

The Makabusi Urban Design Archives

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August 1st, 2001

Expansion of the Urban Form -Part 4

Putting the Genie Back into the Bottle - Expansion of the Urban Form - Part 4

Expansion of the Urban Form and Increasing The Reach of the Urban Oasis

July 23 and 30, 2001 -

The desirability of securing locations within the Urban Oasis is proportional to the reach that the “People Mover System” (APM) could provide. While the range of some APM systems can reach 40 to 50 miles within a one-hour commute, they remain at best, equally competitive in range with the automobile. In fact, most APM systems offer an accessibility range that is significantly inferior to the automobile.

What if the APM system because of its speed, range, operating economics, and capacity is able to provide direct accessibility to other urban centers in neighboring metropolitan regions? This alternative would offer incoming “Urban Oasis” and “Transit Village” residents and businesses premium access to urban activities located beyond the metropolitan region. This accessibility range would be superior to the automobile commuting mode of travel because its restricted range and capacity remains limited to the metropolis.

The Magplane Commuter System as an APM is capable of traveling at 200 miles per hour or more. Because the Magplane Commuter System is able to convert existing intercity travel markets into time, cost, and convenience equivalent intracity commuting markets, the Magplane would provide a competitive advantage for locations within the Urban Oasis for New Economy companies.

What then is the advantage for increased labor accessibility for companies?

In the New Economy, the “Knowledge Base” of companies exceeds the capital value of buildings and equipment. Nortel Networks which is now writing off a litany of poor technology start-ups that it purchased in recent years, was forced to purchase these companies because of the “human capital” that they had developed. Matthew Ingram of the Globe and Mail, recently defended this strategy.

“If the company had not made some of those acquisitions, it would almost certainly be in a lot worse shape than it is now. It’s true that optical and wireless — Nortel’s two major thrusts — are both in the dumps, but they will recover at some point. If Nortel had decided not to try and grow into those new areas, the company would be largely an aging telephone equipment business with low growth and low margins, and it’s unlikely that the market would be any happier about that than it is right now.”

Give Nortel a break: It did what it had to do, July 11, 2001

Access to human capital will increase in importance in future years while physical distance as opposed to virtual distance will remain a formidable barrier for employers of “Knowledge Workers.” The New York Times in its July 11, 2001 edition, described how the resistance of a valuable employee to locate in Silicon Valley impeded the development of a successful internet strategy at Intel.

Mr. McGeady turned the position (personal technical assistant to Mr. Andy Grove) down because he was unwilling to move to Intel’s Silicon Valley headquarters; several years later he said Mr. Grove told him that the company might have grasped the significance of the Internet far more quickly if Mr. McGeady had made the move.

Star Witness Against Microsoft Finds a Wary Vindication, NYTimes, July 2, 2001.

The Magplane Proposal

Magplane International Inc. has developed a research program to investigate the willingness of New Economy companies to relocate within the vicinity of Magplane stations to exploit the productivity benefits of a larger labor pool. In contrast to individual transportation modes such as the automobile, the Magplane Commuter System is a collective mode. As such, it should attract residents and employers within the vicinity of the Magplane stations that should spawn a series of interconnected urban nodes within a large expansive regional urban system. But this attraction into an urban environment that is more dense than the low density campus like architecture would entail some tradeoffs such as: higher real estate costs; integrated office complexes versus secluded and separate campuses; and the growing reliance of public transit versus the automobile for circulation within these urban nodes. The benefits facilitated by increased accessibility to a large regional labor force, would be improved operating economics and increased labor productivity.

A brief outline of the research program as demonstrated by hypothetical Silicon Valley employers is found below.

Hypothesis

That the expansion of the labor pool from the metropolitan scale to the larger regional scale will generate substantial labor productivity increases for Silicon Valley Knowledge Employers.

That this expansion can be accommodated by

Telecommunication advancements. Ground transportation advancements with nearly the speed of air travel. Example: Sacramento to Silicon Valley in 30 to 45 minutes at a cost of about \$10 to \$15 round trip.

Silicon Valley Employer Benefits

The ability to work in Silicon Valley and live outside the region, will

Improve the match between skills and jobs. Improve labor retention. Reduce relocations for new recruits. Provide greater flexibility in managing intellectual capital within the organization. Potentially lower salary costs.

Employee Benefits

The ability to work in Silicon Valley and live outside the region, will

Improve the match between skills and jobs. Improve commuting times for those already commuting into Silicon Valley. Reduce relocation requirements for dual income families. Increase residential location alternatives that will in turn increase housing supply. Reduce the pressures on housing prices in Silicon Valley. Ease inflationary salary needs.

Trade-Offs

While the above effects would provide benefits to New Economy companies, we need to understand what trade-offs these companies would pursue to achieve access to a larger labor pool. Would they for example, move their operations from the intersections of freeways that offer access to a metropolitan labor pool to the vicinity of Magplane stations to exploit the advantages of a larger regional labor pool?

The response of high technology employers and employees to increased labor accessibility facilitated by a Magplane system would certainly provide valuable knowledge about

Organizational changes including workplace locational preferences. Further decentralization of work. Satellite offices, shared or not with other employers. Architectural design changes to accommodate land use intensification. Commuting time. Value to commuters of commuting time. Commuting costs. Willingness to pay .

Desired service attributes. Amenities, comfort, reliability . Station access and egress time thresholds.
Receptiveness to station access/egress transportation alternatives.

This article is authored by Richard Zavergiu who has given express permission for it to be published on this site. Please visit www.magplane.com for further information on the transportation solution made for our urban future.

By Graham Kaye-Eddie

Master Urban Designer

Makabusai Inc.

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August 2nd, 2001

GET A GRIP ON SPRAWL AND SMART GROWTH

It is amazing to think how many perceptive and analytical authors have taken a sidetrack on the issue of land use and “Smart Growth.”

The struggle in understanding metropolitan growth is but simply one between the County and City decision-makers. The Local Agency Formation Commission is at most a feeble organization, which attempts to arbitrate between these two governmental entities. The County and City are both prideful about how they service each of their constituents in the provision of community services.

Thus the battle ground for sprawl are the proclaimed lands on city boundaries. Land areas inside the County yet outside of the City. Speculative auctions conducted almost daily of these lands is especially made for those who own rural land or corporate farms and know the real estate buy and sell process.

These surrounding areas are the lands where the clashes of urban change take place. It is here that urban developers negotiate with stakeholders at prices to survive in their business of house pad makers. They then turn these lands around at risk to sell parcels with good profit margins as lots for merchant homebuilders.

This patchwork of economic activity sets up discordant patterns for infrastructure service provisions from both County and City government. Only after the pads are built and houses sold does this quilt of scattered subdivisions come together over some years.

With only this feint hope can early settler suburban housing sprawl become central places of there own. The best commercial services then offered to these suburban home buyers are still low level old land use formulas of “four–corner” gas stations with fast food adjuncts or strip commercial.

The long term future of commercial retail and population growth can only be integrated into balance with costly public debate or annexation upheaval. This is usually done by using left over lands on some arterial roads and by changing the established land uses in already approved county/city plans. This is indeed a sad state of affairs.

“The Fulton Method of defining sprawl is to characterize it simply in terms of land resources consumed to accommodate new urbanization. If land is being consumed at a faster rate than population growth, then a metropolitan area can be characterized as “sprawling.” highways, urban parks, and so forth” urbanized in order to accommodate population growth.” <http://www.planetizen.com/news/item.php?id=3594>

This urban sprawl growth pattern definition is unfocused and suggests nothing new to the acceptance of a monopoly to developer/farmer/jurisdiction agreements on use of land resources.

