of the SF Weekly wrote an article on how badly



Old Irish Hill

these enormous and tall buildings are designed. He specifically talks about the building at 755 Minnesota in his article, "Assholes on the March". The building at 755 Minnesota is just one example. Sometimes it's just the colors that are objectionable. Residents often think that the colors are the primers then they realize those colors are final. Conversely, the city does

need more housing and warehouse conversions and new loft buildings help fill this need.

As I walked north up Illinois Street I had a view of Pacific Bell Park. I followed the path of an old train track that is continuous on Illinois, but no longer used. Live-work developments line Third Street. It is obvious that many of the buildings are new, but the facades of numerous old warehouses have been retained, preserving some of the historic character of the area. In 1998 residents formed the Dogpatch Neighborhood Association, which has made many strides in keeping the character of the area while allowing development. Many members of this association are also in the Lower Potrero Hill Neighborhood Association, whose members are known for their "Not in My Backyard" (NIMBY) stances towards development.

According to the 2000 Census, Dogpatch is a very expensive place to live, with the median income being in the ninety thousand dollar range. Whites make up approximately 65% of the population, blacks 15% and Asians 10%. A notable statistic about the residents is that they are 60% male, with few children and seniors. Two out of every three households in the area are non-family and almost all of the family households have fewer than four people. Times have changed in the neighborhood due to the cost of housing and the loss of low skill jobs. As a result, there are fewer immigrants in the area, with 90% of the neighborhood's residents being native born. Lastly, there are currently very few apartments for rent

or homes for sale in the neighborhood. Both rentals and sales are in single digits.

Dogpatch continues to evolve with UCSF Mission Bay development and the Third Street light rail line. This will undoubtedly cause an increase in the cost of housing, which has already begun to happen due to speculation. The neighborhood is missing basic businesses such as a good-sized grocery store. What I see for this neighborhood is a change in the type of people that frequent the area. I think that for this neighborhood to be appreciated and to function it must be more accessible. Presently, parking is hard to find in the area and the three bus lines that service the area (the 15 Third Street, the 22 Fillmore, and the 48 Quintara/24th Street) are not considered the safest. I did not get the chance to talk to anyone in the neighborhood, as it is quiet during the middle of the day. I feel that this area will become more vibrant with streetcar stops at 23rd and 20th on 3rd Street opening next year.

There are many attractions in Dogpatch. Hangouts such as the Cup of Blues, Mabel's Café, Moshi Moshi Sushi and Grill, Café Cocomo, the Dogpatch Saloon, and Claddagh's Irish Sports Bar have the area headed in the right direction. Proof of the progress that Dogpatch has made can be seen by the grants that the San Francisco Planning Department's Historic Preservation Program received from the State Office of Historic Preservation (noted in the January 2002 edition of the San Francisco Heritage magazine). Public funding has been designated for the preservation and renewal of the Central Waterfront, focusing on Pier 70 and Dogpatch. In 2002 the San Francisco Beautiful Journal awarded the Robert C. Friese Award for Neighborhood Conservation to the Dogpatch neighborhood. It appears to be the general consensus that this once under-acknowledged area is entering a new stage of its life.

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Jason Henderson

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In 2005 San Franciscans and people around the Bay Area find themselves faced with rising fares and service cutbacks, on top of already disjointed and poorly performing transit systems like MUNI, AC Transit, and Golden Gate Transit. This quagmire exists despite the fact that San Franciscans have spent the better part of the past thirty years talking about the need to fix transit in order to improve our environment, develop in a socially equitable way, and make the Bay Area more livable. Despite the rhetoric of “transit first” as official San Francisco policy, for example, very little has really been done to make MUNI work for everybody. Commuters jam onto the crowded N-line or Geary bus, and deferred maintenance means breakdowns and late buses across town. Busloads of people are frequently delayed by just one or two self-centered motorists parking in bus stops, double-parking, or blocking intersections. Instead of expressing pride in their transit system, most San Franciscans mock it and use it reluctantly. Is there a better way? Of course there is.

In one place in particular, Zurich, Switzerland, people of all incomes and backgrounds not only use their transit system frequently, they can afford it and are proud of it. Zurich is a mid-sized European City with a population similar to Portland or New Orleans, at roughly 1.5 million. It still has a strong and thriving urban core and is part of a post-industrial belt of cities from Milan to London. It is a major financial and business services center, and a post-modern cultural hub of a region between Southern Germany and Northern Italy.

Like American cities, Zurich experienced a decline in transit use with the rise of the automobile after World War Two. Yet beginning in the 1970’s the citizens and leaders of Zurich decided that the car, with all of its environmental and social problems, should not dominate urban space. To achieve that goal, public policies were enacted to make transit more attractive and useful. It should be noted that San Francisco went through a similar policy discussion as long ago as the 1960’s and 1970’s, which resulted in the transit first policy that stresses transit, walking, and biking – on paper. In reality San Francisco’s transit first policy has a long way to go, and Zurich provides a good example of how people in San Francisco might

want to think about the urban future. What can San Francisco learn from Zurich?

First, the fare structure is user friendly. It is an honor system whereby passengers buy tickets from vending machines, and drivers do not hold up buses waiting for someone to fumble for change. This means that drivers pay more attention to the road instead of policing fare evaders, and this actually speeds up the travel times on the routes. Fare prices are generous and passes are deeply discounted. In fact, Zurich dropped fares to attract more riders during the 1980's (MUNI might want to think about this as it ponders raising fares again).

Because of the regional range of Zurich's transit system, and its seamless interface with the equally impressive Swiss Rail system, people in Zurich have fast, car-free access to greenspace, the countryside, and the Alps. The Swiss railway system is family-friendly, thus affordable and convenient for family trips. This means that people can not only live without a car for their everyday needs in the city, but can easily access hiking, skiing, and other outdoor recreation. Thus car ownership is not a prerequisite for enjoying a family vacation or respite from the city. In San Francisco, creating a regional system with one ticket, and emphasizing the use of transit for recreation can make the systems useful for more than just commuting.

Most important for San Francisco's current transportation mess, much of Zurich's bus and tram system is physically separate from automobile traffic. There are special dedicated lanes for trams and buses, and motorists keep out. This enables the transit to operate

without having to deal with car congestion. Main arterial streets in Zurich that are similar to Van Ness, 19th Avenue, or Geary, have transit-only lanes. Additionally, cars are often restricted from making left turns and parking has been removed on many streets to make space for bus lanes. The result, driving is less convenient in Zurich, while transit is swift and smooth.

Transit vehicles get priority at signalized intersections. Buses and trams have electronic transmitters that turn red lights green as the vehicle approaches the intersection. Every MUNI rider in San Francisco has observed a bus unload and load passengers for several minutes only to be held up for another few minutes by red lights. In Zurich, this frustration is minimized, since a city-wide goal is zero waiting time for buses and trams at intersections.

In Zurich, the political courage was there to prioritize transit – and the fruits of that courage are seen and experienced by all. The average person in Zurich rides transit more than once a day, and despite being a much smaller city, Zurich's transit system carries thousands more people everyday compared to MUNI.

A replication of Zurich's success requires taking away car space in San Francisco. If San Franciscans are truly interested in protecting their environment and creating a truly sustainable urban built environment, the spaces of the car must be minimized and not accommodated – this includes taking away on-street parking and lanes on streets. Anything short of that is an explicit non-commitment to fixing San Francisco's transit system.



Ethnography

Stephanie Ruddy

Ethnography is a research method commonly used by anthropologists who wish to gain a cultural understanding of a particular person or group of people. It typically involves studying the subject(s) in their environment through suitable, objective methods of observation that allow for both qualitative and quantitative data gathering. The ethnographer usually begins by asking questions such as ‘What does it mean to be a member of this particular group of people?’ The ethnographer then applies systematic data gathering methods (open-ended interviews, participant observation, key-informant interviews) to attain informed and reliable cultural data. Some ethnographers intertwine quantitative data (e.g. tables, census figures, surveys) that offer substantive support of the qualitative information collected. Ethnographers offer crucial insight to the inner thoughts and emotions of humankind; their passions, fears, and challenges are considered crucial aspects that help achieve sociocultural awareness. Moreover, the heart of an ethnography lies in its process, purpose and ethics. The ethnographer is a research instrument applying an attentive framework rationale that sheds light on the invisible patterns of culture.

Ethnographies are useful in analyzing invisible social constructs that can explain and interpret how others have chosen to define culture, religion, and family setting. In *Tomorrow God Willing* by Unni Wikan and *No Shame In My Game: The Working Poor in the Inner City* by Katherine S. Newman, each author presents anthropological ethnographies that explore the effects that poverty has on communities in the New York City (Newman) and Cairo, Egypt (Wikan) urban environments. Through descriptive, culture sensitive anthropological approaches each author demonstrates the success of forming personal relationships with the groups and individuals that are being studied to ensure that the secular forces of poverty, race and class are not overlooked by numerical data sets, statistical hypothesis testing, and other forms of numerical predictions. These instances only isolate those outside the boundaries of poverty, leading to solutions that treat at the level of the symptom, rather than at the root of its cause. Both ethnographies utilize an approach imbedded within its evaluative methods and ways of writing, a comprehensive effort to break the stereotypes of class and race within the urban environment under which most public policy makers and researchers operate. Although each author is in a different poverty-stricken community,

both describe an array of customs centered on modes of kinship that have developed out of necessity. These approaches are shown to help alleviate the many psychological, environmental, and economic strains that typically engulf those living in poverty. The authors have not adopted victim blaming (when one takes a social problem that someone is experiencing and blames them for it). Rather, Newman and Wikan provide ample ways that this form of research can help everyone, namely those who have never experienced extreme poverty, to more effectively understand contemporary social problems.

The inspiration to write *No Shame In My Game: The Working Poor in the Inner City*, published in 1999, came as an idea to Katherine Newman while riding in the backseat of NYC cab on her way to a meeting from LaGuardia Airport. She had promised Northwestern University that she would write a paper on “jobless neighborhoods” (Newman 1999: ix). However, after tracing, analyzing and giving context to the unavailing attempts of modern-day social scientists’ current preoccupation with putting “the urban poverty problem back on the national agenda” (Newman 1999: xi) through the lens of those outside the labor market, she was inspired to challenge this economic, social frontier of those not “sitting on the

welfare sidelines” (Newman 1999: xi). Thus Newman’s research rationale is shaped at exposing the working poor “...before we consign our whole poverty policy to the ups and downs of the welfare system (Newman 1999: xi).” Newman attempts to expose the working poor as opposed to those who solely rely on welfare. To appreciate the significance of this research one must ask: Have social scientists forgotten those who are underemployed as an alternative method of dissecting poverty?

Unni Wikan’s anthropological research on urban poverty is much less aimed at analyzing “...the macro-forces that determine the economic and social inequalities that create poverty (Wikan 1996: 3).” She seeks to engage the reader with the struggle that the Western world has in defining and interpreting the lives of those who are experiencing poverty in Cairo (Wikan 1996: 1). It is for this



Wikan

reason that Wikan’s book “...carries a special significance” giving first-hand stories, chronicling the daily life and social interactions of Umm Ali (the main character of the book), her family, and other persons directly and indirectly involved in her life in the span of “...twenty-five years of experience with these people, and approximately thirty months of actually being with them (Wikan 1996: 1,8).” Wikan defends her research methodology by explaining that she sees no other “...way of communicating such lives with any degree of faithfulness than by the massive detailing...of everyday events, everyday relationships, and enduring particular concerns, through major segments of whole lives (Wikan 1996: 1).”

Both Newman’s focus on New York’s inner city jobless poor and Wikan’s profound concentration of one family’s personal experience with urban poverty comprise research methodologies whose aim is not to raise specific outcomes in each study. They formulate research questions based on personal observations and relationships. From these observations they begin to ask questions that attempt to explain and describe what was observe. For instance, Newman collects her data with the help of a “large group of doctoral students at Columbia University who conduct interviews, perform shop floor research, and direct fieldwork in the homes of the working poor (Newman 1999: xvi). Each student

is assigned a task, targeted at providing the best possible ways (who to study, where to study, and how to study) to ascertain the true-life experiences of the working poor. In addition, Newman and her student research team carry out structured/unstructured interviews and surveys within African-American residents of Harlem, Dominicans and Puerto Ricans from Washington Heights, and business owners and managers who maintain shops in these areas (Newman 1999: xvi).

Wikan, on the other hand, spends the first month of her research living with Umm Ali and her family in Cairo (Wikan 1996: 326)! “I shared a narrow bed with Hoda and Mona, squeezed in their midst, and itching madly from the bedbugs while feeling suffocated from the crowding and the heat (Wikan 1996: 326)” Unlike Newman’s tedious, methodological approach, Wikan actually becomes a member of the family she is researching. She further explains that her objective in wanting to live with Umm Ali stems from a genuine interest in (a) wanting to be in their lives; (b) the need to write a thesis to make a living and; (c) her need to improve her Arabic (Wikan 1996: 327). Unni Wikan, having shared this information with Umm Ali, leaves Umm Ali to suggest that Wikan’s main objective should be to improve her Arabic while forgetting about the first two concerns (Wikan 1996: 327).

However, neither research method negates the other. The differences in approach are applied as an act of social respect; an exclusive set of guidelines that are designed to protect rather than interfere with the intrinsic modes of culture and society. Newman and Wikan are learning to adapt to a culture truly unlike anything they have ever experienced. They must learn to be culturally appropriate within their ethnographic attempts at exposing the most vulnerable group of people that New York and Cairo has to offer.

The question remains: whether the two authors present a social reality; a reality that is believable and contours appropriately, both the experience of the reader and the informants. This is revealed in how the author chooses to present the information (both author and character voices), how this reality is produced (e.g. interviews, direct observations, data gathering), and the limitations for the research.

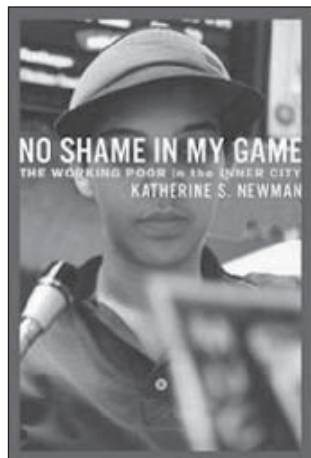
As such, Newman begins by sorting out “waves of data” in which she forms an analysis of whom to study (Newman 1999: xvii). Thus, chapter one, entitled *Working Lives*, displays a comprehensive dissection of three subjects (Jamal, Carmen, and Kyeshia) whose lives represent the lives of the working poor and prove

the inner city struggles that Newman passionately attempts to unveil. At this point, she has painted an elaborate picture that she, as an anthropologist, (and her cohort of doctoral students) is going to unearth something that can potentially enlighten, from an anthropological perspective, the present-day misconceptions of poverty. She is exposing poverty outside the view of economists and sociologists. Newman's emphasis to the reader in the first chapter accounts for her interpretation of the personal voices of the three subjects. When she wishes to account for the voice of the character, she displays through both direct and indirect quotations, the questioning of authority, lack of role models, teen pregnancy, and the dream that someday their situations will change for the better. An example of this is seen as Jamal describes his history with poverty.

"When I was thirteen, it was real good, 'cause she was working at the Post Office. And you know, she would do a lot of good things and we'd go hang out. But she started fucking up her life, and it's like we just got more distant. I never really had a father. My father is like...who knows where he's at. And that's how it is, [fathers] don't want to be bothered with nobody. And my mother, too. They could really care less. So I had nobody (Newman 1999: 9)."

Newman's aim is stated clearly in her writing format. She presents her interpretation of the NYC jobless communities, supports her claim by isolating specific anecdotes of the subject, then, in the following chapter presents the problematic trends (research, tables, readings) of poverty that perpetuate the existence of the working poor.

Wikan begins most of her chapters as though one were reading a novel; she expresses this as her primary intention. "The book should be read as a story... (Wikan 1996: 9)." She is both an active participant in the daily life of Umm Ali and a researcher observing behind the cultural lines, the hidden truths of poverty. Thus as a participant, she is no doubt, part of the "interminable flow of speech" within her narrative approach (Wikan 1996: 9). However, unlike Newman, Wikan is developing a lasting bond with her research



Newman

subjects, and because of this, sacrifices the demand and urgency for public policy makers to take her account of poverty in Cairo seriously, and most likely forfeits the academic validity of her work. But this does not suggest that Wikan is not successful in describing poverty in Cairo as a problem that should be addressed. Rather, her objective is not to depict poverty as an inescapable evil, as Newman suggests in her book, but as something that has already been conquered through strong familial and friendship-based relationships of loyalty.

"Yet with all its problems, Cairo emerges victorious in several respects; most remarkable are her people. Their resilience and good humor seem to enable them to keep going against all odds... Through their myriad small acts the people create a city that is a miracle in the sense of being spared some of the most harrowing problems that beset many big cities throughout the world: violent crime, homelessness, and street children. How are these feats achieved? Looking at Umm Ali's life offers a clue (Wikan 1996: 314)."