“The Wassmer Method of defining sprawl is characterized in population, farmland and retail activity growth. From these numbers he developed a “sprawl scorecard” for California’s metropolitan areas in the 1990s. First Wassmer believes the change in the population of central places compared to the change in the population of the entire metropolitan area. Second, Wassmer also examines the percentage change in the amount of farmland in a region compared to the amount of land overall. Third, Wassmer measures the change in retail sales in central places versus the change in sales overall. Stronger retail activity in the central places means less sprawl on the fringes”. <http://www.planetizen.com/news/item.php?id=3711>

Urban design is a discipline where one must examine all these analyses and attempt to set a prognosis, which offers a better synthesis in the design of human settlements. Efficient future land use is not made with the fatigued economics of land exchange on city edges. It is not made only with factors of land addition, density, absorption, consumption and natural resource use. It is made with inventive designs integrating transportation, mixed land use (not separate land uses as is presently the case in County/City Plans), economics, indigenous environment and most of all a clear understanding by our elected and appointed officials, as to what constitutes good urban design.

Historically one used to reside in “Rosedale” where people lived some distance from one another and where they worked or shopped and used to travel on two lane roads across some “open space” to get there and back. Now in the sprawling suburban dominated Rosedale, it doesn’t make much sense for residents to frequent the regional Ming Plaza Shopping Center nor Downtown anymore.

Once the strip Rosedale Highway retail and business center has been completed, it makes sense for people to live close to these facilities, no matter what unendearing qualities they represent, even if they have only come 10 years later! These non-distinguishing commercial building establishments are the same environments being served in most other cities of America.

However, even with the disappearance of Rosedale farmland and natural open space the newly formed suburban northwest Bakersfield has assumed the face of another anonymous place, thus becoming a grand example of common sprawl.

Should productive agricultural land be integrated better with sprawl? Yes. Should natural rural lands as well as tailored suburban park spaces become part of Rosedales’ permanent open space future? Yes. What singular distinctive indigenous element of our Rosedale settlement patterns suggests that we are designing a better-sprawled environment for our future generations?

Beyond analytical authors one needs to get back on the main track instead of the numerous sidetracks issues of land use and “Smart Growth.”

The challenge of alternative sprawl syntheses should be to include urban designers. The challenge for public decision-makers is to make the best value judgement on what makes-up the best urban design. This necessary skill of design discernment is not something found in nor clearly understood by most government decision makers.

BY Graham Kaye-Eddie – Master Urban Designer.

Makabusi Inc. – Bakersfield – California

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August 4th, 2001

LAW AND ZIMBAWE

PLACE OF ORIGEN

Here is another snippet of news for those who read local USA papers to find out what is happening in Africa. The local Zimbabwean newspapers are highly censored and do not reflect the current conditions regarding racism and governance.

Every once in a while the Christian Science Monitor will have some news. They covered this two days ago. I thank them for this report.

LAW AND ZIMBABWE

Without saying why, another justice of Zimbabwe's highest court announced he'll resign, effective Aug. 31. Michael Gillespie becomes the third High Court justice to quit this year amid what the International Bar Association has called "unrelenting and vicious" harassment by President Robert Mugabe's government and his political party. Mugabe frequently has attacked or ignored the court's rulings. Gillespie's move also leaves only four white jurists on the Zimbabwe bench in the face of pressure from militant black civil war veterans, who accuse them all of racism.

Reflecting on this article it indicates a slow spiral of downward progression of intolerance and lack of compromise to gain total black dominance of political power. I would rather remember the wonderful experiences of friendship with all the black and white folk with whom I matured.

I will never ever forget the wonderful humor expressed by all those I came into contact on a daily basis. In work, play and worship there was a mutual respect for one another. Nor shall I ever forget the loyalty and support in many of our farming tragedies. The craftsmanship of the things made was astounding from weaving to thatching, ceramics to ironsmithing. The wood and granite carvings and sculptures will continually influence my design thoughts.

“GOLDEN_EAGLE”

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GOLDEN EAGLE

Even for our enemies in misery—there should be tears in our eyes. -CharanSingh, mystic (1916-1990)

August 7th, 2001

CITY BUILDING AND HUMANITY

The chief culprits of how Bakerfolks get ignored, suborned, and pushed aside in this so called "citizen participation" process has to do with leadership. We are indebted to our "beanie counters," that is the appointed folk who manage the County and the City monetary affairs, for this to work appropriately.

Like most money managers they are, unfortunately for them, THE KNOW IT ALL FOLK. They are the selected ones who can gaze at the local economic crystal ball and have the solution for all consumption and material matters.

Famous money managers are writing and talking and thus influencing most things. They the big brothers of the tribe of acclaimed numerical believers and are the ones who can postulate where the dollar will come from and

go to. They are also unfortunately consistently off the mark with their best guesses.

As “futurists” they remind one of witchdoctors and soothsayers, bent about the casting of universal conjectures with a huge bias on numbers. The sorry thing is, they don’t or never have spent any time in factories. They don’t spend much time with people who don’t have a degree in finance, and they don’t spend any time with local workers.

It is amazing how these money managers (economists), in particular, can really lose touch with the many human aspects of good living. When there is no cash flow blueprint or spread sheet they do not have the gumption to work their way around uncertainty and the unknown.

It usually takes small advances in the standard of living to make huge advances in common good. Sometimes local businesses and manufacturers do make things irreversible. However national companies can relocate to where the terms are best and the costs are lowest. This should never be forgotten for our local economy.

And yet local governments continue to attempt to attract companies within our boundaries because they want to provide jobs. We just have to ask ourselves collectively as Bakerfolks, what is the price that we are willing to pay for this goal? We have to recognize that this whole realm of capitalism is creating losers as well as winners.

Consumer and shareholder power may be gaining ground, but can never provide the safety nets that County and City should provide its citizens in upgrading the quality of life. Another view is that of economic incentives, which somehow implies no trade-off, suggests that one can have better public services and lower taxes. It also suggests that one can have social justice and unfettered economic growth. This is probably not totally true.

For all the County and City empathy, insights and research, money managers can offer no real solutions. The County CEO’s and City Manager though should remain optimistic about the County Government seat and the Cities downtown entertainment center vision, because they both exist in the same geography.

One should rather have more faith that Bakerfolks will to do the right thing. And without that, we may as well all give up. But one should very definitely not be ready to give up on the proposed City Center, nor the Riverwalk, nor any of the aspirant developers who will give this development area the final name. They are still willing to be city building entrepreneurs.

Humanity is a quality of understanding human nature and of showing kindness to all citizens. City building and humanity is not made of money alone. One hopes that the County and City “beanie counters” should rather foster citizen building with humanity and humility.

BY Graham Kaye-Eddie – Master Urban Designer.

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August 9th, 2001

FAMILY CHANGES IN ZIMBABWE

News from Zimbabwe yesterday. My brother in Australia received an email from my cousin Ursula, Mike and family telling him that they have been run off their farm by freedom fighters and are lucky to be alive. The farmhouse was set alight and they fled.

Now they plan to visit Australia and start a new life here. This change is pretty tough when you’re in your 50’s to start again anew with the whole family in a new country.

So after many years of work, the family inheritance and payments toward owning land has come to a final phase - landless. Reverse discrimination in full, with all its bared implications and consequences is forcing survival re-alignments .

How much more we must still learn about becoming the minority in society? How much more as history has proved with the downfall of Empires must we devise a way for an equitable transfer of power with all it's ramifications?

By Graham Kaye-Eddie Master Urban Designer

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August 10th, 2001

PLANNING URBAN DEMONSTRATIONS

Neighborhood demonstrators see protest as the only means of grabbing the attention of the public, corporations and government. However demonstrations are the necessary precursor to urban change.

The Olive Drive Neighborhood Coalition is still seeking the truth and hopes to share this with all Bakerfolks. The steadfastness with which they are addressing the issue of annexation at City Council meetings is a testament to a break of trust in dealings between governance and citizens.

There are many other Neighborhood Organizations and special issue groups who have been formed to change the status quo course of our local metropolitan urban development process. They unfortunately break new ground singularly with their own initiative and are not likely to form an alliance with others who have experienced the waxing and then waning efforts in their quest for equity and justice. Each of these groups gets into the field of urban law negotiations and either wins or loses in short hotheaded skirmishes or long drawn out brawls.

The unfortunate circumstances which surround these Non Profit Organizations (N.P.O.'s) outbursts are their short term interests focussed on specific issues such as dairies, industrial parks, solid and radioactive waste, contaminated water and air, traffic congestion, taxes, public access TV, urban renewal, agriculture and natural resource protection. Somehow all these participants cause of discomfort is singularly contained in their own organizational structure. This ultimately is their downfall as the pattern one observes shows that each effort is much like a brilliantly painted rubber raft attempting to turn the grey battleship around.

Their energies are founded and directed toward either not in my backyard (NIMBY) syndrome or placing public comments into environmental impact reports. (E.I.R.'s) All these well-directed efforts fall ultimately into the controls and existing standards of the political and bureaucratic. (POLITBURO) mission for urban growth and change from states, to counties, regions, metropolitan areas, cities, neighborhoods, villages, rural areas, agriculture and natural areas. Citizen's efforts are not in the majority successfully introduced into any of these areas of evolution.

At a time when polling shows increasing skepticism by citizens with government performance and accountability, a new movement of neighborhood involvement is taking root in California.

Bakerfolks are involved in this movement and should rather find new ways to connect their participation efforts

collectively. For example a loosely formed Urban Coalition Group (UCG) was created to focus on candidates for County and City leadership. This focus had initial success and then a secondary setback. However the need for civic activities with accountability for quality public services in the different neighborhoods is still an urgent issue for collective involvement. During this process the UCG group discovered that their involvement together made a bigger mark and does make a difference toward urban improvement.

The hidden politburo strategy however is very much similar to that of most warfare — to divide and conquer. Separate NPO's neighborhood urban sorties are bound to be defeated in the final ruminations by governance. Individual members questions and understandings of issues and then the collective NPO's strategies to achieve betterment, are likely to divide many such urban coalition goals. Although the groups may be unified on the issues at stake, they are not necessarily united over how to address them.

When Bakerfolks come to do something through governance, governance becomes the master.

Bakerfolks cannot live without governance.

BY Graham Kaye-Eddie – Master Urban Designer.

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August 13th, 2001

URBAN DESIGN & BEAUTY?

Measurements of facial ratios with any simple formulae cannot capture this elusive subject, precisely because it is a compound made up of at least some incommensurable sources. This one finds when measuring a Pure Bred Spanish Horse to analyze the beauty found in the head.

The singular points of a beautiful horse, peoples faces, or other objects, is that they are experienced not as parts, or ratios between cheekbones and chin, head and body, but as wholes. The experience one engages with beauty is a perception of the reality of the object. It is one that mixes up various other sensations and makes them converge in a particular way, to give a meaningful knowledge.

The question is how, and if, the components we measure under our gaze fit together to create the experience of beauty. This activity conducted in a time frame with ever changing light on the object, in concert with our vacillating state of mind, is difficult to fully understand.

How does one integrate the interaction of many variables toward a coherence of bringing them together as certain factors in our experience in order to discern them as beautiful? If we analyze these factors we might define a few beauty imperatives such as patterns, symbols, perfection and content.

Patterns found in nature are well accepted. We can all experience them as aesthetically pleasing. They are not just the spheres, cones and cylinders or ovals. As an urban designer we know, from the arguments of Vitruvius and the drawings of Leonardo, that good facial and body proportions should be reflected in good buildings. We also know that such body proportions became standards in ergonomics and proper design of buildings as collections of architecture.

Patterns about patterns, mathematical patterns squared or heightened, are produced by nature automatically. The truth is that our eyes and mind respond to every conceivable pattern — spirals, crinkles, blobs, folds, fields, zigzags, textures and dots.

But aside from the sensuality, invention and functional fit of the great variety of forms buried in our minds, what makes buildings and the places they form together beautiful today? It is the way they display the substance of significant ideas. The fact is that urban designed places are rare. Excellent urban places designed in Bakersfield are also most uncommon. These places may have evolved by the chance of circumstance, but certainly not by conscious design action.

Urban design today however should be sourced and directed by a team of designers. This team has the capability of bringing together a collective experience. They can be supported by computerized virtual reality. Instant model making usually follows this. The final approved designs are now derived, manufactured and built with the help of the computer. This should make them far better than the efforts of the past. Similar in a sense to petals in nature, they can offer repetitious geometries, which give them added relevance. When the mind perceives a new idea, and new formal pattern, it is aroused by its own transformation.

Hence our delight when we recognize the shock of new architectural or urban designs. Then design innovation makes a real breakthrough, not just something merely different or clever. Innovative urban design creates new ways of seeing, feeling and experiencing the built man made environment. It is a new kind of knowledge. This cognitive extension is an essential part of the experience of beauty.

Beauty is found in many of man's design creations. The experiences we all have in places that we have visited and enjoyed, or have had intimate connections with, become a set of cumulative and indelible imprints on all of our senses. From these experiences it is clear, if we wish to remember correctly, that we are more than likely to have had all of our faculties acting together to connect with that particular discovery of a beautiful moment. Thank goodness that these all-encompassing moments are coded into our nervous system.

Let's keep our beauty awareness antennas high to recognize deep and successful works of art, truth, beauty, goodness, architecture and the many other things that seem to converge in our minds in some of the fine places we inhabit. May we all find many more beautiful things in the places we experience daily.

“Beauty is that strange attractor of experience, attracted in its shape by the influence of exaggerated patterns, new knowledge, the idea of perfection and significant content. By definition, therefore, no one will have the last word on this mysterious drive, and goal, of life,” said Charles Jencks. He is correct!

BY Graham Kaye-Eddie – Master Urban Designer.

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August 16th, 2001

CALIFORNIA'S NEXT CRISIS?

The first acknowledged year 2001 crisis in California was and still is a concern about energy. The Golden State's second crisis maybe that of running out of potable drinking water. Then say WHOA and hold onto your horses, the major crisis should really become that of transportation.

California is currently home to more than 34 million people. It will have closer to 50 million in 20 years. Each and every one of whom will need power, water and mobility. All these people will require clean air. One hopes that by that time the new generation comes along they will be better educated and prepared to make decisions about their futures regarding the most essential ingredient of collective survival, that of clean air.

It's hard to imagine a state's leadership without the ability to build future power stations, reservoirs and transportation infrastructure. Consider citizens being without electricity for their homes, businesses and production of food. Is it possible to move backwards? Yes, but the majority way to travel in the future is going to be critical to move forward. Mobility is essential to life. Let us also hope that we can all breathe together outside of filtered air conditioning of the buildings and cars we inhabit the majority of the time.