Wikan frequently uses Umm Ali as a stereotype in order to suggest that all women in her position experience similar lives. Her literary composition suggests that most households adhere to cultural, religious, and extensive familial networks as a possible advantage of poverty just as Umm Ali does. This, however, could also be a direct result of Wikan seeing herself as a part of the extended family. Thus she is not able to delineate poverty from an objective, solution-oriented perspective, as does Newman.

Through self-narrative, Wikan writes of Umm Ali's complaints that pertain to specific individuals in her life. Umm Ali's stepmother is the source of many of her anxieties. Wikan reports Umm Ali's harsh feelings toward her stepmother, but does not take the time to present the situation from the stepmother's perspective. When Umm Ali discusses her family, there is too much self-narrative and not enough perspective from those she discusses. It is easy to be caught off track, re-evaluating if this book focuses on poverty in Cairo or Wikan's interpretive ramblings of Umm Ali's life story. By focusing too much on one person's account of poverty, the focus of the study can become unclear and begin to lack purpose.

One feels that there is a clearer sense of observation within Newman's book than with Wikan's. Newman addresses the issue of poverty in each chapter differently and does not fail to find creative ways to engage the reader. She offers various forms of narrative that appeal to a

wide range of personalities. For instance, in chapter seven, entitled *Family Values*, Newman begins with several stereotypes comparing the general consensus of stereotypical lifestyles of inner-city residents. She begins with a stereotype that “American culture is predisposed...” to accept that everyone is a master of their own destiny (Newman 1999: 187).

“Those that fail fall to the ground where they belong, not because they have been denied opportunity, or are victims of forces larger than anyone could control, but because they have succumbed to temptation or lack the brains to do any better...(Newman 1999: 187).”

She breaks down the benign public perception of America’s fixation that “middle-class nuclear families [are]...the goal toward which others should be striving (Newman 1999: 192).”

Newman is more careful to form a bond of trust among her readership than Wikan. She outlines her ideas and concerns as being valid, thoughtful and necessary to grasp poverty from outside the box. She wants to relate to the reader and bring them into her world as she begins to explore this unique group of people. This is evident in chapter six, *Getting Stuck, Moving Up*, where Newman begins with a personal, detailed emotional account of her own toil with the low-wage manual labor force.

“For me, however, the job was a dramatic encounter with life at the end of a real dead end. I worried about whether I would find myself trapped in this limbo, unable to afford to go back to school, prisoner of my family’s need for my earnings (Newman 1999: 151).”

If one hasn’t experienced poverty or the low-wage labor market than this chapter’s powerful proclamations of its imprisonment will change that. In this account, one is aware that poverty has the potential to exist in those living a “white, middle-class” existence and not solely underneath the umbrella of the racial realities of inner-city poverty.

Wikan writes as an outsider when she makes her assumptions of poverty life in Cairo. She hardly draws on her personal experience with poverty in the way that it is presented in front of her. This style also isolates the reader as an outsider, making it difficult to engage and fully comprehend Umm Ali’s life; the reader is left to misinterpret people’s behavior. For example, much of the male experience is untold. Wikan admits that she was not able to participate “in the male world” (Wikan 1996: 127).” This presents the binding limitation of Wikan’s research. Culturally, as a woman, she is not allowed the privilege to engage in the personal lives of Cairo men. However, seen as a member of the household, a friend of Umm Ali, it is no surprise that the men, culturally, would thus treat her accordingly.

However, both Newman and Wikan present poverty as that which takes shape through cultural norms, religious beliefs, moral obligation, and basic survival. Neither authors attempt to romanticize poverty, but rather reveal the testimonial victories of those who suffer from it. Both groups suffer from the daily humiliation of the invisible judgments from the outside world of privilege. The account of such feelings humbles the reader upon realizing that poverty has less to do with personal stamina and more to do with the color of someone’s skin (Newman) and region of birth (Wikan). In this respect, public policy makers can learn from the information brought forth by analyzing personal accounts of the relations between people who suffer from extreme poverty. Each author humanizes the experience of poverty and challenges people to view those affected by it more than just a statistic. Poverty, viewed through Newman’s ethnographic lens, is a glitch in the system of social policy that threatens the unforgiving expansion of racial and class-based segregation; but whose escape, as interpreted and experienced by both Newman and Wikan, is desperately sought out in the lowest rungs of the workforce.

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Green Roof Technology and the LEED rating system; Reshaping the way we view cities

Alex May

Green roof systems are a new idea that progressive planners can use to combat the issues of storm-water runoff, urban blight, and inefficient energy costs. They are built on the top of new or existing roofs which can be either sloped or flat, and has the greatest potential for incorporation on top of any building. In terms of land use, green roof systems give back the land that a foundation of a building takes away when it is first poured. Progressive planners who are interested in the issues of sustainable land use, and who are looking for ways in which to incorporate sustainable concepts into mainstream planning should pay particular attention to green roof systems. A recent study by Pennsylvania State University indicated that green roof technology retained 32.9% of total rainfall over a thirty hour period. This means that green roof systems have the potential for delaying storm water runoff from flowing directly into storm water treatment facilities wherever they are situated.

By delaying the storm water from flowing to the treatment facilities green roof systems provide them with the opportunity to process the water safely and efficiently. In some suburban areas green roof systems eliminate the need for storm water treatment facilities all together. For instance, the Ford Motor Company has recently installed a massive 10 acre green roof on the top of its suburban plant in Dearborn Michigan. The green roof system acts as a, “natural filtration system, with excess storm water collecting in retention ponds before flowing into the nearby Rouge River” (Muller, 2003). Without the green roof system, Ford would have had to shell out roughly \$35 million for an on site storm water treatment facility. A study conducted by Weston Solutions Inc. confirms that green roof systems contribute substantially to an overall reduction in conventional buildings’ energy costs. The study shows that a reduction in temperature of 3 to 7 degrees on a roof top surface can equal a 10% reduction in air conditioning requirements. The study further goes on to say that,



Figure 1

“greening the rooftops of all city buildings (in Chicago) would result in nearly \$100 million in annual energy savings” (Weston). Green roof systems also absorb less heat. A green rooftop can’t get hotter than 80+/- degrees in the summer months, whereas conventional roofs can reach up to 140 degrees (eco-roofs, 2004). Alone, green roof systems can specifically reduce storm water runoff, lower energy and building operating costs and also replace valuable green space.

Together, urban planners can incorporate green roof systems into a new certification process produced by the United States Green Building Council called “Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design” (LEED).

Anatomy of a Green Roof

So, what exactly is a green roof system? The best way to understand what green roof systems are is to understand what they’re not. A green roof is not a

typical roof. All of the roof tops today in urban and suburban areas are for housing vents, locating satellite dishes or internet beacons, and are typically off limits (fig 1). Some roofs in an urban setting might have access via fire escape or other means of entry, but rarely are they accessed or used. In fact, they are often referred to as “dead zones”, because although it is an area that people could theoretically use they have never been associated with land use practices, until now. A green roof system seeks to revitalize this dead zone by turning it into a thriving area of life. William McDonough, author of *Cradle to Cradle; Remaking the Way we Make Things* (2002) says that conventional rooftops are the most expensive parts of a building to maintain because of the direct exposure to ultraviolet rays. The same ultraviolet rays absorb solar energy, which causes the temperature to rise considerably inside of the building. “They also contribute to the ever increasing surface area of impervious surfaces, (along with paved roads, parking lots, sidewalks, and buildings themselves) that contribute to flooding, heat up cities in the summertime...and deplete habitat for many species” (McDonough, 2002). Interested planners can counteract all of the negative aspects associated with conventional roofs by implementing green roof systems.



Figure 2

Types of Green Roofs

There are two different types of green roof systems that planners can implement into their surroundings. The first type is referred to as an *Intensive* Green Roof. The Intensive Green Roof is used for recreational and leisure purposes as well as housing areas for heating and cooling vents (Fig 2). This form of green roof is ideal for areas in cities where other green space is limited. They could be installed on the top of large commercial buildings or perhaps even on the tops of parking garages. The other type of green roof system is called an *Extensive* Green Roof. This type of roof is not used for recreation or leisure activities and is generally the more economical of the two. Extensive Green Roof systems use a shallow bed of soil and a fine layer of Sedum. Sedum is a carpet like material used to cover the bed

of soil (Fig.3). It is constructed using many layers: the original roof, waterproof membrane, drainage system, fabric filter, growing medium, and vegetation (Fig 4). Studies show that by adding a waterproof membrane along with a green roof system, the life of the roof can last twice as long, or forty years (Copeland, 2004). An Extensive Green Roof is almost identical in appearance to an Intensive Green Roof in terms of materials needed for construction. The only difference being that an Intensive Green Roof system sometimes needs more structural retrofit to be done to the underside of the roof before it is installed. As Nancy Solomon, author of *Vegetation Systems A-top Buildings Yield Multiple Environmental Benefits* (2004) explains, “With deeper beds, intensive systems (add) additional soil and taller vegetation (which) translates into higher roof loads, so additional structural support is often necessary”. This is

where prices can skyrocket for a green roof system. An Extensive Green Roof is already two to three times more expensive than a regular roof. Regular roofs are constructed for about \$4 per square foot, while extensive green roofs are somewhere between \$8-10 per square foot (Carlson, 03). By adding structural support to the underside of a roof, depending on the amount needed, it could drive up the cost considerably.

LEED and Green Roof Systems

The United States Green Building Council (USGBC) has incorporated green roof technology into its Leadership in Energy and Design (LEED) rating system. The LEED rating system is a program that uses green building technology as a basis for new building construction. LEED comes in four levels. A project can be LEED certified, LEED Silver, LEED Gold or LEED Platinum. The rating system is broken down into five main categories; sustainable sites and landscaping, energy and atmosphere, water efficiency, building materials and indoor environmental quality. There are a total of 69 points from all of the five categories. In order to obtain certification of LEED Silver, a project must fulfill 33-38 of the 69 points. The basis behind the LEED rating system is that there are prerequisites

for each of the five categories. For instance, in the sustainable sites and landscaping category the prerequisite is for sedimentation and erosion control and “a plan that conforms to best management practices of EPA’s Storm Water Management for Construction Activities or local standards and codes, whichever is more stringent” (City of San Jose, 02). There are many other prerequisites to be fulfilled ranging from the prohibiting of smoking in and around buildings to zero chlorofluorocarbon (CFC) release. After the prerequisites are fulfilled for each category, the planners or developers get to choose from a menu of options in each of those five categories (Palmer, 2004). Green roof systems fall within the menu options of the sustainable sites and landscaping category, specifically

under the sixth and seventh headings, “storm water management” and “landscape and exterior design” in the menu of options. The San Francisco Department of the Environment has chosen LEED Silver for all buildings seeking certification in the city. According to Mark Palmer who is the green building coordinator for the City and County of San

Francisco, “green buildings are designed, built, operated, and even deconstructed and retro fitted to have less of an environmental impact, save financial resources, and provide healthy and productive work environments” (Palmer, 2004). Mark and his office staff are using the USBC’s LEED rating system to redesign the way in which the public and private sectors think about how they design new buildings.

REB, LEED Pilot Projects, and Green Roof Systems

Since the incorporation of the Resource Efficient Building ordinance (REB) in 1999, San Francisco has been able to address some of the goals of the City’s sustainability plan. The REB ordinance established the city’s first “green building program, which instituted mandatory green building measures for all new and major renovation projects for city-owned or leased facilities” (SFgov, 2004). The REB ordinance also

mandates that city buildings adhere to several resource efficiency requirements including “water conservation, energy efficiency, indoor air quality, recycling and waste and debris management” (SFgov). Since the passage of the REB ordinance the department has created nine pilot projects to demonstrate “innovative techniques, building materials, landscaping methods, and other resource-efficient building systems” (REB website).

There are nine projects REB has enabled. Two of the nine projects are the Eco-Center and Department of Environment offices which are using non-toxic paint, recycled carpet, and innovative flooring to demonstrate how to renovate an older structure in an environmentally sensitive manner. Another project is the Moscone West Convention Center Expansion, which

is recycling construction and demolition debris in order to minimize the amount of waste being sent to landfills. The Visitacion Valley Clubhouse will feature water-saving toilets, energy efficient and natural lighting, locally produced clay tile, non-toxic paints, and the reuse of construction debris. The Golden Gate Office Building will be demolished, the debris

recycled, and an exemplary office tower built in its place. Laguna Honda Hospital will be demolished and rebuilt, integrating environmentally sensitive features into both its design and operations. The Islais Creek MUNI Maintenance and Operations Facility will showcase green building features such as natural lighting, high-performance window glazing, and recycled building materials. The 23rd and Treat State Park will incorporate natural lighting, recycled construction materials, non-toxic paints, and landscaping with native plants.

Finally, the new California Academy of Science building will feature many green building techniques including natural ventilation, alternative power sources, energy efficiency, water conservation, and an impressive Intensive Green Roof System that will be used as an education center for the many benefits that green roof systems provide. This project and all of the above mentioned projects are being created using the



Figure 3

USBC's LEED Silver rating system.

The California Academy of Science Building

The California Academy of Science (CAS) building is one pilot project that stands out from the rest. The building is undergoing renovations at the present time, and should be completed by 2008. Among other green building techniques, the new (CAS) building will be mostly recognized for its unique design of an Intensive Green Roof System. Architect Renzo Piano has created a design whereby the green roof is intricately woven into the surrounding slopes of the natural environment (Fig.5). The roof will blend the building into the natural environment, creating a stunning building in both appearance

and functionality. "The most striking architectural feature of the new Academy will be the undulating, living roof. Inspired by the natural world, the undulations will read as "hills" against the surrounding landscape"

(calaacademy.org). Aside from preventing an estimated 2 million gallons of storm water runoff from flowing into Golden Gate Park annually, the green roof will also provide habitat for animals, and will be planted with drought resistant native plant species that will require little maintenance. The roof will also serve as an exhibit to promote the awareness of green building design. Green roof systems are the most visual aspect of green building and the green roof on top of the California Academy of Science will be the most direct representation of how progressive building techniques can work within a city. Citizens, students, architects, and planners throughout the Bay Area will be able to gain first hand knowledge of the benefits associated with green roof systems from Piano's green roof. When completed, the California Academy of Sciences will be among the top green building sites in the world. It will give the San Francisco Department of the Environment

a strong reference to the benefits of all aspects of green building, and could also legitimize a Department of the Environment as a cornerstone for all cities (urban and suburban) seeking sustainable ways to make their environments more livable for their citizens.