The root of these problems and future ones in California is that of an irresponsible approach to people selection. Giving the right people the responsibility to use design ideas necessary to resolve the use of natural resources has not been accomplished.

Politicians cannot create policies by themselves. Bureaucrats are too scared to whisper about anything new. Special interest groups are betting on the come for a specific solution that is certainly not one which integrates with others to cascade into a better quality of life for all Californians.

Both the energy and water crisis have blossomed into an atmosphere of an atrophied bunch of non-leaders. The political interest lies in gabbing a lot in front of the media. One is sure that when politicians confront the daily swinging sessions in the Assembly or Senate for some pathetic debate attempts to construct specific new laws, there is hardly anyone present to listen. These laws if passed will not have much substance. Instead of piecemeal scabby covering laws that are the trend, the legislative outcomes are most likely be of a kind which bleeds the citizens of their tax monies where ever possible. Look at your recent electricity bill!

The continuing pattern of studies to resolve problems or the comfort of hiding under the cover of Environmental Impact Reports based on the worthless basis of three minimum design variants is quite pathetic. This zero-sum atmosphere now has environmental, residential, and industrial-lobbying interests scrambling into committees on a vast array of issues. This is not going to work for the better of Californians.

California now faces the even grimmer prospect of going dry after stalling for decades on water required to service the future generations of population increases. "Whiskey's for drinkin'. Water's for fightin'." has been heard frequently in many circles of late. Can Californians make peace before the aqueducts and pipes run dry?

Not until there is an interdisciplinary gathering of urban design folk who can offer integrated solutions in the fields of energy, water, transportation and education can Californians move effectively into the future. This is the challenge for the next millennium. How leadership faces resolving these issues together with the economics of the collective connections is the most pressing concern.

Knowing that the above issues are the classical urban design example to resolve for new settlement reform, may one dare to offer a short prognosis to each major category? Atomic energy plants on the Pacific Ocean edges in combination with Desalination Plants for water production. Magplane for transportation mobility. Finally a practical "head and hand" continuing educational system for all Californians for all ages from young to old folk.

Well what is your prognosis to prepare for a better California?

BY Graham Kaye-Eddie – Master Urban Designer.

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August 18th, 2001

ZIMBABWE LAND REFORM & OUTLOOK IN SOUTH AFRICA

To ignore these land exchange events would be harmful to the long-term prosperity of the entire geographical area of Southern Africa. The news here was found again in the Christian Science Monitor. For this it confirms what has happened to our family in Zimbabwe and what could happen in South Africa. EPN also had a short early morning report on these happenings.

Rampant looting of white-owned farms in Zimbabwe was confirmed by State-owned broadcast outlets, and police said they had recovered “Substantial” property. The white agricultural union put losses to Militant blacks at \$3.8 million so far, including livestock, tractors, Fuel, and household appliances, and said at least 300 people had fled For their safety. “About 12” looters were arrested, police said, along With three whites who were trying to recover their belongings - Although the latter were freed within hours.

Giving “fair warning,” the leading black businessman in South Africa told whites they must “share” their prosperity or risk the same seizures of land and other assets that are taking place in neighboring Zimbabwe. Cyril Ramaphosa of the Black Economic Empowerment Commission said too much wealth still is in white hands and efforts to increase black participation in business has fallen short.

His remarks appeared at odds with President Thabo Mbeki, who has gone out of his way recently to discourage asset seizures in South Africa.

BY Graham Kaye-Eddie – Master Urban Designer.

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August 19th, 2001

URBAN DESIGN REQUIRES MORE THAN A/E/P

Urban design today is without integrated human cooperation and humility. It is certainly not a debate solely between the separated professional fields of architecture, engineering and urban planning. Our cities have degraded many connections, only one of which, happens to be between the suburbs and agriculture.

One of the major breaks in city building has been the dialogue across generations essential to civic life. This fault lies in families being separated from convenient interactions at the neighborhood, village, town and city community levels. How to effectively reach and interact with people again from the young and old, of different incomes, race or religious upbringings is the first SOCIAL IMPERATIVE that of humanity.

Any city planning system geared towards only responding to the driving force of the “current economics” of the time is flawed. This singular expression is found in commercial “Big Boxes,” together with the consumption of productive agricultural land and natural landscapes by tract housing, served only by the car for mobility. This is bound to get things wrong. This apartheid approach to serving human habitation thus ignores integration with nature. It ignores the ENVIRONMENTAL IMPERATIVE that of nature in all it’s wondrous forms, integrated into a cascading set of survival cycles.

The starting place for better development of cities, agriculture and natural open space should mean better planning. This planning suggests a start of a team approach to policy making. Politicians and bureaucrats cannot do this task on their own. It should become a collective effort which most times only include urban planners. Policies thus formed usually miss the reality mark of effectiveness. Missing team members for such policy making might include scientists, technocrats, industrialists and/or agriculturalists. Policymaking should then with urban planners derive concepts draw from such an interdisciplinary group. This team should be directly chosen for their wisdom experience and innate creative skills. Drawn together to quickly anticipate passage of the policy issue at hand, they should proceed through formulation of a solution through analysis, prognosis to synthesis. The written resolution should only then be committed to a LEGISLATIVE IMPERATIVE – laws. These laws “are the spider’s webs which, if anything small falls into them they ensnare it, but large things break through and escape. - Solon, statesman (c. 638-c558 BC)”

Our present rests in conforming with the principles of reliance on building cities based on the physical ideas necessary for individual and group human use, inside of existing regulations. It is within these narrow constraints that we find separate fields industriously making food, conserving natural and man-made habitat, manufacturing parts for all the different forms of city and mobility building, and a vast array of businesses crafting for all sorts of objects. These citizens all follow policy, sets of laws (natural and man made), codes, rules, systems and convention to govern their actions. The responsibility, accountability and authority vested in each field are therefore held to these structural forms and as such subjectively serve the public good. Thus the community generally self-consciously holds to a REGULATORY IMPERATIVE. These regulations are rarely reviewed, rescinded or redrawn. They should be examined regularly to reveal their practical effectiveness.

Connecting all these four above imperatives is the common factor applied to estimate astute progress. The tyranny of economic data supplied by our economists is a dubious but necessary measure of value. Sometimes economic models no longer capture the realities of how the marketplace operates. In fact Alan Greenspan recently fretted about “the challenge of measuring and modelling our dynamic economy.” As guides however to investment decisions, business and government does factor these formulaes into revenue forecasts. Thus the profitability of both a private and public city building has the unenviable task of discerning between an ill informed speculation or an a good deal. In so doing the ECONOMIC IMPERATIVE has be visited and satisfied.

Finally, the future structural initiative of cities does not lay in a return to the principles of urban planning and architecture. This may be possibly defined as “fittingness” of building and settlement, part and whole, for the citizens. It should become rather an abnormal sharing of responsibility for development amongst the team leadership of “five” imperatives to forge a satisfactory pathway into the future. The planning that has gone wrong is one of not having interdisciplinary teams members involved in the process of all the above five imperatives being effectively accomplished.

Think of the key to good planning as a minimum five individual problem solvers; the socio/politician; the environmentalist; the architect, /engineer/urban planner; the economist and the developer. This interdisciplinary team should resolve problems better than has been done in Bakersfield in the past.

BY Graham Kaye-Eddie – Master Urban Designer.