Progressive Ideas that Bridge the Gap

When looked at alone, green roof systems appear to be a natural fit for the tops of buildings and homes. The plant species thrive on top of the waterproof membrane and the extensive and intensive green roof systems require very little maintenance. They reduce storm water runoff by as much as 40%, create green space area that can

be used for recreation and leisure activities and also create an animal habitat at the same time. These objectives that green roof systems promote are great for both urban and suburban

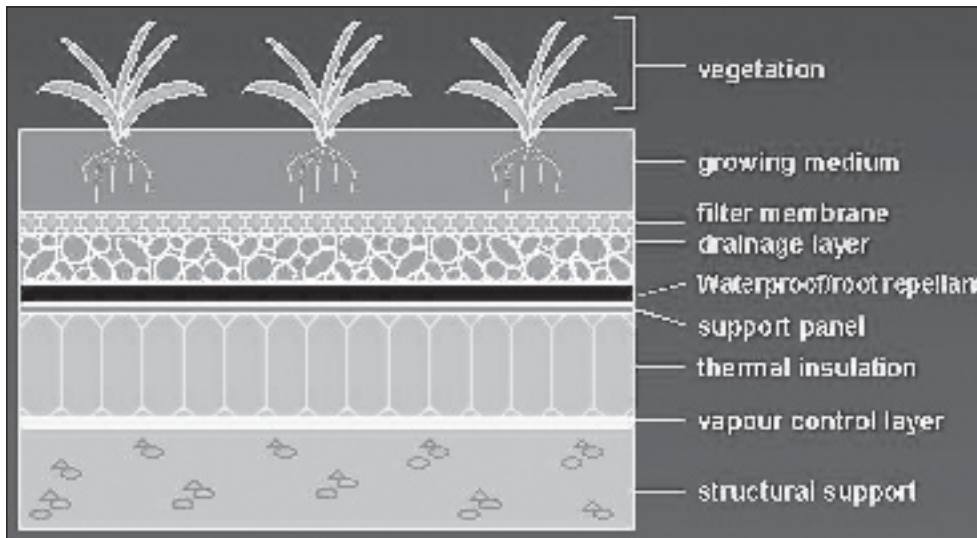


Figure 4

cities. What town would not want the added benefit of green space, animal habitat and storm water treatment? Both suburban and urban town planners can use this technology to their benefit in a variety of settings. In a suburban context, town halls and residential housing are great places for green roof technology. In an urban context, large scale commercial buildings, parking garages, apartment buildings and residential buildings can all add green roof technology and benefit from them as well. Green roof systems do not have to be thought of as only providing benefits for urban areas; they know no boundaries and are really a universal tool that any place which suffers from urban/suburban blight, constant flooding and high energy costs can benefit from. When combined with the LEED rating system, green roof technology adds to an already progressive system of measurement. In my opinion, Renzo Piano's incorporation of a green roof into the green building

design of the CAS building will be the bridge that conservative planners need to come across to progressive planning ideas. It has been a much anticipated dream of mine that planning will become a more unified process, and that ideas of sustainability will firmly take root in the minds of planners everywhere. I truly believe that green roof systems are the bridge that will enable planners from around the world to become unified in promoting what are the best ideas for global cities. Wishful thinking leads me to believe that if my dream can be realized and green roof systems are the bridge,

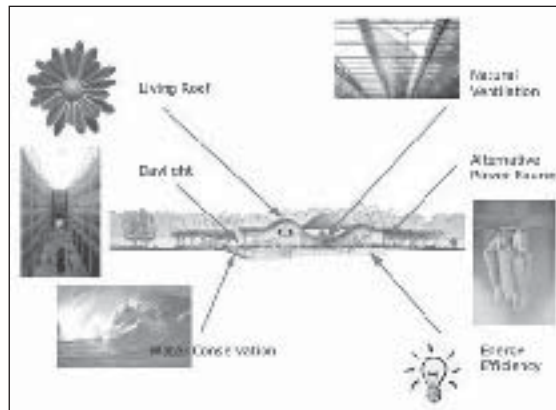


Figure 5

that maybe there can be a national and international planning consortium that promotes the ideas of green building through the implementation of the LEED rating system. I think this is what interests me the most about the field of planning. That there are such great ideas like green roof systems and the LEED rating system that shape the way people think about cities. I feel as though I have in my hand the key to a sustainable future. By writing about these progressive ideas, I hope to unlock the potential that planners have in creating more livable cities.

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FIGURES

Figure 1, 2, 3. Michigan State University. Conventional Roof, Intensive Roof, Extensive Roof http://www.hrt.msu.edu/faculty/Rowe/Green_roof.htm

Figure 4. Greenroofs.org A Cross Section of a GRS. Picture. <http://www.greenroofs.org/index.php?page=aboutgreen>

Figure 5. California Academy of Science Website. New Academy/The Roof. 2003. <http://www.calacademy.org/newacademy/theroof.php> 9 November 2004

For Hunger Proof Cities: Sustainable Urban Food Systems

Aly Pennucci

Literature Review

For *Hunger Proof Cities: Sustainable Urban Food Systems* addresses the growing problem of hunger and malnutrition within cities around the world. Focusing on food as a human right and not a consumer product, this book looks at the role of the state as well as individual urban dwellers in making this paradigm shift happen. They suggest that to do this people living in cities need to have more control over how and what types of foods are produced distributed and consumed. These collections of essays provide an overview of several approaches towards this goal.

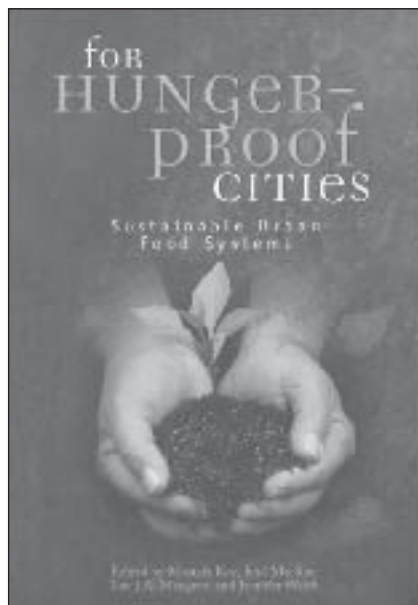
Using the United Nation Food and Agriculture Organization's (UNFAO) definition of food security, *For Hunger Proof Cities: Sustainable Urban Food Systems* addresses the growing problem of hunger and malnutrition within cities around the world. The UNFAO defines food security as "food being available at all times; that food be accessible to all people; that food is nutritionally adequate in terms of quantity, quality and variety; and that food is acceptable within the given culture. Only when all these conditions are met in place can a population be considered 'food secure'" (1). Focusing on food as a human right and not a consumer product, this book looks at the role of the state as well as individual urban dwellers in shifting the way we think and act on the issue of food security. The book is a collection of essays, many of which were presented at the International Conference on Sustainable Urban Food Systems in 1997 (4). Drawing on experiences and expertise from a diverse group of players (including academic researchers, local activists, policy makers, etc.) the book provides an overview of the different processes

and tools needed to strengthen and secure urban food systems.

The contributing authors cover a variety of topics which the editors have broken out into eight themes: concepts of urban food security, local food systems, urban and community agriculture, accessibility and urban food distribution, ecological and health concerns, engendering the food system, the politics of food and food policy and a discussion on food democracy. Overall the book provides a conceptual framework in which we can better understand urban food security by acknowledging the complexity of the issue and therefore the need for a diverse set of solutions.

Because of the growing populations in cities, and particularly the growth of poor people living in cities, the need for sustainable urban food systems has never been greater.

The authors argue that by setting up more sustainable urban food systems the health and well being of city dwellers will improve drastically with access to fresher more nutrient rich foods which, in turn creates processes that minimize the cities impact



on the environment. People in general and specifically those living in urban areas have become too removed from the process of food production and have, as Graham Riches points out, “become disempowered and deskilled in their capacity to produce their own food” (206). Drawing urban dwellers back into the process works to refocus the issue of food as a social good. Conventionally food production and distribution is thought of in a rural context; this book addresses food issues as relevant in an urban context and looks at the distinct needs of city dwellers.

The book discusses how globalization, specifically the shift from local to global food production, has impacted the environment. The impact that came up most frequently is the increase in our dependency on fossil fuels as our food travels halfway around the world before hitting our grocery stores and tables. The solution is simply to shorten the distance between where food is produced and where it is consumed. One suggestion is developing more urban agriculture. Several papers are case studies of cities around the world, where there are both informal and formal urban gardening programs. Angela Moskow and Harahi Gamez Rodriguez both focus on urban gardening in Havana, Cuba. Moskow discusses how urban gardening not only helps to close the gap between where food is produced and consumed, but also discusses how to improve the quality of the food available (particularly to lower income citizens) as well as enhancing the community as a whole through neighborhood beautification. Rodriguez picks up on this position of community benefits as she focuses on urban agriculture in a city park, which she explains will provide food and beautification while concurrently addressing issues of deforestation and river pollution in the area.

A.W. Drescher presents the flip side to this suggestion of urban agriculture by presenting a case in Lusaka, Zambia, where the land being used for household urban gardens was heavily polluted and was poisoning the citizens. This paper acknowledges that in order to create sustainable urban food systems land, air and water pollution must be addressed. In order to grow food in urban and periurban areas, we need inputs that are not contaminated. Drescher suggests a combination of solutions: connecting urban growers who live in non-polluted areas with those in highly-polluted areas in order to share food; providing better education on why you should not grow on polluted land; better labeling to inform people of the toxin level in their food; and implementing real producer responsibility

to prevent further pollution and to provide help in the clean up process.

Many of the papers focus either directly or indirectly on the social implications of urban food security. Overall the book argues that food security is very much a social justice issue and that until we address it in this way we cannot truly affect change. In his paper *Food Policy for the 21st Century: Can It Be Both Radical and Reasonable?*, Tim Lang states, “We need to recognize that the central driving force in the food economy is the desire to make money out of food. As humans, we may think of food as an issue of need; economically it is a commodity for greed” (217). To me this is the most central argument: in order to create more sustainable food systems food needs to be recognized as a basic human need and right. This, coupled with Elaine Power’s discussion of the absolute link between social and environmental justice, goes to the heart of the problem.

By using specific case studies involving social and environmental inequities the authors emphasize the problems in the current system. Several papers look specifically at examples of social inequities within the food system. Some focus on issues of gender, age (youth) and class. Other papers focus on distribution mechanisms or specific environmental problems. Giving us these specific examples from around the world illustrates the severity as well as the commonality of the issues. Although the problems in Canada are not identical to those in Zambia, the problems can be tied to the globalization of food systems and the removal of urban dwellers from the process. Additionally, the solutions suggested worldwide tend to highlight the need for greater local control of food production, distribution and consumption.

Reading this book gave me the foundation to begin exploring the issue of urban food security further. I loved that I was provided with a diverse set of problems, ideas and solutions from writers with different perspectives and experiences in the field. I would recommend this book to other readers because it lays out the argument for why we need stronger more sustainable urban food systems in an accessible and compelling manner.

Little Kabul

Narges Gardizi

Throughout my life I have been torn between two cultures that have both played a significant role in my life. I am an American born, Afghani Muslim woman. As a result of my background, I have always been fascinated with the migration and assimilation of my people that has ultimately lead to my existence here in America. I grew up in America and far away from my roots in Afghanistan, however the area of “Little Kabul” in Fremont, California has provided me with a chance to identify with these roots and has helped me learn what it is to be Afghan. This paper is to give others a chance to experience the struggle of the Afghani immigrant and the development of their new home in America called, “Little Kabul.”

One of the greatest aspects that have created the United States of America is its rich diversity of peoples, cultures, and religions. Foreigners, from Spain, Europe, Africa, China, and many other lands have all contributed into the building of America. If these numerous peoples did not immigrate to the states, America would not be what it is today. America is famous for its diversity, and rich abundance in varieties of culture and religion, which is a result of massive migration from different countries. Many of the immigrants such as the Irish and Jews, came here to escape harsh situations such as starvation and genocide.

One group of Immigrants that have had a great impact on certain parts of America including Los Angeles, New York, Washington, and Fremont is the Afghani immigrant. The Afghani immigrants migrated throughout the world, particularly to America in massive numbers during the cold war in the 1970's to escape political, and religious discrimination. In the years prior to the cold war, there was migration, but very little. They came to the States for a new chance, and a new life. Throughout the years they have learned to both assimilate and ultimately grow into a very strong, united, and large community in California, much like the community they had back home in Afghanistan.

War background

In the late 1970's America was fighting in what was called the Cold War against communism. Though many

countries were involved in this Cold War, the primary countries were Russia, America and Vietnam. It was in 1979 that Russia went into Afghanistan, and ultimately occupied the country. The war on Afghanistan was for Russia to try to gain greater access to both Iran and Pakistan and also to the Arabian Sea. Afghanistan was to be used as a buffer state for easier access to India and the Indian sea as well. Other reasons also revolved around the issues of oil and control.

During this time Afghanistan became an Allie with the United States. America then funded them and sent weapons to help fight the Russians. As a famous Afghan revolutionary Amacha Massood put it, “It was America's weapons that were used, but the Afghan blood that was shed”(Magnus, Naby, 58). The country united to defend itself. Future northern alliance soldiers and other Mujahid (Freedom Fighters) groups assembled to defeat the Russians. The Russians then began to destroy anyone who stood in the way of their plans for the takeover of Afghanistan.

They began assassinations of teachers, doctors, lawyers, political leaders and followers, college students, and anyone with any type of education or mentality that would threaten their plan. You were either with them, or against them. Anyone who seemed even slightly educated or opinionated was destroyed. Fauzia Mohammadi, described a student revolt at the University that was violently put down in 1980 (Mohammadi, 2004). The entire crowd of students was shot at, and the survivors were then taken to prison, some of whom

have still not been found. Young children who seemed to have the potential of being brain washed were sent to Russia to be trained in schools. This type of oppression and mass genocide caused about sixty percent of the population to flee from the land that for centuries has been their home. They left all their belongings in hopes that they would one day return.

The American dream

The immigration process took different steps, to the eventual goal of reaching America. Most of the first wave of immigrants from Afghanistan migrated to refugee camps or neighborhoods within the countries of Pakistan, Iran, and India. Eventually with the fall of Khomeini, who was the leader of Iran around that time, the borders of Iran were closed to Afghan immigrants.

Those who had the capabilities, resources and money were able to eventually leave these refugee camps and spread out through Europe, particularly Germany, and Italy. As noted before the vast majority of the refugees fled the country with nothing, leaving all wealth and resources behind. These families then were forced to put together what money they did have and send sons over to Europe, while the parents and daughters stayed behind. This was in order to give at least one member in their family the opportunity for success so that they would hopefully succeed and return later for the rest. Whether in Europe or in Refugee camps within the Middle East, there was one dream common among the Afghani refugees. This was the dream of the wondrous country of America. The rumors that they had heard in Afghanistan even prior to the war, took toll. The beautiful country of freedom, where money was abundant, people did what they want, and every night was a party became the goal to the wondering people. This led to a vast number of Afghans in the early 1980's to migrate to America.

During the migration to America, the state of California became a very popular place to go to. For years

even back home, many of the Afghani's had heard the description of the state where the sun is always shining, where Hollywood and the Movie stars resided in, images of nothing but "fun in the sun." This in turn made California, particularly from the city of San Francisco all the way to Los Angeles, the goal of most of the immigrants.

The majority of immigrants came in family units. The average family consisted of perhaps grandparents, mother, father, and young children. Out of this family unit, the ones who could work were the father and sometimes the mother (depending on how young the children were). The children were immediately put in school, as a result of education being of great

importance to Afghani culture. In Afghanistan they had free schools, but ironically only the rich would attend. Universities were only found in the cities. The city, however, was not easily accessible by most of the country. Therefore the rich (who were the people who usually lived in the city) attended school. The poorer classes lived



outside the city in the countryside. The poorer classes also had to work to survive and could not afford the time for school. Those poorer classes who did attend, gained credentials that overall had no meaning, due to the class system that was present within Afghanistan. When these poor rural families got to America they took advantage of the school systems and their wide range of accessibility, and equal opportunities.

Among the families was usually a father (who lacked adequate English skills or credentials) that would have to get a job to help his family survive. These men were forced to go into the job market at minimum wage to make ends meet. The jobs ranged from cab drivers and vendors to businessmen.

This process was a great revolution for the Afghans. People from every class in Afghanistan were now together, something that would never have happened back home. For the first time, the rich and the poor from every ethnic group in Afghanistan was starting to come together at the same level in society. It was

the first time in Afghani history, that a person's last name and where they lived had no significance on their status or success in life.

Fremont and urban issues

The Afghani communities began to disperse throughout the Bay Area and Los Angeles. In the Bay Area, Afghani immigrant's patterns concentrated in the South Bay, particularly Fremont. In the early 80's, Fremont was barely a city; what was lacking was a sense of community. Fremont began a new housing program through the incorporation of section A (Mohammadi, 2004). Brand new homes that were affordable were being built in Fremont, Union City, and Hayward. This was a great opportunity for the Afghans. Not only was there a great abundance of homes, but they were also provided with government aid. This was necessary in that the Afghani Immigrants were a group that migrated with literally nothing as far as materials and money went. Many of the immigrants that came to the Bay Area were approved for housing and medical aid, particularly in the area of Fremont or rather Alameda County as a whole. Not all were accepted for the government aid. However the city of Fremont was still a good opportunity due to the extremely low prices during that particular time. It was then that the community of Afghans in the Bay Area began to build itself.

This sparked the beginnings of "Little Kabul." Stores started to be opened along the strip of Fremont blvd and Mowry Avenue. It began with just a couple of Kabob shops, and within years bread markets opened, gift shops, rug shops, Halal Meat shops (Kosher meat), wedding halls, and Mosques. By the early nineties (about ten years after settling in Fremont) the majority of Fremont blvd became Afghani owned.

As the community began to grow in Fremont, there was a need for an organization or committee to be able to represent Afghans in the city. This is how organi-

zations such as the Society of Afghan Professionals (SAP) began. This organization is one that deals with urban, religious, and political issues among the Afghani community in Fremont. Issues ranging from having Muslim burial grounds and Mosques, to concert halls for entertainment, and celebrations for holidays were all handled by the SAP and other organizations that they cooperate with.

The current urban issue today that the SAP is working on, is to call the Area of Fremont blvd and Mowry Ave "Little Kabul." SAP has proposed this to the city of Fremont, and this issue is still under work (Mohammadi, 2005). According to city regulations when a certain number of businesses are all of one type, this can be done, much like China town. The Afghan



Leaders of the community are pushing for this neighborhood that is currently known as "Centerville" to be officially given the title of "Little Kabul" (the unofficial nickname it contains now) due to the growing numbers of Afghans in the area.

The leaders of the community claim that future generations need some sort

of symbol and identity in order to recognize the struggle in which they went through to get here. They even have hopes of setting a monument and community center one day. CBS did a story on "Little Kabul" when this urban issue first came out in 2000. One of the leaders was asked by CBS what the significance of this name change is, he responded to CBS by saying, "The new generation coming after us must have something to remind them of how their parents came to the United States with empty hands." (Amerie, 2000)

This issue sparks great controversy, and this is part of the reason it has not passed yet. Other ethnicities such as White, Latino, Indian, and many others in Fremont are arguing that calling the neighborhood Little Kabul could start a separation in the different ethnic groups of Fremont. This shows a fear of domi-

nation, within the city against the other ethnic groups. What the future holds for this urban policy is unknown, for now.

Assimilation?

By the late 90's and early 2000 the area of Fremont blvd and Mowry Ave became a social gathering place for Afghanis throughout the Bay Area. The Afghan community here became so large overtime that it became well known throughout the Afghan communities in America. The people learned how to shape the city around there culture. The Starbucks on Mowry Avenue became very much like the coffee shops in the city of Kabul, where you would find the men playing chess after dinner, and a heavy inflow of young Afghanis looking to socialize with there own peoples and culture.

The younger generations are fluent in English and fully assimilated into the culture of the western world have been successful in America. The average Afghan family has at least one or two children who are attending some sort of college/university system. The parents, who came here and worked minimum paying jobs, were able to put their children through school so that they can have a better chance of success.

Today, young Afghans own numerous branches of Loan offices and Mortgage offices in Fremont, such as Community One Financial, Pamir Travel, and Golden Key. The Hospitals in Fremont are swarmed with Young Afghan men and women trying to fulfill their dreams of being doctors, creating a new generation of Afghan Americans trying to succeed in order to pay due to the parents that left everything they had to save their lives. Though assimilated into western culture, the Afghani cultural ideals have far from left the minds of the younger generations. The family unit and the culture and religion of Islam are still top priority over their goals to assimilate. It is as if they fear by westernizing too much they may loose the Afghan identity.

Life styles assimilated, not cultural and religious mentality. This was in most part due to the racial discrimination that many of the younger generations faced in school, on the job, and in the streets (Fidaye 2004). This caused the younger generations to rebel against what they viewed as discrimination. It was at this time

in the late 1980's that the infamous ALT (Afghan Lewani Tribe) was formed. Lewani means crazy in the language of Pashto, which is the national language of Afghanistan. Farsi is the second language of the country, though everyone can speak it. ALT was a sort of gang that was formed in Fremont that caused much turmoil for the Fremont police. This lasted for about ten years, they were created to help Afghans in the community feel safe among those who did not accept them. When I asked an x-member about it he responded,

"It wasn't a gang, it was just a way that we defend- ed one another and made friends. We only fought when other people would start it. You were a baby when we were fighting to simply exist in America. For you it's

easy now, they didn't like us then." (Amini, 2005)

For younger generation of Afghans there is a great need to identify more with their culture and religion. The Star bucks scene that had become a social gathering very quickly was

not enough for the young generations (Mohammadi, 2005). Eventually this lead to the need for a more Afghani or at least Middle Eastern scene, so Hookah cafes became popular and replaced the Starbucks scene. This is a place where coffee is served, it contains Music and of course the Hooka pipe, the Middle Eastern Tobacco pipe. Though they are Arabic owned, Hooka cafes have provided a sense of culture for the younger generations. Persian, Arabic, Indian and Afghan scenes all were more preferable. Instead of American clubs, younger generations flocked to Middle Eastern clubs, which developed in response to the demand for their culture to be present for all aspects of their life. They identified with the Muslim community, and American culture as well as the Afghan community. Children like myself grew up with an Afghani household, a Muslim religion, and an American life style outside of the house. Assimilation to the American lifestyle was hard. Many had to be able to balance these three life styles. As I always say, "I can never be Muslim or Afghan enough for Afghanis, and I will never be American enough for the Americans."

Conclusion

Afghanistan is still a nation. With the soviet invasion in 1979 Afghans have ever since been wandering in search for some place that they can call home.

They went from homeless, to refugee camps scattered throughout the world, then to America to become successful Afghani Americans. They have assimilated to western life, and have also been able to successfully keep their culture alive. The Russians were eventually pushed out with the defeat of the Red Army in 1989 (Magnus, Naby 45). The country then faced a civil war among its own people. Now since September 11th and

the fall of the Taliban, the country has been finally freed for the first time since 1979. However for those generations who fled during the war, have a new home, in what resembles what they had left behind. For those who migrated to Fremont, “Little Kabul”, is now the home to this new generation of Afghani-Americans.

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Photo Essay: Following the San Francisco Waste Flow

Sanra Ritten



Diego Felix, one of the nearly 770,000 people living in San Francisco, sips his morning daily cup of coffee out of a disposable paper cup.



Disposable and recyclable products make up a large portion of San Francisco's waste stream.



As of July 1, 2004 the basic monthly rate for weekly collection of a 32-gallon container was \$18.90. Blue and green carts are picked up at no additional fee as part of the "Fantastic Three" recycling program.



A new fleet of trucks which are divided into two components; one side for trash and the other for recyclables, were designed to facilitate more efficient pick-ups and transfer.



San Francisco's waste management system is entirely privatized. Sunset Scavenger and Golden Gate Disposal are 100 year old companies which are currently in business. They are now both subsidiaries of Norcal Waste Systems, a California based corporation.



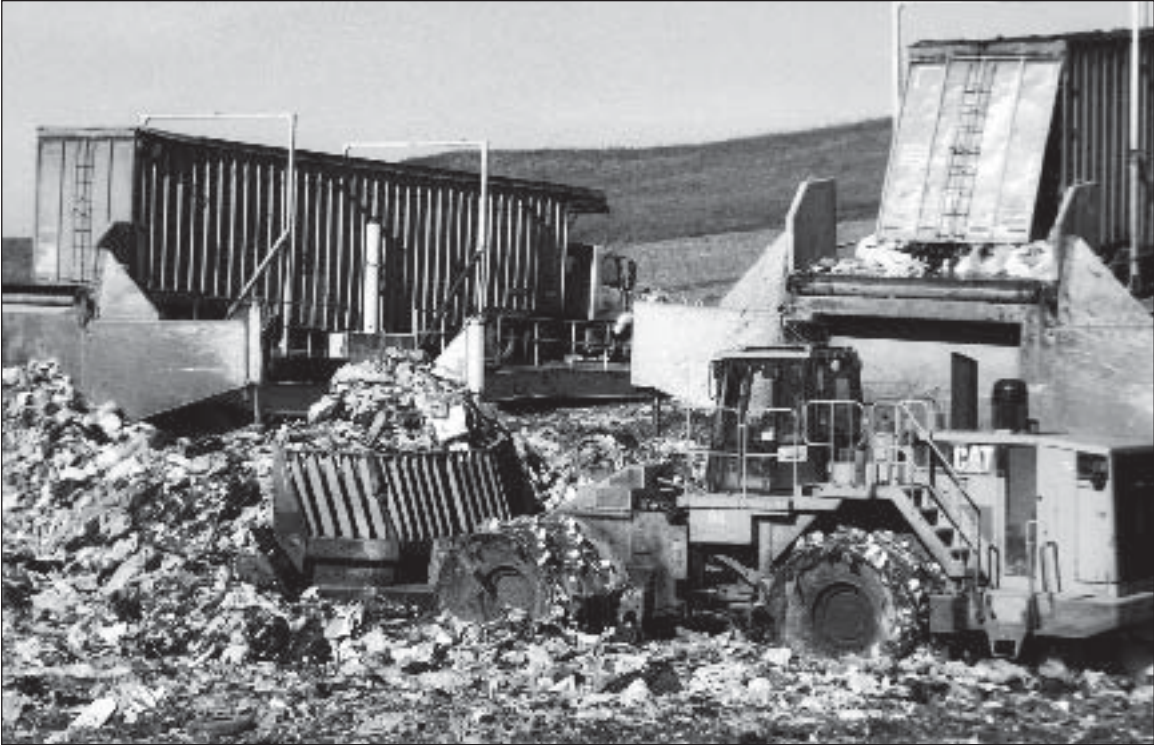
After collecting trash on the designated routes for the day, the waste is taken to the San Francisco Recycling & Disposal Inc.'s Solid Waste Transfer and Recycling Center.



The waste that is thrown into the black trash bins (whether it is recyclable or not) is compacted at the Transfer station and then loaded into large trucks.



These trucks transport 2,600 tons of solid waste produced in San Francisco per day to the landfill. Each truck holds about 26 tons, and each of the 30 trucks in the fleet makes an average of 3 trips a day.



San Francisco has an agreement with the Sanitary Fill and Waste Management Company of Alameda County which provides for the disposal of up to 15 million tons of San Francisco's municipal solid waste in the Altamont Landfill. At 1 million tons per year, the current rate of disposal is estimated to last through 2010.



Once a site has been properly covered with dirt, it usually takes about 6 months before the trash begins to slowly decompose.

Obesity and the American Way

Rocco Pendola

Originally I wrote this paper in the fall of 2003, on the heels of a widely publicized study that linked – with statistical significance – prevalence of overweight and obesity with the density of one’s built environment (Ewing et al 2003; McCann and Ewing 2003). Since that time, other researchers (Frank et al 2004; Lopez 2004; Saelens et al 2003b) have presented their own findings on this emerging topic. The following paper is an updated form of my original work, adapted to include a synthesis of recent academic literature on overweight, obesity, and physical activity (as it pertains to urban planning) and a streamlined set of recommendations for future research as well as implementable goals geared towards achieving a built environment conducive to increased physical activity. Statistical analysis has also been added.

“The American way of life is not negotiable”

George H. W. Bush at the Earth Summit on the Environment, Rio de Janeiro 1992.

In an October 2003 article for *Orion Magazine Online*, author James Howard Kunstler sideswiped the American public referring to them as “crypto-human land whales waddling down the aisles of [the] local supermarket in search of Nabisco Snack-Wells... and other fraudulent inducements to ‘diet’ by overindulgence in ‘low-fat’ carbohydrate-laden treats.” Kunstler trashes the car culture that defines America, labeling our cities “hollowed out ruins,” lamenting the fact that “our towns have committed ritualized suicide in thrall to the WalMart God,” and calling our predominant way of life in suburbia “isolating... and neurologically punishing, and from which every last human quality unrelated to shopping convenience... has been expunged.” After citing the numbers, Kunstler connects the current epidemics of obesity and depression to the nation’s predominant spatial arrangement, car-dependent suburban sprawl. Despite the biting prose, when it comes to the physical condition of Americans, Kunstler is hardly hyperbolic.

Obesity and Overweight

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) (1998), and hence the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

(CDC), defines overweight as body weight in excess of a predetermined benchmark for desirable weight, in relation to height. Obesity refers to extremely large amounts of body fat relative to lean body mass. According to the National Health and Nutrition Examination Surveys (NHANES) from 1999-2000 and 2001-2002, 65.1% of adults, twenty years of age and older, were overweight or obese, 30.4% were obese, and 4.9% were extremely obese (Hedley et al 2004). Among children and adolescents, ages six to nineteen, 31.0% were either overweight or at risk for being overweight, while 16.0% were overweight (Hedley et al 2004).

The consequences of what the CDC often refers to as “the obesity epidemic” are staggering. Obesity accounts for the deaths of approximately 280,000 U.S. adults per year (Allison et al 1999). Mokdad et al (2003) reported significant associations between overweight and obesity and numerous diseases, including diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, asthma, and arthritis. Annual U.S. healthcare expenditures related to obesity morbidity totaled \$92.6 billion in 1998 (Finkelstein et al 2003). And recent studies comparing healthcare costs between obese and nonobese patients revealed that obese patients had more hospitalizations, prescription drugs, and outpatient visits, making them considerably more expensive to service than the nonobese participants (Raebel et al 2004; Wee et al 2005). It should come as no surprise that

obesity and overweight has made the shift from a private, individual problem to one of public concern.

The Relationship between Urban Form, Auto Use, and Obesity and Overweight

It has become common knowledge that physical inactivity puts one at greater risk of being overweight or obese. Many blame environmental factors for lack of physical activity and an increasingly sedentary American lifestyle (Berrigan and Troiano 2002; Brownson et al 2001; Giles-Corti and Donovan 2002; Handy et al 2002; Humpel et al 2002; Jackson 2003; Kreyling and Ketcham 2001). In a multidisciplinary review of literature from the fields of public health, urban planning, and urban design, Frank and Engelke (2001) conclude that in order to improve public health, physical activity must increase. Planners, they contend, can help achieve this through construction of a built environment conducive to transport options other than the automobile. An abundance of research shows that urban form, often measured in terms of density and land use mix, dictates travel behavior. Specifically, mixed-use environments produce higher rates of walking and biking and less driving than their low-density, sprawling counterparts (see, e.g., Cervero and Gorham 1995; Holtzclaw 1994; Saelens et al 2003a).

San Francisco supports the hypothesis that density drives rates of auto use and ownership. In an examination of 2000 U.S. Census data for San Francisco, I found significant correlations between population density and the percentage of residents utilizing a car (driving alone or carpooling) for their work commute (Pearson $r = -.631$, $p < .001$) as well as the percentage of households that have no vehicles available (Pearson $r = .707$, $p < .001$). Population density is also significantly correlated with the percentage of people commuting to work using options other than the private auto or carpool, i.e. public transportation, walking, bicycle, etc. (Pearson $r = .648$, $p < .001$). When controlling for poverty status, the relationship between density and auto use/ownership held. For every increase of 1,000 people in population density, the number of people utilizing a car for the work commute drops by one-half of one percent ($p < .001$). Similar outcomes occurred when controlling for median household income as well as when using the percentage of households with no vehicles available as the dependent variable in a multiple regression analysis (for all regression results, see Table 1).

The notion that this association between urban form, transport behavior, and physical inactivity leads to obesity and overweight has been a source of speculation in countless academic articles for years. Researchers have only recently substantiated the link with hard numbers. The following section reviews that literature.

A Body of Evidence

Ewing et al's (2003) study was the first to statistically associate urban form with the obesity and overweight epidemic. It was also the first study of its type to saturate the mainstream media, making its way onto the front page of countless newspapers and to the top spot of many nightly newscasts over the course of several days in the summer of 2003. The widespread reporting of this scholarly finding led to numerous misinterpretations and overblown accounts by sensationalist news outlets. Case in point, an August 28, 2003 *Reuters*' story bearing the headline: Urban Sprawl Makes Americans Fat, Study Finds.

What Ewing et al actually did find differs substantially from what much of the popular media reported. In their words, "urban form *could be* significantly associated with some forms of physical activity and with some health outcomes" (Ewing et al 2003, 54; italics added). Using data from the 1998, 1999, and 2000 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) surveys, Ewing et al employed metropolitan and county-level sprawl indexes as independent variables against outcome variables, such as BMI, obesity, minutes walked, and hypertension. Ewing et al found significant associations between all four dependent variables mentioned and the county sprawl index, while at the metro level, only minutes walked was significantly associated. Lopez (2004), utilizing BRFSS data, corroborates Ewing et al's findings. According to Lopez, as urban sprawl increases so does overweight and to a larger degree, obesity.

At the same time as providing fuel for smart growth advocates and the New Urbanists, Ewing et al added much needed statistical support to the hypothesis that the built environment impacts health. Frank et al (2004) followed with a study that did not rely on aggregate data from BRFSS; rather they were able to conduct research through a travel survey in the Atlanta, Georgia area with 10,878 participants. Obesity was the dependent variable with several

sociodemographic, physical activity, and built environment measures serving as independent variables. In the end, Frank et al found that the likelihood of obesity increased by 6% for each additional hour spent in a car per day; obesity likelihood decreased by 4.8% with each additional kilometer walked per day; and for every quartile increase in land-use mix, likelihood of obesity fell by 12.2%.

Saelens et al (2003b) compared two communities in San Diego, one defined as a “high-walkability neighborhood,” the other a “low-walkability neighborhood.” This study combined the use of an accelerometer with the self reporting of physical activity performed, height, and weight. Participant perception of their built environment provided measures for environmental characteristics, including residential density, street connectivity, and aesthetics. Sample size was 107 (n=54, high-walkability; n=53, low-walkability). Results support the hypothesis that urban form influences health, specifically obesity, as more low-walkability residents met overweight criteria than high-walkability residents. 60% of low-walkability residents were overweight, while 35% in the high-walkability neighborhood were. On average, those residing in the low-walkability neighborhood had a higher BMI than that of high-walkability residents, but this comparison stopped just short of being statically significant (p=.051).

While Sturm and Cohen (2004) did not measure urban form against overweight and obesity, their work still warrants a mention in this section. Sturm and Cohen employed Ewing et al’s (2003) sprawl index against outcome variables, such as self-reported medical conditions and mental health disorders. They discovered no association between sprawl and mental health, but an increase in sprawl did accompany an increase in chronic medical problems.