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August 20th, 2001

URBAN DESIGN AND ASSESSED PROPERTY VALUES

There is always a correlation between market land values and assessed land values. The marketplace for establishing these values is in the hands of private and public appraisal estimates. An urban design field for future development areas is very much established by these folk who create a numerical checkerboard of land values in somewhat predictable ranges of value for most sorts of land uses.

Kern Property Value set for 2001 – 2002

Kern County Assessor –Recorder Jim Maples announced recently that his office has determined the taxable value of Kern County Property for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2001 at \$46,278, 925,000. Maples was quick to caution county officials that this amount includes values, especially within the oil and gas portion of the role, which are subject to dispute by property owners.

Although the FY 2001-02 property value represents a 6% increase from the assessed value of \$43.6 billion used to develop the county to meet the demand for services will not be known until the close of the budget year.

Status of the Values

Fiscal year 2001-2002

Roll actual assessments

Roll 1-Secured, \$26,445,567,000

Roll 2-Oil&Gas, \$15,973,431,000

Roll 3-Utility, \$ 1,590,025,000

Roll 4-Unsecured \$ 2,189,046,000

Roll 6- Mobile Homes \$ 89,856,000

TOTAL \$46,287,295,000

(All Roll values effective as of June 23, 2001)

So when one looks at a piece of agricultural land on the edge of the City of Bakersfield boundaries with a thought of either selling or buying for a purpose, it would be smart to dance with the knowledge of an assessed property value. A review of the current County & City General Plan adoptions of land uses should be made. Then a best guess value scenario from appraisers of the current and or future market value for a chosen land use is the next step. Only then can one make an astute land value appraisal to buy/sell property.

Considering the triad of value appraisals currently taking place south of the railroad tracks in downtown Bakersfield, the dollar per square foot sales prices for the pieces of land required for the proposed Riverwalk Project will make interesting reading if it moves forward as planned.

BY Graham Kaye-Eddie – Master Urban Designer.

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August 21st, 2001

WHAT IS 'URBAN' PLANNING

Today's article is a letter written by a respected colleague who has a particularly fine view of urban design. Sriram Khe challenges and author of an article in the American Planning Association Magazine August 2001. It makes good reading and a lot of sense.

Sriram Khe, unlike most planners, rarely sees the private and public sector as antagonists, debating issues in a civil manner. He would like to see more interaction between the two on urban planning matters.

I agree with the bottom line of Kevin Platt's "Viewpoint", published in the May 2001 issue of the Planner: that planners no longer plan, and that planners should stop assuming that things can't be done differently.

However, I don't agree with Platt's view that a lack of physical planning skills has caused this. And, therefore, there is no question of 'going back to the basics' either.

In the 'old' days, planners developed a plan, which was invariably adopted by the elected body and was then forced down on the community. Now, the real planning is done in the political realm, and it is invariably a bunch of lawyers, activist groups, and elected officials who decide what a plan should be.

In a way, planning is moving towards an ideal of participatory planning. Interested people from the community are able to participate in the planning process and influence the nature of the final plan. In such a format of how things are done, planners have become facilitators of discussions, who are frequently called upon to clarify certain technical issues.

However, the real problem is that planners have chosen the easy way out of dealing with competing visions for the future. Planners are afraid to take the lead on planning. Instead of taking advantage of the input into the planning process that comes from environmentalists, builders, lawyers, elected officials, and everybody else, planners prefer to hide from these participants and wait for plans to develop on their own. The net result is that planners don't plan. Planners administer laws and have, for all purposes, become guardians of the status quo because the real planning is done elsewhere.

Often planners take this approach because a more active approach may affect their continued employment: what if an interest group unhappy with a plan decides to go after the job that the planner holds? Planners have, therefore, adopted a strategy of maximizing job security, which then dictates that they refrain from planning.

It is this 'reactionary' trait in modern planning that worries me. Planners have become the ultimate preservers of the status quo. I am not depressed about planners not planning anymore, but am almost panicky about how planners have let themselves be trivialized into a bunch of wimpy reactionaries.

Planners are like the lion in The Wizard of Oz who lacked courage. But, a curriculum that will focus on physical planning will not make champs out of wimps. In fact, a focus on physical planning misdirects any inquiry into why planners no longer plan. As Platt himself recognizes, "planners must become a whole lot braver and put themselves on the line to better serve their communities".

Sriram Khé, Ph.D. Economics Department, California State University-Bakersfield Director, Environmental Resource Management Program 9001 Stockdale Highway, Bakersfield, CA 93311-1099 Phone: 661-664-2495 Fax: 661-664-2049 E-mail: skhe@csub.edu

BY Graham Kaye-Eddie – Master Urban Designer.

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August 22nd, 2001 NEW FREEWAY PROPOSAL AND CLEAN AIR?

California State and the governments of the Cities and County of Kern may have to spend an unknown amount of money over the next few years to reduce vehicle pollution enough to save federal funding for our proposed new freeway and road projects. Our Golden Empire (GET) transit will have to be part of this solution.

As of this moment there is no task force to examine Metropolitan Transportation projects in the light of Air Quality. There is no Kern Council of Governments (KCOG) Planning Board to hear suggestions on ways to limit the nitrogen oxides spewing from tailpipes, because the higher-than-permitted levels forecast for 2005 threaten federal highway and transit money.

One understands that KCOG and/or the Kern Transportation Authority (KTA) depending on which hat they wear sometimes at the same meetings, should be devising regional limits on vehicle emissions as part of a larger plan to reduce unhealthy ground-level ozone readings to federal standards set by the Clean Air Act. Unless vehicle pollution levels are reduced more quickly, projects not already in regional transportation plans, such as the proposed study for the east/west freeway will come to naught.

A heads up suggestion would be that a Blue Ribbon task force should consider focussing on getting Bakerfolk commuters out of their cars and cleaning up those vehicles that remain on the road, might sound like heresy. However late this action might be it should include governments helping to fund the replacement of older taxicabs. Also it should think about buying more GET and school buses that run on cleaner fuels, and also try to persuade more businesses to help pay for employees' transit and financing vanpool programs

But people who drive to work could end up paying the bill. The possible millions estimated to cover the costs of these measures and others would easily be covered by the monies that could be collected over the next three years with a region-wide, amount-per-day surcharge on parking,

The extra charge should apply to commercial garages, as well as parking spaces that companies provide for their employees, as well as those that are normally free. It should possibly apply to parking at shopping malls or other stores. This strategy could amount to a per person annual parking tax and should persuade some people to carpool or take transit. Then the monies collected should more than pay for the cleaner vehicles and other pollution-reduction programs.

The obvious way to deal with our Southern San Joaquin Valley air quality and transportation is to promote public transit and reduce vehicle miles traveled.

Who will decide which pollution-reduction measures to suggest to the KTA? It would not be smart to include the Kern Transportation Foundation but rather a selected and balanced group of planners from incorporated Cities in Kern County and a balanced smattering of private sector appointees to approve these air quality and transportation project measures.

It would be most prudent to form this Blue Ribbon Committee who should then decide which projects to enact, then local and state governments should have to pay for any programs not covered by these suggested with extra fees.

Would it not be of great comfort to Bakerfolks to know that there are steps and measures being made to change their ranking in the Southern San Joaquin Valley from the third worst air polluted area in the nation to something less? We can't keep on holding our breath for cleaner air anymore.

BY Graham Kaye-Eddie – Master Urban Designer.

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August 23rd, 2001

URBAN DESIGNERS AND ARCHITECTS ARE WIMPS

Both Urban Designers and Architects should have a mutual desire to preserve the uniqueness of natural and man-made artifacts by encouraging a joint interdisciplinary partnership.