Researchers have identified a possible pathway to weight-related ill health: low density → auto use → BMI/obesity → chronic health ailments. Table 2, utilizing the Bay Area in California as a representative example, illustrates the front end of this contention.

Promoting Active Daily Living

In response to the obesity epidemic, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) encourage development of a pedestrian and bike-friendly built environment through its Active Community Environments Initiative (ACES). ACES looks to increase physical activity, and thereby enhance the public health, by promoting walking and cycling as opposed to driving (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2003). As this paper suggests, a caucus is emerging that supports strategies such as those backed by the CDC to combat sedentary living and the resultant health concerns. But in order for real change to occur, the will to act must spread from a select group of academics, public health officials, and interest groups such as Smart Growth America (a national consortium of 100 advocacy organizations committed to promoting compact, mixed-use development to foster walking and biking) to a broader coalition of policy makers.

Indeed, a shift in national attitude away from the prevailing ethos of car culture is imperative.

The growing discussion regarding the instability of world oil markets and the eventual end of the so-called era of cheap oil offers a golden opportunity (Deffeyes 2003; Goodstein 2004; Heinberg 2003; Roberts 2004). Whereas most of the talk emanating from Washington on the subject revolves around the promise of alternative fuels

such as hydrogen, substantial dialogue, focusing on the reduction of driving, must commence. If indeed sedentary living and excessive driving is a primary contributor to obesity and overweight (and this epidemic is on a similar trajectory as a global oil crisis), the prospect of changing American lifestyles heads off numerous painstaking consequences of the status quo. This approach centers on what is an unlikely national policy of putting pedestrians, cyclists, and public transportation first, a strategy that could – in theory – lessen oil dependence at the same time as increasing physical activity and presumably improving public health. I will focus on cycling as transportation and exercise.



Visual 1 – Bicycle way, autos not permitted. Connects Market Street to Church and Duboce corridor in San Francisco.

Pucher (1997) offers inspiration in a study of German cities. Despite perceived philosophical and spatial differences between Europe and the United States, a goal to increase walking and cycling in America is not unrealistic. Germany, for example, has the second highest level of car ownership in the world (behind the United States), and has suburbanized substantially. Pucher debunks the contention that lengthy travel distances in America act as a barrier to walking and cycling. Forty percent of all urban trips in the United States are two miles or less, and 28% of all trips are one mile or less making the bicycle a viable option (Pucher 1997). Public policy and the national mindset are the true obstacles.

Retrofitting existing roadways to provide safe passage for cyclists and reduce the automobile's *carte blanche* remains an implementable ambition, even in low-density environments. Pucher offers suggestions from Germany:

Fahrradstrassen (bicycle street): special bicycle streets which permit auto traffic but give bicyclists strict priority in right-of-way over the entire breadth of the street.

Fahrradschleusen (bicycle way): special lanes at intersections that allow bicyclists to pass waiting cars and proceed directly to the front. Cars stop at a considerable distance from the light as bicycles fill up the roadway between the intersection and the car stop line; bicyclists also enjoy an advance green light at such intersections (Pucher 1997).

The city of San Francisco provides fine domestic examples of how planning decisions can make otherwise hostile environs friendlier to potential and present cyclists.

Thanks in large part to persistent activism and the monthly Critical Mass bike rides, miles of bike lanes have been striped throughout San Francisco since the early 90's; hundreds of bike racks have popped up in the city; bike commuters are on the rise; and bike-related injuries are down (Gajda and Markowitz 2005). While no direct causal link has been established, bike lanes are thought to be a major contributor to the fact

that 1 in 25 San Francisco adults commute regularly by bicycle (San Francisco Bicycle Coalition 2003). After the city striped bike lanes on Valencia Street,

bicycling increased on that street by 144 percent. In fact, cyclists now account for 16% of vehicles during rush hour on Valencia (Department of Parking and Traffic 2000).

While traditional bike lanes are an asset, planners must consider going beyond the typical solid white line that separates the bike lane from motor vehicle lanes. Coupled with special advantages (*Fahrradstrassen* and *Fahrradschleusen*), bikes lanes, painted a color distinct from the street with

strong protective buffers between the cyclist and auto traffic, should be encouraged. Thanks to such design specifications, motorists may view bike lanes as more than an impediment to right turns. Special delineation of bike lanes may prompt car drivers to give them the same respect as they do sidewalks. It is not too often that one sees cars driven or parked on city sidewalks, as is frequently the case with bike lanes.

Street routing that allows for fast, direct routes for bikes, but not cars offers cyclists calm alternatives to high traffic thoroughfares.

Pollard (2003) suggests wholesale changes in planning to combat sedentary lifestyles. He calls for an overhaul of current zoning regulations, many of which prohibit mixed-use land development, thereby rendering walking and cycling impractical and dangerous in such environments. He also suggests that governments discourage driving by removing parking provisions and altering the design of roads to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists as opposed to high-speed automobile traffic (Pollard 2003).

Alterations to the built environment and adjustments to the flow of auto traffic in the form of bikeways, bike streets, bike lanes, advance green lights for bikes, direct routing, and other modifications make cycling and walking a more attractive option than it would be otherwise. Implementation is the challenge, as most local governments operate within a system where driving is a way of life.



Visual 2 - Direct route for bicycles, not for cars, Valencia at Tiffany in San Francisco's Mission District.

Recommendations for Future Research

Overweight and obesity is no longer an individual concern. Its economic impact in terms of health care costs, its connection to other life-threatening and life-altering diseases, and the rapid growth of overweight and obesity in children has elevated its status to epidemic levels. Overweight and obesity is raising substantial public concern. A convincing body of research implicates car-dependent environments and their association with physical inactivity as a primary contributor to overweight and obesity. A popular remedy calls for construction of more compact urban and suburban settings that mix land uses in an effort to increase rates of walking and cycling for both utilitarian travel and leisure time activity. Such a goal requires cooperation between urban planners, urban designers, architects, and developers, the public health sector, government entities, as well as advocacy and citizens groups.

In order for this cohesion to occur, further research is required on the subject. Researchers must replicate the types of studies cited in this paper across the country in various settings, taking into account variables that might be working in concert with, or separate from, urban form to bring about such alarming rates of overweight and obesity. While the hypothesis that urban form drives levels of physical activity and physical activity drives physical well-being is gaining credibility, this issue is hardly one-dimensional. How much of a role do age, education, socioeconomic status, and other neighborhood factors (such as availability of healthy food choices) play alongside urban form in contributing to the epidemic? For instance, what impact does a concentration of fast food restaurants have on

one's weight? In San Francisco's high-density Mission District, the population is diverse in terms of ethnicity and financial resources. Do residents with less money eat at the inexpensive fast food chains, concentrated at busy corners, while those with means select healthier choices? And if so, what are the age, race, and health differences between the two groups living in the same built environment? This query, tweaked for local conditions, can be applied anywhere in America.

Saelens and et al's (2003b) comparison of what they defined as "high-walkability" and "low-walkability" neighborhood warrants further efforts. Drawing distinctions between exurban, suburban, close-in suburban, and varying types of city neighborhoods (i.e. the high-density Nob Hill or North Beach districts of San Francisco versus the relatively low-density Sunset or Richmond districts) offers researchers the ability to hone in on exactly what role density and proximity to work, school, and services has on one's weight and general physical well-being.

Of course, a limitation of the recommendations made in this paper is that the ideas focus on San Francisco and Germany. I would argue that initiatives and design specifications enacted in these places can be duplicated, even in suburban settings, but further study on best practices for fostering walking and cycling (and less driving) from divergent locales is necessary.

Hard research on obesity and overweight in relation to urban planning concerns is in its infancy, but the epidemic is not. Intense scrutiny of our built environment's association with public health is required if urban planning hopes to play a role in curbing what might just become the number one cause of preventable death in the United States before the decade is out.

Table 1 Multiple regression models for auto use/ownership levels in San Francisco*

<u>Independent Variables</u>	Dependent Variables					
	<u>% car commute</u>			<u>% hh no vehicle</u>		
	Coefficient	t	p	Coefficient	t	p
¹ Population density	-.490	-9.551	<.001	.647	14.119	<.001
Poverty status	-.679	-5.391	<.001	1.228	10.917	<.001
² Population density	-.446	-7.738	<.001	.535	10.319	<.001
Median hh income	.217	4.324	<.001	-.452	-9.993	<.001

*By census tract, N = 176.

¹ % car commute: Adjusted R² = .481, F = 79.727; % hh no vehicle: Adjusted R² = .717, F = 216.273

² % car commute: Adjusted R² = .452, F = 71.112; % hh no vehicle: Adjusted R² = .697, F = 196.074

Table 2 Bay Area Counties, Density-Driving-Obesity link

Bay Area County	Density [^]	% using car to commute [•]	Prevalence of obesity ^{••}	Expected BMI ^{••}	Expected weight ^{••}
San Francisco	16,634.4	51.3	14.9%	25.72	164.24
Alameda	1,957.4	80.2	17.0%	25.97	165.84
San Mateo	1,574.4	85.1	17.1%	25.99	165.94
Contra Costa	1,317.9	83.7	17.6%	26.05	166.30
Santa Clara	1,303.6	89.5	17.3%	26.01	166.04

[^]population per sq. mile/land area, U.S. Census 2000

[•]U.S. Census 2000 ^{••}Source: McCann and Ewing (2003)

Table 3 Transportation Choices in European Cities

City	% trips by bike	% trips by foot	% trips by transit
Muenster (1994) ¹	32	22	10
Bremen (1991) ¹	22	21	17
Freiburg (1992) ¹	19	21	18
Hannover (1990) ¹	16	23	22
Cologne (1992) ¹	11	30	17
Nuremberg (1995) ¹	10	24	21
Munich (2000) ²	12	NA	NA
Copenhagen (2000) ²	20	NA	NA
<u>Amsterdam (2000)²</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>NA</u>	<u>NA</u>

¹Pucher (1997)

²Greater London Authority (2001)

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Urban Action is proud to present the first steps outside the paper boundaries of this journal. While the journal remains our main platform, three high quality Urban Action movies were made by Tony de Jesus, adding new media to our focus on the urban environment. They are located at: bss.sfsu.edu/urbanaction/video/jesus

Tony has always been fascinated by moving images. His first love was of swashbuckling action-adventure movies, but his intellectual and emotional growth eventually led him to documentaries. According to Tony, film and video are an excellent choice for examining the world around us - and for reporting our findings to others because “after all, the world itself is moving.”

Though the nature of the form requires a certain distortion of reality on a framed two-dimensional plane - edited in space and time by the filmmaker - this subjective onscreen truth can be regarded as a powerful tool for analysis in all fields. Just as readers accept that an essay or a book represents a certain perspective, they should also accept video as a tool to gain perspective about a topic. The key is to find an author or director that people can trust.

Feng Shui for Dummies: Four Perspectives of Chinatown is about San Francisco’s Chinatown; the film examines two streets (Grant Avenue and Stockton Street) in terms of their architecture, people, businesses, and transit. Though Chinatown is often thought of as a single entity, Tony’s observations here suggest a chasm between the two streets, one that is larger than the single city block that separates them.

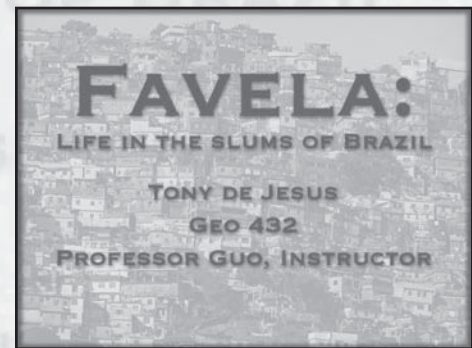
With contributions by Max Jillie, Mary Katherine Hayes, and Zoe Leonard.



FAVELA:

LIFE IN THE SLUMS OF BRAZIL

Favela: Life in the Slums of Brazil looks at the Favelas, or slums of Rio. The Favelas are shanties; the poor inhabit these dwellings on the hillsides, their steep grades making them the least desirable choice for formal development. This is but one way in which economic and geographic realities converge.



Looking at Cities



Looking at Cities examines San Francisco from a Lynchian point of view. Breaking the city down into elements that influential Urbanist Kevin Lynch defined in his landmark work *The Image of a City* this documentary exposes a city that consists entirely of districts, paths, edges, nodes, and landmarks.

With contributions by Paul Bisazza, Max Jillie, Zoe Leonard, George Murry, Christian Samples, and Hanah Snively.

To view the movies go to bss.sfsu.edu/urbanaction/video/jesus on your web browser and click on the titles of the movies. If you would like to get in touch with Tony for advice or inspiration you can reach him at maximalist@excite.com



Fredrick Schermer

What a wonderful surprise Stockholm turned out to be. A city beautifully laid out on many different islands, with days in June lasting longer than any experienced ever before, and a population that is genuinely nice and decent. It hurts a bit as well. Memories of my native country flow abound, and I see through my tourist eyes how it once felt in Holland many moons ago. I recognize a lot more than I had anticipated. I can read the Swedish news papers and get more than the gist of it — though my ears hardly understand a word of what people say. I sense the emotions out on the street — a strong feeling of community, and shared responsibility. Public transit — though mostly privatized it has an outstanding quality. The food — well, okay, it too reminded me of Holland in the seventies and that was a bit disappointing. But wait, wonderful foreign restaurants scatter the town of close to 2 million people.

The elections for the European Union are held this week, and I can read the political posters. One translates loosely into: *Equity is not a free market toy*. What a delightful surprise. No stories on how we can

all get rich quick and how fearful we ought to be. One can taste freedom in Sweden, people are relaxed, and unafraid. No homeless people in the street — though there were some drunks in the street at eleven in the morning. Will the Swedes hang on to their paradise? Or will they squander it away like the Dutch have done in the eighties and nineties just to stay in the thick of the free market? I look at Stockholm, Gamla Stan, the old island in the middle and all the islands around it with newer and newer buildings. The bikes we rented help us move effortlessly across the bridges from island to island on separate bicycle lanes, and when we are a day late returning them there is no extra fee: one of the guys in the rental place is originally from San Mateo who followed his heart and now lives in Stockholm! In Sweden we got a *free* ride too.

Is Stockholm a dream? Are the winters so bad people must hang in there together to get through the long dark days? Or do the Swedes know that it is just a matter of staying the course and not give in to the most promising spin. Sweden tells me there exists a successful track next to the global rat race — it does require community sense, one for all - all for one, but apparently it can still work as long as all of us believe in it.

Our Ecological Footprint: Reducing the Human Impact on the Earth

Charlotte Ely

Literature Review

The objective of Mathis Wackernagel's and William Rees' *Our Ecological Footprint: Reducing Human Impact on the Earth* is to "make the case that we humans have no choice but to reduce our ecological footprint." Because Wackernagel and Rees believe that the "environmental crisis" is not an environmental and technical problem, but a social and behavioral one, they have written a book that challenges the conventional philosophies that are the base of our economic system. By introducing a revolutionary way in which we can determine humanity's impact on the earth, Wackernagel and Rees have also called for changes in the way we view the earth and how we exploit its resources. In effect, *Our Ecological Footprint* provides readers with a powerful indicator, one that not only measures the resources we need to run our households, communities, cities and nations, but one that imparts a tangible vision of societies living according to the planet's carrying capacity. By measuring our footprints, we can learn to live sustainably.

Our Ecological Footprint: Reducing the Human Impact on the Earth by Mathis Wackernagel and William Rees begins with a metaphor: a tale about tiny woodland species of wasp, a mushroom and unsustainable relationships epitomized through greedy, gobbling maggots and a single mushroom with a limited carrying capacity:

"It seems when a wandering female wasp chances upon the right kind of mushroom, she deposits her eggs with in. Almost immediately, the eggs hatch and the tiny grubs begin literally to eat themselves out of house and home. The little maggots grow rapidly, but soon something very odd happens. The eggs in the larvae's own ovaries hatch while still inside their immature mothers...it doesn't take long before the entire mushroom is over-filled by squirming maggots and fouled by their bodily wastes. The exploding population of juvenile wasps consumes virtually its entire habitat, which is the signal for the largest and most mature of the larvae to pupate. The few individuals that manage to emerge as mature

adults then abandon their moldering birthplace, flying off to begin the whole process over again."
(Wackernagel and Rees X).

What do wasps and mushrooms have to do with footprints? The answer to this question is the premise of Wackernagel's and Rees' book. Increasingly, humanity is confronting a daunting predicament: island earth cannot sustain the current and increased levels of economic activity and material consumption and yet that's precisely what we are imposing on the planet (Wackernagel and Rees 1). Economic activity is growing each year. The world population is steadily increasing. More people are consuming more, using more energy and more land to satiate increasingly ecologically and socially devastating lifestyles, hence leaving larger and larger footprints. Humanity is *eating itself out of house and home*. Essentially, *Our Ecological Footprint* argues that if we are to maintain our mushroom, we must learn to live and progress sustainably.