Modern architects are blamed for factories and warehouses that are universally received as blots on the landscape, whose raw functionality is profoundly at odds with the natural environment. One just has to travel on Interstate I5 and pass the new IKEA warehouse whose square footage numbers are to “big” to consider as a reality, to observe such a misfit.

Urban designers are blamed for modernist buildings that violate the skyline, the street-line, and the urban texture of downtown areas, with few if any compensating advantages. Bakersfield has quite a few examples of these circumstances.

Architects are the first to complain that the time frame placed on buildings longevity of service today is mostly established by moneylenders. However the time frame for the menu of buildings should be reviewed. Moneylenders always try to scare the developer and architect into considering an alternative future use for their investment to ensure a second possible use for the proposed building so as not recapture a building on their books when or if the new building owner goes bankrupt.

So as not to lose the buildings original use the architect has to show an alternative. Good architects have to swallow hard about these conditions. Most architects conform. From the bankers point of view this should prevent buildings from becoming wasting assets. The challenge for architects should be rather to provide a capability for future repair and change rather than the possibility of having to demolish buildings at enormous expense.

It is my belief that there should arise a common language, an agreed upon a set of principles, and polite discourse of city building between an interdisciplinary group. This should permit the designers of public and private spaces to endow them with cheerful public pageantry and dignity.

The grammar, derived from public and private “theme” buildings should be derived from the relations between the five imperatives mentioned before in my article “Urban Design needs more than Architects Engineers and Planners.” All designers have extraordinary egos. To draw attention to the architect and his skills, public and private architectural clients have recently paid scant respect to the surrounding city building fabric. Consider the City of Balboa in Spain hiring Frank Gehry for the Balboa Museum in the existing downtown setting, as an example.

Urban designers are prone to ask why architects on the one hand no longer follow the example of Michelangelo on the Campidoglio, and wonder how private interests can only exploit niches of political power. This can destroy a communal and public-spirited environment.

On the other hand architects maintain that they must be true to their time, to their materials and to themselves. Imitation, rule-following, and stylistic formalities are thought to be a threat to creativity. Originality, sincerity and self-expression are the only standards by which a building should be judged.

Buildings that claim only space for human uses, and end up as stage sets of facadism are troubling for urban designers. Stage sets are suitable only for imaginary life, not for real life. Indeed, urban designers have favorable dispositions toward judgments from the man in the street. This critical source of basic understanding should be a warning sign – a sign that Bakerfolks desires for form, symmetry, order and human scale have been respected.

Maybe the new Bakersfield City Architectural Committee should view the pattern of design decisions in Bakersfield's process of approval, more closely. Design decisions are seldom if ever submitted to popular vote, and are either pushed through by development interests via direct lobbying of the city council and never submitted to a panel of experts chosen for their clarity of architectural and city building understanding.

Historic Bakersfield traditions arose when the people who lived in closer proximity, in order to protect and celebrate their communal life, built the city. Our forefathers, past movers and shakers, had Bakersfield arise from the human determination to dwell in a place, not for a day or a year; not even for thirty years; but forever. Urban architecture – and urban public buildings in particular – should be invocations of the permanent. It is this that makes the different styles not only agreeable to every age, but also adaptable to every use. Somehow Bakersfield a hundred years ago proved capable of creating a spontaneous urban harmony incorporating the humblest residences and the grandest public buildings side by side.

The question is why this cannot be done today? Architecture, it should be remembered, is first and foremost a vernacular art form. Although there are the great projects, the great architects who succeed in them, both are exceptions. We build because we need to, and for a purpose. The communal purpose should be clearly articulated.

Therefore a Bakersfield 2020 Vision of architecture that is universal in its aim, and comprehensive in its understanding should become the relation between buildings and Bakerfolks. According to this vision the goal of architecture is "fittingness." Downtown buildings must fit adjacent to each other and to a defined "urban context." A building must fit with other buildings in the composition of the whole downtown.

This demand for "fittingness" stems from a deep human need. We seek to be indigenous at our home in the Southern San Joaquin Valley – to come in from our traveling, to settle in the distinctive place that is pridefully ours. Hence we need to match and to harmonize, first with our natural environment and then project our common commitment to the peaceful settlement of our special place. We have to return to these principles as the basis for our future downtown building. If we are to end the disaster of our planning systems, we should reconstruct and renew the experience of community in our geographic settings.

Our uneasiness with urban designers and architects for their physical planning responses should give rather to the promise of a more open togetherness in collaboration, compromise and creativity. Maybe such an effort needs more courage and risk taking.

This cannot be done with a bunch of wimps but rather a design group with willpower and sensitivity to make the grouping of beautiful buildings into a truly unique Bakersfield community.

BY Graham Kaye-Eddie – Master Urban Designer.

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August 25th, 2001

URBAN DESIGN AND REGIONAL AGENDA

Last week I received a classy invitation to attend a Sacramento Area Council of Governments Regional Forum 2001. (www.sacog.org)

The Agenda appears to be excellent for regional affairs. Don Harris founder of the Nehemiah Corporation is the featured speaker. (www.nehemiahcorp.org) Other speakers will discuss issues of conservation, energy, commercial growth, and Kevin Starr will share his taking on the history of Californians

Having just received news from the Great Valley Center NEWS (www.greatvalley.org)– SACOG are mounting a \$1/2 million + study of Land-use Strategies. Now this should be interesting. So the northern part of the San Joaquin Valley is looking forward effectively while the San Joaquin Valley is languishing in lack of leadership.

After challenging our KCOG to get a handle on regional transportation and air quality (NEW FREEWAY PROPOSAL AND CLEAN AIR?), it is interesting to read in Great Valley News (Vol. 4 Issue 2, Aug 2001, front page) the article; Sacramento Studies Land-use Strategies.

The study includes 18 cities and includes regional transportation issues bearing on land use. To be examined as well are redevelopment, infill, mixed commercial/residential uses parking, bicycle/pedestrian streetscape strategies and situating development near transit sites.

Martin Tuttle SACOG executive director, “is attempting top focus on land-use strategies that can maintain or improve jobs/housing balance with the overall goal of reducing driving, traffic congestion and transportation-related emissions.”

In addition this SACOG study will examine: - zoning changes; location efficient mortgages; variable development fees; tax breaks; incentives and seed grants or loans; adjustments in parking policies and creation of on-street amenities.

Now if this is the normal trend of Regional actions, why is KCOG mounting a meek transportation/air quality workshop? Why is the City looking at improving bicycle routes? Again our executives are in another time warp.

While other Councils of Governments are attempting to wrestle with meaningful issues our officials are sleeping. No wonder we are never going catch up with the rest of our Great Valley.

BY Graham Kaye-Eddie – Master Urban Designer.

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August 26th, 2001

URBAN DESIGN AND CRITICISM

One hope’s that the people who randomly visit this web site are somewhat interested in a do-it-yourself critical approach about how to get cities built a little bit better. City building as a process needs a re-visit from many folk preferably from those who see the world “from outside of the box.”

Sometimes the articles that are published here are informed and well written. Most times they are done to beat the dead line of a person who is an amateur in writing. The articles are most times breathless, ungrammatical but correctly spelt, only because of the inbuilt software program speller – that is if one remembers to apply it before placing the article on the web page!