Before presenting their readers with a detailed explanation of what exactly a footprint is, Wackernagel

and Rees address various themes that reoccur throughout the text and are significant components to the ecological footprint concept. First *the obvious and profound: we depend on nature*. In order to grasp what the ecological footprint is and what it hopes to accomplish, it's necessary to recognize, as David Susuki said, "we are the environment. There is no distinction" (Bioneers 2000). I remember when my hippy artist Nona told me I was stardust as kid, and in a way that's true—as Wackernagel and Rees point out, "we replace almost all the molecules in our bodies about once a year. The atoms of which we are made have already been a part of many other living beings" (Wackernagel and Rees 7). Humans are connected to the planet and, like every other organism, need the planet. We depend on water and air and food and wood and photosynthesis and the detritus and all the cycles that maintain ecological integrity. Wackernagel and Rees address this point in order to make the following argument: "If we are to live sustainably, we must ensure that we use the essential products and processes of nature no more quickly than they can be absorbed." By degrading the planet, we degrade our livelihoods and ourselves.

A second component of the ecological footprint concept is that it challenges the conventional dream that human enterprises can infinitely expand on a planet of finite resources. While human ingenuity may be boundless, earth's resources are not and no matter how inventive and capable we are as a species, we are constrained by space, time and the indifferently, unanthropic processes of the planet. In other words, we must learn to live within our means. The ecological footprint is concerned primarily with physical space, e.g. how much land is required to provide for activity x. This concept is at the core of the ecological footprint concept because it encompasses the two most pressing problems that the ecological footprint addresses: 1) the valuable land, like prime agricultural land, ecosystems such as wetlands and forests, etc., that is *consumed* in order to support every day human activities and 2) the unequal distribution of that land *consumption*, which brings us to the third major component.



The Ecological Footprint addresses the disproportionate land-area available to world's rich and poor countries. Even though the people living in the North constitute a much smaller percentage of the global population, they consume much more. In fact, Wackernagel and Rees write, "if everybody lived like today's North Americans, it would take at least two additional planet Earths to produce the resources, absorb the wastes and otherwise maintain life support" (Wackernagel and Rees 15). That ratio is greater now and was likely a gross underestimation at the time this book was written. According to www.rprogress.org, if everyone were to live like me (a recycling, composting, used-clothes-buying vegetarian who either buses or walks to school everyday and buys locally grown, organic produce), we'd need three additional planets. The industrialized countries are using abhorrently more than their share of the world's resources—the Ecological Footprint acknowledges this and questions how this inequality can be remedied. What does this disparate

consumption imply for developing countries, which are compelled to live as industrialized countries do? Wackernagel and Rees say that it simply cannot be done, maintaining "to recognize that not everybody can live like people do in industrialized countries today is not to argue that the poor should remain poor. It is to say that there must be adjustments all around and that...continuing on the current development

path will actually hit the less fortunate the hardest" (Wackernagel and Rees 16).

The themes of depending on nature, living within our means and addressing the resource disparity coalesce in the first sentences of the first chapter: "Many of us live in cities where we easily forget that nature works in closed loops. We go to the store to buy food with money from the bank machine and, later, get rid of the waste either by depositing it in the back alley or flushing it down the toilet" (Wackernagel and Rees 7). "Big city life" is a major focus of *Our Ecological Footprint*; in fact, Wackernagel and Rees *explore* how society perceives the pinnacle of that human achievement "the city"

in order to introduce the thinking behind Ecological Footprint analysis (Wackernagel and Rees 9). They believe that something fundamental is missing from the popular perception of the city, and that this something can be found by seeking answers to two questions: 1) What would happen to any modern city or urban region if it were enclosed in a glass or plastic hemisphere that let in light but prevented material things of any kinds from entering or leaving? 2) How large would the hemisphere have to become before the city and its center could sustain itself indefinitely and exclusively on the land and water ecosystems and the energy resources contained within the capsule? (Wackernagel and Rees 10). What's missing from the popular perception of the city is the fact that the "ecological locations of (cities) no longer coincide with their geographic locations," meaning that the physical space that cities require to function expands well beyond the county line: "Modern cities and industrial regions are dependent for survival and growth on a vast and increasingly global hinterland or ecologically productive landscapes" (Wackernagel and Rees 29). The ecological footprint is easily understood by visualizing the amount of agriculture land, timber land, ranching land, mining land, oil drilling land, etc. etc. that goes into a typical city activity like driving to the store to buy some meat and veggies for the B.B.Q. you're throwing on your new deck. The ecological footprint is directly connected to sustainable development in cities because it helps us understand the ecological requirements for a sustainable society. And by understanding the ecological requirements for a sustainable society, we can also begin to understand the social and environmental consequences of our current way of living.

The ecological footprint recognizes that the conventional approach to economics, the development paradigm, consumption patterns of industrialized countries, escalating global population, the South's increasing demand for goods and services and the unequal consumption patterns between the North and South have severe implications for the health of the environment and the health of societies. Wackernagel and Rees write the following:

"Our life support system...is being eroded at an accelerating pace...deserts are encroaching on ecologically productive areas at a rate of 6 million hectares per year; deforestation claims over 17 million hectares each year; soil oxidation and erosion exceed soil formation by 26 billion tons per year; fisheries are

collapsing; the draw-down and pollution of ground water accelerates in many places of the world; as many as 17,000 species disappear every year; despite corrective action, stratospheric ozone continues to erode; industrial society has increased atmospheric carbon dioxide by 28 percent...At the same time, many people are unable to meet even their most basic requirements...20 percent of the human population enjoys unprecedented wealth, including (most) people in the "North." However, 20 percent earning less than 1.4 percent of the global income endures conditions of constant malnutrition" (Wackernagel and Rees 32).

Our Ecological Footprint focuses on these impacts and has created a method to understand and limit the ecological and social destruction wrought by modern life. If we can calculate how much land is required to enable typical human enterprises for a given number of people and then compare that to the amount of available land, we can determine whether or not we are living within our means, and if we're not, we now have a powerful tool to help us alter our lives accordingly.

Wackernagel and Rees define the ecological footprint as "an accounting tool that enables us to estimate the resource consumption and waste assimilation requirements of a defined human population or economy in terms of a corresponding productive land area" (Wackernagel and Rees 9). In other words, where do the resources needed to supply the current consumption of modern cities come from? And, once those resources have been converted to wastes, where do they go? The idea is that for every item of material energy consumption, a given amount of land in one or more ecosystems must provide first the resource itself—water, food, energy, etc.—and second the "waste sink," e.g. landfills for our trash, rivers to dump water dirtied by industrial processes, sewage treatment facilities for human waste, etc. (Wackernagel and Rees 63).

Our Ecological Footprint presents a way of calculating this transaction. First, the footprint estimates the average person's annual consumption of particular items based on national or regional data: divide total consumption by population size. Then, the footprint estimates the actual land area consumed by each person for each major item consumed, e.g. how much land does it take for Jolly Joe America to enjoy his ice cream cone? We've got to consider where the ice cream came from (the cow that produced the milk, the processes that converted the milk to ice cream: the sugar—it production history—the strawberry flavor—how the

artificial flavors were synthesized, etc. etc. etc.) and the cone and how both were transported from where they were made to Joe's local Baskin Robbins. *Whew*. Lastly, the footprint computes the total ecological footprint of the average person by summing all the ecosystem areas appropriated by all purchased items in his or her annual shopping basket of consumption goods and services. Once we have calculated our ecological footprint, we can begin to think about what we need to do to change. Aside from using the footprint to monitor our lifestyles and make the much-needed changes, *Our Ecological Footprint* also recommends a series changes that each individual must make.

According to Wackernagel and Rees, "the first step toward reducing our ecological impact is to recognize that the "environmental crisis" is less an environmental and technical problem than it is a behavioral and social one" (Wackernagel and Rees xi). As this is the case, their recommendations to resolve our environmental and social crisis have to do with abolishing the "psychological quirks" that pervade the modern way of thinking and hence the modern way of living. They characterize these quirks as 1) the boiled frog syndrome, 2) mental apartheid and 3) the tragedy of the commons. Overcoming the boiled frog syndrome means that people must "detect the gradual but deadly trend in which population and economic growth threaten to boil civilization" (qtd. 139 Wackernagel and Rees). Triumphant over mental apartheid requires that we break down the psychological barrier between modern humans and the rest of the world; we've got to understand that "the fate of the ecosphere is the fate of humankind" (Wackernagel and Rees 140).

Reversing the tragedy of the commons (an idea based on Aristotle's belief that "what is common to the greatest number gets the least amount of care") is the third "behavioral syndrome" that keeps us from living sustainably. Wackernagel and Rees agree with Garrett Hardin (the ecologist who introduced the idea of the tragedy of the commons) that we need "mutual coercion, mutually agreed upon" achieved via social contracts to govern the resources we all need to live. In addition to fighting these behavioral and psychological sustainability inhibitors, Wackernagel and Rees generally call for "making cities more livable while increasing their density and becoming less auto- and resource-dependent" (Wackernagel and Rees 141), proposing sustainable initiatives such as planning for high-density, high-amenity downtown restoration and promoting the use of renewable energy in commercial

and housing developments—all these initiatives would help make cities exist within their ecological limits.

The authors have based the findings and theories of their book not only on the research and ideas of many other environmental scientists, environmental and social justice activists and theorists, but on concrete, calculable facts, often obtained through government and even corporate databases.

Our Ecological Footprint: Reducing Human Impact on the Earth is based on substantial, defensible ideas, numbers and statistics; this is one of the reasons that it is such a persuasive text. So although many of the ideas presented in the book were not new to me, learning about how the footprint is calculated was enlightening. I was really impressed by how the footprint uses the "system's" own numbers to identify flaws within the system. Reading and reviewing this book made me realize what it takes to *sustain* cities and my own daily activities. I'm sitting here on a Saturday afternoon, typing away on my computer without any lights on, without listening to music and contemplating unplugging my digital clock because, you know, I'm not sure if I really want to be responsible for the land consumed in order to provide me with energy that I'm not really needing at this particular moment in time.

So—I unplugged the clock. And when I take a sip from my cup of organic tea, I start thinking about footprints, footprints everywhere. This book has me beginning to understand the extent of the earth that's used to fuel city life and my own life; and in a way that lesson is a burden because now I feel I have less control over how what I consume affects the earth. My consumption as city dweller is far too integrated into this ecologically and socially destructive madhouse for me to be able to comfort myself by thinking that buying organic and walking every where really has a significantly beneficial impact on the earth. I'm not saying I'm going to buy my fruits and veggies at Costco and drive a hummer because nothing matters, but that the problem is too big for just my hands. Realizing this has made me love and detest this book. I've gotten over the "psychological quirks" Wackernagel and Rees claim hinder sustainability and I think if every person who read this review read the book and overcame the quirks, we'd be heading in the right direction. But until the system starts thinking in terms of footprints, our mushroom won't be safe.

The East 14th Street South Area Development Strategy: How San Leandro Hopes to Engineer Change

Stephanie Brown

When populous Bay Area cities such as San Francisco, San Jose, and Oakland announce plans to encourage density and diversity of development in a particular neighborhood or district; introduce pedestrian friendly, “human scale“, landscapes; or promote use of public transportation, those interested in urban design and land use planning might be intrigued, but would hardly be surprised. Bay Area cities of such scale and prominence have been employing such progressive concepts for a number of years. However, when a smaller city such as San Leandro decides to implement forward thinking principles such as those listed above, heads should be turned and headlines made. In response to concerns over the quality and quantity of new businesses and residential development along San Leandro’s East 14th Street Corridor voiced by everyone from homeowners and business associations to individual residents and property owners, the East 14th Street South Area Development Strategy was created.

The Development Strategy is a detailed land use, urban design and streetscape improvement plan intended to implement the San Leandro General Plan and other regional planning initiatives aimed at reducing blight and stimulating development along the corridor.¹⁾ The visioning process for the Development Strategy began in December of 2001 when the City Council increased discretionary approval for any change of use or new development proposals in the project area. Subsequently, the City Council directed City staff to begin preparation of the Development Strategy. Resulting from a number of Council meetings, a 15-member Citizens Advisory Committee was created and after an 18-month period of development the strategy was adopted in April of 2004.

To implement this strategy, San Leandro Planning staff, City Council members and the community adopted three new zoning districts. With the guidance these new zoning districts provide, San Leandro hopes to facilitate and engineer progressive change in the nature, appearance and density of retail business, housing stock, and community services located along East 14th Street, effectively transforming it from an auto-oriented commercial strip corridor to a vibrant mixed use area with a balance of commercial and residential uses.²⁾

San Leandro’s plan for development is both forward thinking and respectful of existing business and residential uses. To understand both the causes and implications of the Development Strategy and adoption of new zoning districts, the location and its context in the greater region will first be examined; secondly, current conditions in the corridor which have acted as catalysts for change will be identified; and finally, these catalysts will be compared with the zoning codes enacted to implement change and their overall effectiveness will be analyzed and determined.

The Location

San Leandro is located in the heart of the San Francisco Bay Area (See Image 1). It is bordered by the city of Oakland to the north, the unincorporated area of San Lorenzo to the south, the East Bay Hills make up the city’s eastern border and the San Francisco Bay its western edge.

East 14th Street, which runs north/south through San Leandro, is part of a series of urban sections of State Highway 185 in the East Bay Area (See Image 2) The street begins as El Camino Real in San Jose, changes to Mission Boulevard in northern Fremont, and after

passing through San Leandro becomes International Boulevard in Oakland. Although it is technically and historically a State Highway and does serve a considerable regional transportation function, the portion of East 14th Street that runs through San Leandro also serves as the city's central spine, as it passes through Downtown.

Current Conditions Overall

As identified in San Leandro's General Plan, the East 14th Corridor no longer functions as a State Highway, has strip commercial facilities that are out of date, businesses that suffer from haphazard development and lack of off-street parking, and oddly shaped or small parcel sizes present a development restraint due to the large space often needed to be economically viable. Bicyclist and public transit options do exist but are limited along the corridor and East 14th Street's wide right-of-way, limited crosswalks and long city blocks make for an unfriendly, if not hostile, environment for pedestrians.

In addition to these immediately obvious issues it has been determined that the overall urban design of buildings, size and type of streetlights, and shape, size and setback of lots in the corridor, as well as a lack of street furniture and paved medians, does little to attract business or development to the area.

Demographics

When San Leandro's General Plan was updated in 2000, and compared to U.S. Census data from the same year, several new facts about the city were brought into

focus. During the 1990s San Leandro grew by 16.5 percent, while housing stock grew only by 3.6 percent, creating a high demand for housing and driving up rent.

In addition to this lack of new housing, existing housing stock saw a rise in value of 80 percent between 1998 and 2001, effectively pricing out many potential residents. Census data also showed that the fastest growing age groups in San Leandro were the 'baby boomer' generation (ages 45-54) which increased by 57 percent, and the 'frail elderly' population (over 85) which increased by 53 percent. In addition,

a substantial growth of 26.6 percent took place in the elderly population group between the ages of 75 and 84. That these three age groups dominate overall age demographics of San Leandro shows a strong need for

senior housing for those already 75 and older, and for those in the 'boomer' generation who decide to stay in San Leandro. In addition, 35 to 40 percent of San Leandro's households are considered 'low income' or 'very low income'.³⁾ The needs of these households have raised demand for affordable housing. Placement of more dense senior housing and subsidized affordable housing along the East 14th

Street Corridor will not only provide a more appropriate and useful form of housing for seniors but will also open up existing single family home stock for new families.

Auto Dependence

Auto-centric Bay Area cities like San Leandro, many of which saw the bulk of their development during the post World War II era housing boom, can often be characterized by their "strip" type



Image 1. San Leandro's Location within the San Francisco Bay Area



Image 2. The East 14th Street South Area Development Project Area (Shaded)

retail centers, prominently featured parking lots, and lack of options for pedestrians, bicyclists, and those who use public transit. All of these features cater to the convenience and freedom of automobile movement, or Level of Service (LOS), but can lead to a deficit in development that is both dense and of a “human scale“. The East 14th Street Corridor today possesses many of the above noted qualities. Development along the corridor has long been considered a product of its regional transportation function and as a result many businesses are auto-oriented. In fact, of the 125 retail goods businesses along the corridor and its immediate side streets, 44 are auto-related.⁴⁾ These include auto dealerships, repair shops, parts dealers,

businesses along the corridor, reflect that the area is somewhat weak as a retail location. The Development Strategy suggests redevelopment of areas of marginal retail space into residential or mixed-use and that further retail development be more concentrated and diverse.

Cohesion and Character

A lack of cohesion exists between many businesses within the corridor, both in form and function, and can detract from the area’s overall draw as a commercial center. To facilitate development of retail and business services in distinct concentrations, or “nodes“, the Development Strategy suggests that the various districts of the East 14th South Area be highlighted and made more prominent. Creating such nodes will bring a variety of businesses and consumers to specific districts based upon the products or customers they seek. The Development Strategy recognizes a number of “cultural centers“ of retail activity based around particular ethnic groups and aims to cultivate their growth and attractiveness.



Image 3. The northernmost portion of the East 14th South Area

etc. Additionally, many of the other retail developments along the corridor are auto-centric, such as drive-thru fast food establishments and businesses with large and prominently featured parking lots. In order to redefine East 14th Street as a center of commercial and civic activity, the focus must be shifted from that of adequate traffic flow and abundance of automobile services to that of pedestrian friendliness and a diversity of businesses and services that, when combined, will draw people out of their vehicles, and onto their feet.

Retail and Office Development

Rents in the corridor for retail space range, on average, between \$1.00 and \$1.20 per square foot. Average office rents range between \$1.00 and \$1.35 per square foot. Both of these figures are well below the average for other areas of San Leandro, and when combined with the lack of diversity in the type of

Transportation

Overall, conditions in the corridor with regard to vehicular transportation are fairly good. Approximately 20,000 vehicles travel through the area daily and experience only minimal delays. The LOS of the area has been determined to be of a B or C level. A level of B indicates 'Stable Operation/Minimal Delays', and C indicates 'Stable Operation/Acceptable Delays'. The San Leandro General Plan states that the City's official goal with regard to LOS is to maintain a level of D or better.⁵⁾ Public transportation in the area is also fairly good with two major bus lines running the length of the development area. Parking, often an issue for downtown areas, was not determined to be an issue, with only 30 percent of available parking being utilized during the business day.⁶⁾ This being said, the transportation issues facing the area are not related to vehicular circulation but rather to pedestrian access. Existing sidewalk widths of 9 to 10 feet on some portions of the corridor are not large enough to provide sufficient pedestrian circulation⁷⁾, which is key in an area looking to improve use of public transportation and 'walkability'. Long distances between crosswalks creates an environment that is unpleasant to pedestrians and encourages jay-walking.

East 14th Street Development Strategy Goals

The Development Strategy outlines three sets of goals, or 'Goal Sets', to be accomplished through implementation of new zoning codes and policies outlined in the General Plan, and within the Development Strategy itself. Goal Set 1 pertains to 'Desired Uses and Quality of Development', such as attracting high quality retail, residential and mixed-use development that is transit supportive and self-supporting. Goal Set 2 pertains to the issues of 'Corridor and District Character', such as creating a distinctive design for the corridor overall as well as for individual districts and neighborhoods located within. Goal Set 3 pertains to 'Streetscape and Transportation' concerns, such as a balance of all modes of transportation that is safe, attractive and efficient and which will better serve businesses and residents in the area, while addressing the needs and desires of pedestrians by "beautifying and enlivening" the streetscape.⁸⁾

Engineering Change: How Three New Zoning Districts Meet the Goals of the Strategy

As the final step in the Development Strategy, and to implement the goals outlined within, the City of San Leandro City Council and Planning staff adopted three new zoning districts in May of 2004. These districts, SA (South Area)-1, SA-2, and SA-3, create a solid framework for all future development within the project area. Each district corresponds to a portion of the project area, SA-1 corresponding to the northern portion of East 14th Street: Southern Downtown and the McKinley Residential District; SA-2 to the more centrally located Palma and International & Cultural Districts, and SA-3 to the most southern Gateway District (See attached map). Each district's use regulations outline those uses that are permitted, those which require a Conditional Use Permit, and those which require Administrative Review. Also noted are permitted hours of operation businesses within each area.

Housing

To address the housing issues brought forth through study of San Leandro's recent demographic change, as well as to create business and demand for the City's desired magnet retail centers, a higher density of housing has become the focus in the new zoning districts. Magnet retail centers refer to commercial clusters that often contain well known, large scale stores and not only attract shoppers who live nearby but also those who live in other neighborhoods and cities. Development of single-family homes has been entirely phased out of all three zoning districts. Within the boundaries of district SA-1, conditionally permitted residential development must be of the multi-family classification and must not be any smaller than 25,000 square feet, and must reside on ground floor next to East 14th Street. In



Image 4. A pedestrian jay-walks due to the distance between crosswalks

this district, live-work, mixed-use residential, two-family residential, and multi-family residential sites of 25,000 square feet or less require administrative review. This zoning discourages development of smaller, "piecemeal" residential buildings in the area and is in keeping with San Leandro's plans for a more dense and defined southern downtown. Zoning district SA-3 has much of the same restrictions on residential development as does SA-1 but without the size restrictions. The centrally located district SA-2 on the other hand, which has been designated as the new residential core of the East 14th Street Corridor, has four of its six permitted uses in the residential classification and all retail and other businesses and services requiring conditional permitting or administrative review.

Auto-Orientation & Dependence

The three new zoning districts address the auto-oriented nature of many businesses along the East 14th Street Corridor and San Leandro's desire to bring visitors to the area out of their vehicles. Within SA-1 any auto-related business or land use, including parking lots and drive up facilities, require a conditional use permit. Car dealerships, which have long been a

prominent feature of this district, have now been phased out entirely from the district's zoning code. District SA-2 does not permit any auto-related business or land use at all. This, again, is in keeping with the City's desire to transform this area into a residential core. District SA-3 is the most liberal of the three with automobile parts, washing, repair, dealerships and rental only requiring a conditional use permit. This creates in SA-3 a new, centralized location for auto-oriented products and services along the corridor and will drastically change the current landscape as existing dealerships and repair shops are phased out of districts SA-1 and SA-2.

Diversity and Density of Retail and Office Development

One of the main objectives of the South Area Development Strategy is to promote and cultivate new and diverse business and retail along the corridor, and the zoning changes San Leandro has made to meet this goal are both progressive and practical. Development of retail and business is allowed in each district, but in keeping with the desire to create distinct nodes of commercial activity, its scale and nature is highly regulated.

Within SA-1 small (2,000 square feet or smaller) cafes, financial institutions, neighborhood/specialty food markets, pharmacies, business and professional offices, business and trade schools, and full service restaurants, among other types of business, are all permitted. Some of the businesses and retail which require conditional use permits are bars, liquor stores, laundry and dry cleaning businesses, department stores, hotels and motels, large scale fast food establishments, schools, tobacco stores, and theaters. Requiring administrative review are businesses such as small scale fast food, supermarkets and large (2,000 square feet or larger) cafes. All of these uses amount to a downtown area that is vibrant and diverse, but which possesses character and individuality. Making it difficult for fast food establishments and supermarkets to move into the



Image 5. Mixed-use residential along central corridor

neighborhood creates an environment that is friendly to small business as well as to the overall "human scale" of buildings that exist in this district.

Within District SA-2 all of the above mentioned retail and business land uses require at least a conditional use permit, and many require administrative review. Administrative review is a form of discretionary review that is held at a staff level, without public comment. This is, again, in keeping with the desire to establish this area as a residential core. In district SA-3, development of larger cafes, restaurants, drugstores, supermarkets and retail services are permitted and smaller scale development such as small theaters and fast food establishments are discouraged through the requirement of administrative review. This is in keeping with San Leandro's goal of creating a gateway district in this area that will accurately define the border between the City and neighboring San Lorenzo.

Cohesion and Character

This goal of the Development Strategy is considerably more subjective and in many ways can be linked to diversity of residential and office development goals. In order to give districts their own distinct attributes and appearance, Zoning classifications for each district create areas with development of varying scale, density and use.

Transportation

The Development strategy does not find any vehicular or public transportation needs that need to be addressed within the East 14th Corridor. It has been determined that future impacts on transportation in the area, as a result of development encouraged by the plan, would be of little to no consequence. Therefore, improvement of the pedestrian environment has been targeted as a main goal.

To implement change in the pedestrian environment a number of requirements have been embedded within the new zoning codes. Minimum setbacks of buildings in

all three districts have been designated at zero feet from the sidewalk. This will create a continuity development along the corridor and will create an environment that is both comfortable and pleasant for pedestrians. Phasing



Image 6. Narrow paved strip between parking lot and traffic along corridor.

out 30, 40 and 50 foot building setbacks, prominently featured parking lots, and lack of continuity of sidewalks, provides a space for pedestrians to walk leisurely and to feel protected from vehicular traffic along the corridor. The introduction of 13 and 13.5-foot sidewalks in the corridor will provide more space for pedestrian circulation as well as encourage use of street furniture such as benches, chairs and public art. Wide sidewalks will also provide space for outdoor seating at cafes and restaurants in the area, a development that would

encourage pedestrian traffic in the area. Additionally, a minimum 5-foot landscaped yard or planter strip shall be provided for any parking facility or other open space area abutting a public street.⁹⁾ This will eliminate the pedestrian's need to jog his or her path along the sidewalk to avoid shallow paved strips such as the one pictured here on the left.

Conclusion

San Leandro's plan for the East 14th Street South Area is both timely and timeless. It addresses the corridor's current problems and issues by encouraging development that is in keeping with some of today's most progressive urban design concepts. Thanks to the Development Strategy's imaginative, yet practical, view of the City's future, the East 14th Corridor can now be seen as an area in transition rather than one with numerous problems and obstacles to overcome. The Development Strategy clearly defines issues facing the corridor as well as plans to address these issues, and through the use of the three new zoning districts, accomplishes its goal of creating a framework for future development. To undertake such a creative and forward-thinking approach to the urban design of its main street is both brave and unconventional for a smaller city such as San Leandro, especially when faced with the current fiscalization of planning caused by recent budget cuts at the state and federal levels. San Leandro's strategy for the East 14th Street South Area is cohesive, coherent, and will hopefully prove to be successful.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 South Area Development Strategy, Introduction, p. 1
- 2 South Area Development Webpage, <http://www.ci.san-leandro.ca.us/sldevsvcse14southstrategy.html>
- 3 San Leandro General Plan, 2.6, San Leandro in Perspective
- 4 South Area Development Strategy, 3.3.3, Retail Space
- 5 South Area Development Strategy, 3.4.1, Vehicular Circulation
- 6 South Area Development Strategy, 3.4.1, Vehicular Circulation
- 7 South Area Development Strategy, 3.4.3, Pedestrian Circulation
- 8 South Area Development Strategy, 2.2, Strategy Goals
- 9 South Area Development Strategy, Section 2-680, Minimum Yards

FIGURES

Image 5 "Photo Simulation of Possible Mixed-Use Residential Along Central Corridor". South Area Development Strategy. April, 2004.

Visitacion Valley and the Third Street Light Rail Line: Is this the Future of Planning in San Francisco?

Ellen Keith

San Francisco's Third Street light rail line (TSLR) is scheduled to be complete in 2005 (SF Planning Dept 2000). The rail line incorporates many aspects of land use planning serving as a great platform to explore current development issues. What follows is a comprehensive critique of the project and its surrounding environments, specifically Visitacion Valley, a process that involves city government, transit oriented development (TOD) opportunities, brownfield cleanup, and the resistance of big-box retailers. The TSLR will be an extension of the current MUNI rail line 5.4 miles into the city's eastern neighborhoods. The rail line will consist of 19 stops all of which will be located in the median, continuing the design currently seen along the waterfront of the Embarcadero (Seattle 2002). Since the project's conception much attention has been drawn to the areas surrounding the rail line, including Bay View Hunters Point, Mission Bay, and Dogpatch. This Southeastern section of the city ends in Visitacion Valley where the line will terminate. With its completion, the rail line will bring a whole new element of public transportation to neighborhoods that are currently being underserved by the city's public transportation system (SF CityScape, 2004).

Visitacion Valley and the Schlage Lock Factory site in particular, are the main focus of this paper. The 20 acre site, which formerly housed the lock factory, remains unused since the 90's and has been the focus of much recent land use debate. The Schlage Lock site has drawn the attention of city planners due to its close proximity to both the rail line and the CalTrain station. The city's eastern neighborhoods are projected to absorb the majority of both the commercial and residential growth in the next decade, and the planning process behind the Schlage Lock site could serve as an example for further TOD in San Francisco (Seattle 2002).

Background

The TSLR is segmented into two phases. Phase one, which is discussed in detail in this paper, will open up the city's previously untapped eastern neighborhoods. This is in accordance with the San Francisco general plan's transportation element which states that transportation should serve to guide development

(San Francisco Planning Department 2000). Phase one, or the initial operating segment (IOS), is projected to cost \$405 million dollars. Funding was provided in large part by proposition B. Passed in November 1989, proposition B served to increase the sales tax by ½ cent. It has since generated 347 million dollars to fund the project (Federal Transit Administration). \$4-5 million of this fund is designated for streetscape improvements, which will create a systematic design theme along the transit corridor (Seattle 2002), by construction of pedestrian friendly sidewalks, lighting, information kiosks, and transit shelters. The line will potentially serve as a more reliable and faster means of transportation than the existing #15 third street bus, which currently transports the area's resident's downtown. The daily ridership is now at 32,400. With the implementation of the IOS 71,000 passengers a day are projected by 2015 (Seattle 2002). The TSRL represents potential to revitalize the Eastern section of the city which previously housed primarily commercial interests. The TSLR project involves transit planning

as well as economic development planning, as seen with the emphasis on TOD. The area surrounding the rail line represents one of the city's largest areas of developable land (Seattle 2002). It is expected to absorb 65% of the city's job growth and 50% of the residential growth (Seattle, 2002). According to the Bay Area Government's "Blueprint for Bay Area Housing", only 16% of San Francisco's residents can afford the median price of a home in the city, priced at \$554,560 (ABAG, 2001). The area surrounding the TSLR has the space and potential to be used to address the lack of affordable housing in the city. The 19 stops will be located along a specifically designed median in the center third street, each about a 1/4 mile apart from the other, increasing accessibility to the surrounding areas and encouraging TOD. With TOD transit use is encouraged through mixed use and intense development in the areas around the rail line. Mixed use residential zoning, or N3, allows for 73 residential units per acre which could begin to address the housing issues San Francisco is facing, in addition to projected population increases in the coming years (Seattle 2002).

Visitacion Valley

Visitacion Valley, with a population 25,000, is an area of working class residents and the site of the currently unused Schlage Lock factory (Stanley 2004). The factory opened in the 1920's and employed many people in the community (Stanley 2004). It shut down in the 1990's, later becoming the operating grounds for a printing press that soon after closed leaving behind additional contamination (Stanley 2004). With the rail line reaching its final construction phase and the existing Caltrain Station which provides rail service to San Jose and its surrounding cities, the adjacent 20 acre Schlage Lock site is prime territory for redevelopment. In 1999 Home Depot

proposed a 108,000 square foot store at the site with 850 parking spaces (SPUR, 2000). As a result, the neighborhood residents, members of the community group Visitacion Valley Planning Alliance (VVPA), joined together to resist the big-box retailers proposed use of the site. Through community action the plan was eventually dissolved and Home Depot was forced to find a new location to develop. Following the Home Depot proposal, the Schlage Lock site has been subject to a variety of ideas recognizing the mixed use potential inherent in the transit rich location of the site. Land use issues are abundant including, building reuse, TOD, infill development, mixed used opportunities, housing issues, zoning, and brownfield cleanup. This project, in conjunction with the completion of the TSLR, has potential to serve as a model



Visitacion Valley

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for other areas along the transit corridor that are being targeted for redevelopment (SF CityScope, 2004). What follows is a history of the players and involved in a planning process that began in 1999 and continues today.

The Planning Process

With the Home Depot proposal in 1999 a number of organizations got involved illustrating the complexity of the process behind land use development. In May 2000 SPUR's urban policies committee published a report containing recommendations and the possibilities inherent in the transit-rich nature of the site (2000). This was in reaction to Home Depot's EIR which was being disputed at the time. For the proposal to be approved the project required a conditional use permit, approval pending that the project was both, "necessary and desirable for the community (SPUR, 2000)."

Home Depot's objectives failed to meet this requirement and Urban Ecology, an organization of

architects and planners, was recruited by VVPA to help develop alternative approaches to the Schlage Lock site. The San Francisco Planning and Urban Research (SPUR) group supported the collaboration between these two groups and noted that Visitacion Valley has, “potential to be one of the cities most livable and affordable neighborhoods (SPUR, 2000).”

Initially, VVPA assessed the situation and needs of the community by giving out 400 surveys to residents. Urban Ecology then lead a weekend workshop forming a community based approach to the design process. From this meeting emerged the idea of using the site as a community center, a focal point that the neighborhood currently lacks. The community sought for the site to be developed with a deliberate design concept, versus the single-use, auto oriented idea originally pitched by Home Depot. What still remained was how to implement the ideas proposed for the Schlage Lock site.