Slowly one finds that professional urban design and architectural writers and journalists as well as critics are far more sure of their articles and that they have a discipline of getting them published for newspapers and or magazines with enough days in between to do some serious reading and research. And what's more they I assume they get paid for their efforts. Welcome to an amateur with a full time job! That is one who makes a living with horses, urban design and architecture.

Everybody has an opinion. After reading journals and pieces about our urban environment for many years one may draw a conclusion that there has been little advance in our city building practices. Compare the advances in electronic communications; robotics, nanotechnology and biotechnology just to name a few. One wishes we could similar advances in architecture, urban planning and engineering. (A/E/P)

Somehow one finds that most professionals of word publication, video, movie and speech making about our urban and environmental realm are just mouthpieces for governance. As such they become the puppets for the creators of "civic" cultural products only and have become biased and out of touch with real future city building interests.

The most fascinating thing about all of this is that there are no tests for city building critics. It seems the tests for other pursuits of criticism such as movies; art, books, music and food have exceptional cyberspace followings. Urban design architecture and engineering has yet to reach any of these well-covered "urbanspace" heights.

It is my hope that a new cadre of folk will apply themselves to radically changing all the pieces that fit together to make up our cities. My belief is that the words written by the few good A/E/P authors have maybe gone a little of kilter and been crowded out of the field of reporting issues clearly. They lack focus on the reality of quality of living.

My hope is that this new rough and tumble of urban criticism will shake the very footings of the complacencies we have all fallen into. We should all rely a lot more on raising our heads to a new level of city creation, that is way better "BY DESIGN."

BY Graham Kaye-Eddie – Master Urban Designer.

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August 29th, 2001

Metro Bakersfield Freeway and Clean Air

After reading an article in the New York Times about our Governor recently and being prodded by friend Art Unger, I wrote the following letter and got a fast response.

I am not sure whether a robot answered this letter or whether it was penned by a real person. We will wait to see if the promises made go forward and the Governor does indeed instruct his office to dispatch it to Caltrans and Kern County for attention at the right moment.

8/27/01

The Honorable Gray Davis

State Capitol

Sacramento CA 95814

559 445 5295

Honorable Governor Davis

It was with great interest that I recently read a New York Times article of your speech, when you dedicated yet another new Freeway in the Los Angeles Basin. Did you really mean that this would be the last freeway you would dedicate?

I am sure that you are aware of an upcoming solution to a proposed "Kern River Freeway - Centennial Freeway - Washington Street Freeway" passing through Bakersfield in the Southern San Joaquin Valley.

It is an example of a freeway that:-

1.0 facilitates sprawl onto prime farmland

2.0 divides modest neighborhoods

3.0 is likely to bankrupt small businesses by separating them from their customers

4.0 that it brings noise and pollution to an urban park (the 460 acre Bakersfield Educational Studies Area across from CSUB)

5.0 adds to our severe non-compliance with ozone standards

6.0 will adversely impact the Rosedale-Rio Bravo Water District underground water storage area

7.0 and have substantial consequences that of reducing some of the irreplaceable farm land served by canals with sprawl.

It is my fervent hope that you are still Governor when the final decision is made on this proposed Bakersfield Metropolitan Area freeway as a State facility.

Sincerely

Graham Kaye-Eddie

Master Urban Designer.

Thank you for your e-mail.

I greatly appreciate your keeping me informed on issues that are important to you. Your comments add to the information my Administration needs as we strive to make California a better place in which to live and work. If your concerns fall under the jurisdiction of the state, your correspondence will be forwarded to the appropriate agency or department for action. To ensure that your message receives the proper response, please be sure to include your name and address when you communicate with my office and please do not include attachments in your e-mail. We do not accept or respond to attachments.

Again, thank you for sharing your thoughts. An informed and engaged citizenry is essential to the democratic process.

Sincerely, Governor Gray Davis

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August 30th, 2001

REGIONAL GOVERNMENT (KCOG) REDUCING AIR POLLUTION

At last there are local efforts brewing to reduce air pollution in the Southern San Joaquin Valley. A workshop has started thank goodness and is proceeding most tentatively.

Naturally the effort is controlled by Kern Council of Governments (KCOG) officials. The effort suggests a list of 130 solutions. Only thirty are shown at this time.

Currently Used Reasonably Available Control Measures (RACM)

Examples shown here were in a table. It is available from KCOG. The headings for columns are Measure; Description ; and Responsible Agencies.

1 Regional Express Bus Program Program includes purchase of buses to operate regional express bus services. GET; Kern Regional Transit (KRT)

2 Expansion of Public Transportation Systems This measure would focus on expanding and enhancing existing public transit services. Transit improvement increase mobility and travel options for existing riders and attract new users. Transit also offers cost saving to commuters. At reasonable levels of utilization, transit is more energy efficient than automobile travel and can also reduce traffic congestion GET; KRT

3 Transit Service Improvements in Combination with Park-and-Ride Lots and Parking Management Local jurisdictions support and work in conjunction with transit agency to improve the public transit system and add new Park-and-Ride facilities and spaces on an as needed basis. Caltrans

4 Purchase vans for vanpools Purchase a specified number of vans for use in employee commute travel
Employers

5 Telecommuting Goal of specified percentage of employees telecommuting at least once per week. Employers

6 Develop Intelligent Transportation Systems The term "Intelligent Transportation Systems" includes a variety of technological applications intended to produce more efficient use of existing transportation corridors. An example application the Freeway Management System, which combines the use of in-road sensors, surveillance cameras, ramp metering controls, and variable message, signs to detect and respond to freeway incidents. Cities; County; GET; Caltrans

7 Coordinate Traffic Signal Systems This measures implements and enhances synchronized traffic signal systems to promote steady traffic flow at moderate speeds. Signal synchronization has been implemented by most larger municipalities in the Valley; however, efforts for large-scale coordination across the entire Valley. Bakersfield; County

8 Reduce Traffic Congestion at Major Intersections This measure implements a wide range of traffic control techniques designed to facilitate smooth, safe travel through intersections. These techniques include signalization, turn lanes or median dividers. The use of grade separations may also be appropriate for high volume or unusually configured intersections. Bakersfield; County; Grade Sep. District

9 Site-Specific Transportation Control Measures This measure would encourage the implementation of any available transportation control measures targeting specific locations or subareas. This could include geometric or traffic control improvements at specific congested intersections or at other substandard locations. Another example might be programming left turn signals at certain intersections to lat, rather than lead, the green time for through traffic. Bakersfield; County; Caltrans

11 Bus Pullouts in Curbs for Passenger Loading Provide bus pullouts in curbs, or queue jumper lanes for passenger loading and unloading. Bakersfield; County

12 Adaptive traffic signals and signal timing Self explanatory Bakersfield; County

14 Bicycle/Pedestrian Program Fund high priority projects in local plans consistent with funding availability. Kern COG

15 Encouragement of Bicycle Travel The measure would provide funding for the promotion of bicycle travel to reduce automobile use and improve air quality. Once useful channel for public sector encouragement of bicycling is bikeway system planning. Identifying and publicizing appropriate routes for inter-city bike trips could help bicyclists avoid other, less safe facilities. Another area for potential actions is the development and distribution of educational materials, regarding bicycle use and safety. Kern COG; Cities; County

16 Development of Bicycle Travel Facilities This measure encourages a variety of capital improvements to increase bicycle use in the Valley. Off-street bikeways may be implemented where high speed roadways preclude safe bicycling. In downtown areas, on-street bicycle routes are more feasible because traffic generally flows at a slower rate. Bicycle travel facilities should be clearly marked with signs and adequately maintained. Cities; County; Caltrans

17 Bike Racks on Buses Bike racks would be placed on a to-be-determined number of buses to increase bicycle travel GET; KRT

18 Close streets for special events for use by bikes and pedestrians Self Explanatory Cities; County

19 Have bike/hiking patrols to ensure safety Self Explanatory Bakersfield

20 Encouragement of Pedestrian Travel Promote public awareness and use of walking as an alternative to the motor vehicle. Kern COG; Project Clean Air

21 Cool cities approach to reduce heat build-up Painting and other exterior building and community design (tree planting) to avoid heat build-up leading to greater ozone formation Cities; County

22 Satellite campuses Reduce school-related driving by having satellite campuses Colleges, Universities

23 Alternative Fuels for Fleets This measure is aimed at encouraging the use of alternative fuels for vehicle fleets operated in the nonattainment area. GET; APCD REMOVE Project; School Districts

24 Retrofitting HDDVs Subsidies or direct funding to assist in heavy duty vehicle engine retrofits APCD

25 Transit Access to Airports Operation of transit to airport to serve air passengers arriving and departing the airport to eliminate a number of auto access trips and vehicle miles traveled. GET

26 One-Way Streets Redesignate streets (or portions of in downtown areas) as one-way to improve traffic flow. Cities; County

27 On-Street Parking Restrictions Restrict on-street parking where appropriate. Cities; County

28 Provide funding so volunteers do not have to pay the cost of trail creation and maintenance Self Explanatory Cities; County

29 Land use/air quality guidelines Guidelines for development that contributes to air quality goals APCD

30 Accelerated retirement program Identify high emitting vehicle age groups and develop a program to remove them from use Cities; County; APCD

31 Expedite bike items from RTP RTP has bicycle and pedestrian master plan with build-out over a 20 year period. Bikeways and pedestrian walk-ways would be built at an accelerated rate to achieve benefits in time for attainment in 2007. No Benefit

32 Retrofitting HDDVs Subsidies or direct funding to assist in heavy duty vehicle engine retrofits Kern COG

It certainly is going to be interesting to read all the other 100 or so suggestions. Even more interesting should be the evaluation of participants as to which solutions make the most sense. One wonders if the starting point for this effort should be a priority ranking of the cost of each alternate and a comparative of this estimated dollar amount value to how well each solution would reduce the magnitude of our current air pollution.

It is apparent so far that the suggestions are in the majority most expensive to implement. So the real question is who is going to pay for this? We all are! Imagine flaming a past Regional Transportation Plan with bikeways and pedestrian paths (#31) as having No Benefit. This is truly amazing.

Seems to me that we have to look at solutions of the things we already can work with together. For example, GET needs to prescribe design criteria for bus transit service to every new approved residential subdivision in the Bakersfield Metropolitan area. GET needs to prescribe a network of lanes to service these new subdivisions efficiently. Surely the existing streets have a lane that can be dedicated to this exclusive service. There are few costs to bear to set up this suggested system. The shift from Single Occupancy Vehicles (SOV) commuting vehicles to a better designed bus system would be grand to observe, when the buses deliver their ridership to destinations faster and more conveniently than is now offered.

Would this suggestion reduce air pollution? You can bet it will! Do we need more than the 30 reasonably available control measures (RACM)? Better believe it we do.

BY Graham Kaye-Eddie – Master Urban Designer.

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August 31st, 2001

MARKET-ORIENTED APPROACHES TO GROWTH WITH URBAN DESIGN

Some of the analyzed problems about policies for urban growth in communities which has caused programs for

open space, land conservation and land development constraints to become new land reforms are a little tangential to the creating of good urban design solutions.

The sense that we citizens must regain control over the impact of urban growth, decline and change to our quality of life has come more into focus. Statutory “planning” reform laws have become a concern of Bakerfolks.

The costs and benefits of suburban growth, congestion, loss of urban space, deteriorating environmental quality and rising government spending has caused a closer look at management of affairs. Decision makers could follow status quo. They could attempt the path of more command and control urban planning or encourage market-oriented approaches.

Smart growth in essence attempts to focus on better leadership intelligence on process oriented boundaries, land use mandates linked to comprehensive legislative goals. This is a conventional approach. Consumer Oriented Growth management prescribes residents needs being satisfied. Based on no visions, no vague future planning, it is assumed to deliver all the choices in housing for residents to move in, stay or leave the community.

Market oriented urban planning disagrees with public highest and best use evaluations of land, lack of housing innovation, the time taken for approvals and associated permitting costs. This approach attempts to limit political discretion in approvals; avoid uncertainties in communities needs, preferences and wants over time; and minimize ill-defined growth management policies.

The efficiencies in the Real Estate Market should then be given reign to;

That consumers be at the center of urban growth management; allow housing choice and innovation to be maximized without restrictions for a variety of building uses and types to create unique neighborhoods and places to evolve;

That public water, sewer and waste collection services should adopt the principle of pricing structures as private utilities for cable, telephone and electricity;

That development control standards for noise, glare, storm-water runoff landscaping, buffering, aesthetic and circulation concerns be set;

That proportionate capacity allowances for public facilities such as schools, fire stations, libraries, parks and transit be based on population/density figures within a geographic limit. (Example - square mile).

That politicians and officials avoid subjective value driven criteria being introduced into the urban development process such as picking one land-use pattern over another.

Neotraditional, New Urbanism, Coving and Traditional Subdivisions are trends that still fall short as urban design alternatives for better settlement patterns. These forms of housing still discriminate between economic classes, fall short of balanced mix of housing, as well as community cultural and commercial needs. They also do not impact the feint redlining prejudices innate in real estate financing and marketing. Development and marketing of urban environments should forever break the pattern of “birds of a feather flock together”.

The most egregious problem which has not been confronted in the above urban design solutions is that of vastly different mobility ratios of service access and egress. Circulation and transportation patterns to serve a moving and changing neighborhood density should also be far more clearly defined. The blanket Transportation Oriented Development for example based on pedestrian walking distances from a station point is also short of distances that can be reached for the bicycle or for that matter other forms of transportation such as the battery driven golf cart.

If the Market Oriented Growth approach is to have a chance to succeed it should carefully re-examine the

present dysfunctional transportation networks in place. We have to re-arrange pedestrian sidewalks to become rather pedestrian pathway connectors. Bicycle pathways cannot assume a safe share of existing streets which still carries vehicular traffic. Transit still shares the mixed-use of public and private vehicles on the same street system. Maybe this should be changed for exclusive use only. The weaving of alternative transportation choices in connective layers is going to become a paramount issue if we are to reduce the overall cost of transportation.

A major principle for the Market Oriented Growth if it is to remain open ended, will be an application of the science of appropriately sized settlements to be acknowledged by both governance, citizens and the marketplace. We do not clearly understand that different human marketplaces need urban design to better satisfy communities which contain a population of 5,000, 10,000, 25,000 50,000, 100,000 and say 250,000 in a region. The challenge is to find a distinctive market balance in each scale of community commensurate with an urban design expression of a specific quality of life. What differences do we find in a rural village versus a city neighborhood? The importance of this urban design future integration should provide an opportunity for different living environmental choices. We can then truly attach significance to the classification of neighborhood, village, town, city and megalopolis.

Before becoming absolutely radical and presenting a position for no zoning; voluntary transactions; mitigated spillovers; and incorporated development into market transactions, let's clearly view Market Oriented Growth as being a workable urban design for a balanced change, only when we can thoroughly apply the correct transportation service to the different population variants.

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