The plan Urban Ecology and community members developed took into account the benefit and potential of the rail line and train depot as a TOD site. The two proposals they generated present a mixed-use approach to the site including housing, building reuse, and other retail possibilities. These community based solutions will better serve residents as a whole, and represent the kind of development San Francisco would benefit from. These proposals would potentially create 770 to 900 jobs for the area, providing more economic development than the Home Depot would have generated as a single use site (SPUR, 2000). This represented the start of a planning process that is still happening. Upon implementation this process will represent community informed planning that will serve to benefit both the residents as well as the economy in Visitacion Valley.

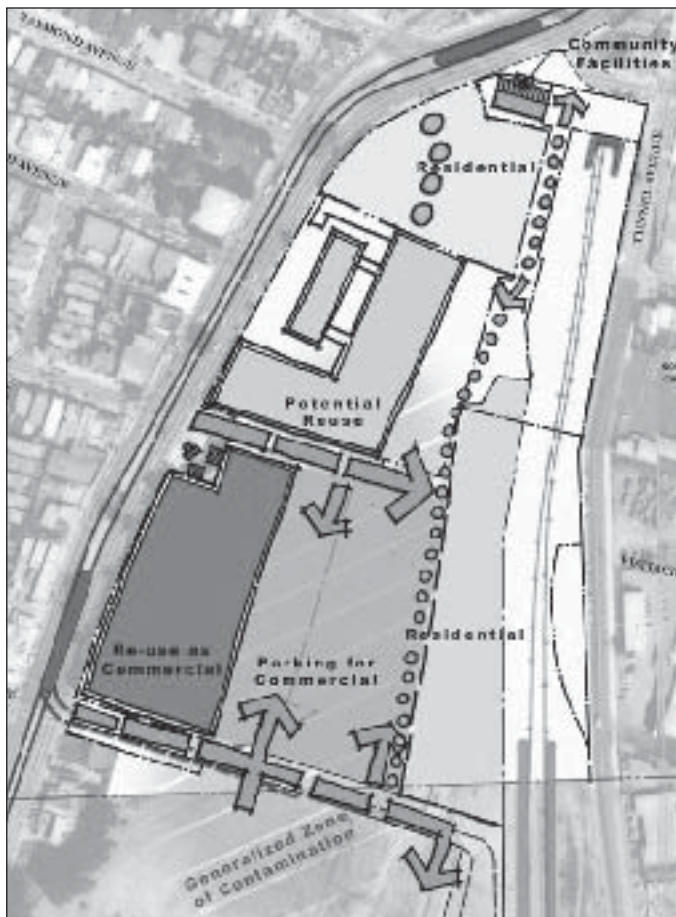
The Schlage Lock Site

The Schlage Lock site is surrounded by a chain linked fence enclosing multiple abandoned buildings creating a major eyesore along Bayshore Blvd. In August 2000 the SF Board of Supervisors (BOS) enacted interim zoning controls for the site changing its status of M-1 (industrial) to NC-3 (neighborhood commercial zoning.) The zoning restrictions also limited commercial use on the site to 50,000 square feet. This size limitation placed strong restrictions on the possibility of big box development. These controls, as interim, expired in March 2003 but helped set a planning framework for the next few years. Visitacion

Valley district supervisor Sophie Maxwell and Urban Ecology conducted two workshops in November 2001 to solidify planning goals for the site. By engaging the community in the planning process 10 points of focus emerged providing community based goals for the planning department to instill permanent zoning controls.

Among these goals was a desire for mixed use development, maximizing the use of space by incorporating housing above retail. Reuse of the old office building as a community center was also identified as a possibility, presenting the opportunity for immediate use. Also expressed was the need for a major grocery store, something residents currently have to leave the

neighborhood for. As part of TOD, Pedestrian friendly design is essential element. A TOD is characterized by the reduction of reliance on the automobile by providing access to public services such as grocery stores, childcare, libraries, all elements that collectively give a neighborhood a sense of identity. By providing these kinds of services interaction within the community



Schlage Lock Site

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is likely, ultimately revitalizing the area as a whole. This approach to planning could bring much needed economic development to an area whose potential is currently untapped.

At this point many different entities joined together including; the San Francisco Planning Department (SFGOV), San Francisco Municipal Railway (MUNI), and SPUR, to encourage further exploration of these concepts. They applied for and received a “Transportation for Livable Communities” grant from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC). These funds, in turn, were matched by a grant from Ingersol Rand Company and Universal Paragon Company, two property owners on the site who stand to be affected by the outcome of how the city decides to zone this property. The grant funded the development of a concept plan created with the collaboration of planning consultants, the SFGOV, and the area’s citizens. This plan is similar to other efforts at work in the city, with the Better Neighborhoods plan incorporating redevelopment efforts with the Central Waterfront, Hayes Valley, and Balboa Park (SPUR 2002). The consulting firms selected were EDAA, Nelson and Nygaard, and Strategic Economics. These three groups provided a solid information base in design and land use, transportation planning, and real-estate economics, respectively.

With this grant, a week long charrette was planned. A charrette allows for collaboration in a condensed time period resulting in informed planning solutions that can then be implemented. The concept behind a charrette is that a lot can be done in a short period of time when people from many different aspects of planning come together. As a result, a consensus is formed from what could alternately be a long and arduous process. With this gathered information the formation of appropriate zoning controls can then take place along with the beginning of redevelopment. The results of the workshop were illustrated by the creation of a series of maps visualizing the concepts being discussed. These addressed a variety of issues including site considerations showing the intention of the planners of carrying over the current street patterns onto the site. By identifying access points for traffic throughout the site, a grid formed upon which various approaches to the flow of traffic, both for pedestrians and automobiles could be explored. What evolved from these sessions was a flexible but systematic approach to the development of the Schlage Lock property.

Contamination became a major factor and influenced the location of the planned housing in the

Northern and southern ends of the site. The Department of Toxic Substance Control (DTSC) is the lead agency for determining the approach to the clean-up process. The level of clean up in the site varies dependent on the zoning for the area. All commercial development for the site has been directed to the southwestern portion of the site where contamination identified as being most heavily concentrated (Stanley 2004), therefore requiring a degree of cleanup not as intense as required for residential purposes. As a final component of the charrette, a Strategic Concept Plan was devised by identifying property issues and outlining development ideas, in order to get the project beyond speculation and into implementation as soon as possible.

Conflicts and Compromises

Little Hollywood, a neighborhood to the east of Visitacion Valley, is currently disconnected despite its close proximity to the CalTrain station and the site. The train tracks represent a physical barrier making access in either direction difficult. Originally residents expressed an interest in creating some kind of footbridge to join the two communities. As the planning events unfolded this idea was identified as a financial sinkhole, and that the funding for such a project could be better spent elsewhere. This was an interesting portion of the process and an important one to note, as the community faced the realities of the complications involved in implementing ideas that in theory sound desirable. This part of the plan demonstrates the fluidity necessary in the planning process and the issues that can arise upon further exploration of concepts proposed in the charrette.

The results of the week long workshop exemplify how complex the redevelopment of a space can be. It also shows that effective planning is possible when the efforts of many informed people have the opportunity to collaborate. The completion of the Strategic Concept Plan resulted in two conceptual visions incorporating both what the community desired with the knowledge of trained professionals.

What’s Happening Currently

Diana Williams, at Urban Ecology, stated that although the interim zoning controls have since expired, their purpose had been served, with the success of deterring the construction of the Home Depot. The owners of the Schlage Lock site have since issued a request for proposal (RFP) calling for mixed-use development,

incorporating both commercial and housing needs. The developer Pulte Homes has been contracted to build and they will now go through the process of rezoning the site for mixed-use (Williams 2004). The public's involvement has not proven futile, due to the fact that the city refused the original proposal. Peter Cohen with Urban Solutions has been recruited to work with the businesses' along Leland Avenue, the commercial core in Visitacion Valley, to regenerate their capabilities, and make it congruent with the redevelopment happening at the site (Williams 2004).

Conclusion

This process reflects the growing trend of community involvement in the development process. In March 2003 the SFGOV held a meeting discussing

land use options in the city's eastern neighborhoods. At this meeting supervisor Chris Daly stated, "land use is one of the most contentious political topics in the city, always has been and probably always will be" (Planning Dept.). This planning process represents all of the best approaches to better neighborhoods, by the promotion of economic growth through the creation of jobs, design and the importance of public space, and by strengthening the city's sense of its neighborhoods. All of these things promote a future in San Francisco that attempts to support the economically diverse population that lives here. Collectively, the TSLRL and the Schlage Lock site represent the current planning process at work in San Francisco. The development of the site as a mixed-use TOD could encourage similar development patterns along the rail line in the future.

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FIGURES

Figure 1, 2: EDAW (July, 2002) Strategic Concept Plan. Visitacion Valley Schlage Lock Community Planning Workshop.



Elmer Tosta

There are many similarities within the city boundaries of Venice, Padua, and Vicenza. With the exception of Venice, (where auto traffic in the city center is not a problem because of its geographic site and use of canals and footpaths for circulation), Padua and Vicenza, along with many other Italian towns in other regions have banned auto traffic from their centers (either permanently, or during certain hours of the day). These auto-free areas are devoted to *pedronalli* (pedestrians) but are also used by people on bicycles. Examples cited will be limited to the three towns of the Veneto region.

Within these sacred car free areas, a retail phenomenon has developed that has the potential to erode some of the individuality of these cities. Along with prosperity of the Veneto region has come gentrification, which in turn has led to a marketing strategy in the city centers that is eroding the individuality of each town's primary commercial district. Each city center is host to a number of manufacturer-owned or franchise based businesses which are creating an atmosphere similar to an upscale

shopping mall. The retail mix includes stores like Armani (upscale clothing for men and women), Furla (shoes and leather goods), Timberland (American outdoor wear), Hermés (French upscale clothing and leather goods, and Sisley (high style casual clothing for young women), to name a few. Those stores that are known for being extremely high-end (i.e. Armani and Hermés) do not sell their most expensive merchandise in these smaller stores. Each city center has retained its unique exterior architecture and each store has adapted by putting its trademarked interior behind the façade.

Each of the three towns cited are different from each other. Vicenza's main streets and plazas are graced with buildings by Andrea Palladio, one of the best known architects of the Late Renaissance. Padua is a university town with a decidedly younger and more diverse population. Padua is also the site of a significant Roman Catholic shrine, the Church of St. Anthony. In addition to car free plazas, Padua closes its main street to traffic in the evening, allowing it to become filled with pedestrians. Venice, because of its



Vicenza



Padua Prato della Valle

unusual site, relies on waterways and pedestrian paths for circulation. Its history is the most diverse because of its site at the tip of the Adriatic, and as a result, is visually the most diverse. Venice is also the main tourist attraction in the region.

Is it the homogenous nature of these shopping districts that attracts tourists? The nature of business development in the centers of these towns merits study, although much has been written about gentrification in this region. These city centers are meticulously clean and vibrant, but their retail mix raises the question of how many more franchise type businesses will fill these city centers and how much longer will there be open air markets that are selling goods consumed by local residents and Does the presence of these high end retailers mean that the rents in the city centers will escalate to the point that only the franchise type stores will be able to afford them? Is this corporate gentrification going to reduce these medieval towns to “Disneyland”-like versions of what tourists think

they are supposed to be like? The benefit to travelers is that there will always be change to be witnessed, and even with the gentrification, there are many lessons to be learned from these towns about their limited use of the automobile in their city centers and the benefits of pedestrian and bicycle access for residents and tourists.



Ravenna Tourist Bike

Proposed Graduate City Planning Program for San Francisco State University

Emmet McDonagh

Interviews

with Professors Richard Legates
and Michael Boswell

Over the course of the last few years, the Urban Studies department at San Francisco State University (SFSU) and the City and Regional Planning (CRP) department at California Polytechnic State University (Cal Poly) in San Luis Obispo have envisioned jointly creating a new graduate/master program in City Planning at SFSU. Cal Poly currently has a graduate program in City Planning, but part of the reason for initiating a new program in San Francisco is that the city provides a much larger and more diverse laboratory for studying city planning than San Luis Obispo. In recent summers professors from Cal Poly have taught at SFSU and students from Cal Poly have taken classes at SFSU.

Conversation with Professor Richard LeGates

During February and March of 2005, I conducted two interviews with faculty members – Professor Richard LeGates from SFSU and Assistant Professor Michael Boswell from Cal Poly. I spoke with Professor Legates one-on-one and with Professor Boswell over the phone. The interview with Professor LeGates will be written in a narrative fashion since we had more of a conversation than a question-and-answer interview. The interview with Professor Boswell, on the other hand, will be written in a question-and-answer format since that is how the interview was conducted. There are no guarantees that the City Planning program at SFSU will be approved. Currently, the program proposal is going before the Planning Accreditation Board (PAB) and is also threatened by the current California state budget deficit. If the program is approved it will be in place by Fall of 2006.

To start, Cal Poly's CRP graduate program has existed for 25+ years, excelling in the built environment, but doing so in a small community. Diversity is needed among planners, and with 11 million people in the Bay Area, San Jose State and UC-Berkeley are the only schools in the region to have accredited graduate programs in City Planning. The thing with planning graduate programs is that they are small and hence they train few planners at a time. The envisioned program at SFSU would feature 20-25 students a year. At the beginning of the envisioning process, the idea of a partnership with Cal Poly came up. The goal was to copy Cal Poly's program, but it was always evident that many of the students in the graduate program at SFSU would be working full-time and attending school as part-time students. This is why the students in the program would take two classes a

semester and finish in three years, instead of the two years that it takes at Cal Poly.

Over the course of six years, SFSU Professor Raquel Rivera-Pinderhughes and Cal Poly Assistant Professor Linda Day have worked on a grant proposal for the program that has not yet been funded, but there is much optimism that it will be. In the last 18 months the process has sped up as both schools made more commitment to the program. SFSU hired a new faculty member, Mai Nguyen PhD., in anticipation of the new program and some current faculty will teach classes in the program – most likely with younger Cal Poly faculty. The program evaluation process is long, and approval by the Academic Senate, school Presidents, and most importantly, the PAB is required. At this time the hope is that SFSU can get Cal Poly's accreditation or go through an abbreviated review process.

One thing that the program has in its favor is that Richard Giardina, SFSU's Provost in charge of curriculum development, once taught Urban Economics at SFSU. The graduate program would also help SFSU's undergraduate program due to the addition of more teachers' assistants. There is a lot of excitement and optimism surrounding the potential of the program, as a new relationship among both the faculty and the students of the two schools would likely develop.

Phone Interview with Assistant Professor Michael Boswell

Emmet: Are you and the CRP faculty looking forward to the possibility of the new graduate program?

Professor Boswell: Yes, we are. This has been a long time coming.

Emmet: How many CRP faculty members would teach in the SFSU graduate program?

Professor Boswell: We are not sure about that yet, it depends a lot on a proposal with faculty budgeting. Nonetheless, most of the members of the current Cal Poly CRP faculty are interested.

Emmet: How do you expect the program to be different since the SFSU students will mostly be part-time students?

Professor Boswell: I don't expect this to make the program very different from ours, just a year longer.

Emmet: Are any current CRP majors interested in

going to SFSU for the program?

Professor Boswell: I believe so. Currently, some CRP students take Urban Studies classes at SFSU during the summer. Also, one third of the students in our department come from the Bay Area.

Emmet: What kind of commitment has Cal Poly made in the last 18 months to the program?

Professor Boswell: The CRP department didn't do a lot. Our new College of Architecture and Environmental Design Dean, Tom Jones (who is from San Francisco) did a lot.

Emmet: What are your thoughts on trying to copy the Cal Poly graduate program?

Professor Boswell: It should be pretty easy since the only design aspect will be done with computer programs – not drawing on paper (like in the CRP undergrad program). There might be a little bit of trouble since the students will have different backgrounds from their undergraduate programs, but that is normal to a certain extent.

Emmet: Is the CRP department hiring new faculty to cover for the faculty that would be teaching at SFSU?

Professor Boswell: We have hired some already, but again a lot depends on the budget.

Emmet: How long has Cal Poly been trying to have a program with a more diverse community and bigger city?

Professor Boswell: The idea evolved about 4-5 years ago and has developed slowly.

Emmet: Would the CRP faculty at SFSU be older or younger?

Professor Boswell: Probably newer, even though everyone seems to be interested. The fact is those older faculty members tend to have family and financial situations that make it harder to be moving every few quarters/semesters on a regular basis.

Emmet: Thank you for your time Professor Boswell.

Professor Boswell: You're welcome, it was a pleasure.



Mike Boswell

IMAGE

"Michael Boswell." October 5, 2004. Online image. California Polytechnic State University at San Luis Obispo. 5 Apr 2005. <http://planning.calpoly.edu/facultystaff/facdetail.php?recordID=9>