



Current Barriers to Transit Oriented Development in Washington

Columbia City

Link

Presented by

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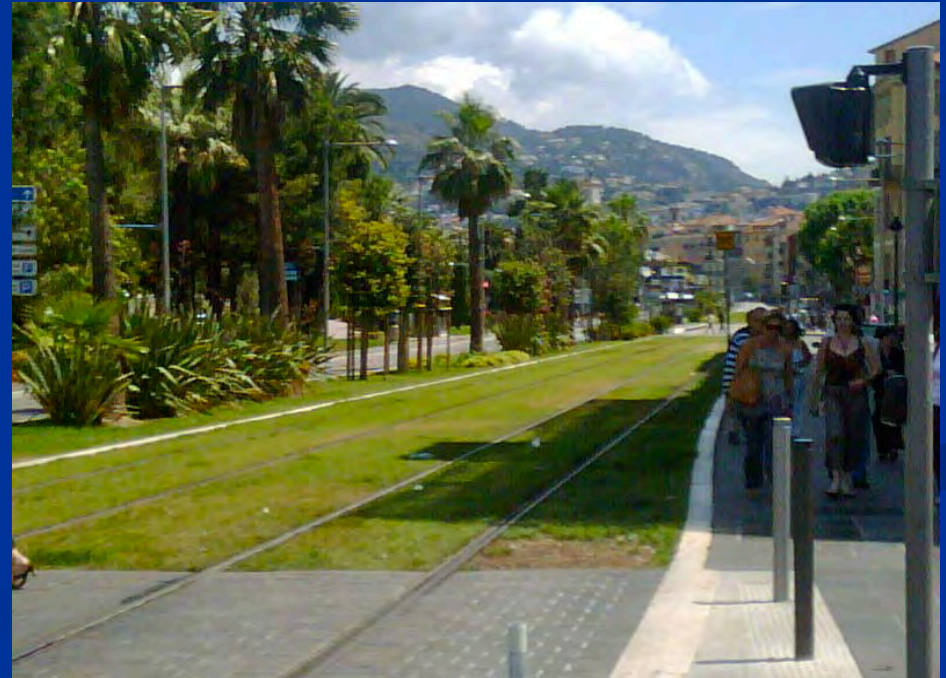
Seattle, Friday, September 18, 2009

The Inspiration











The Background



askingprice

NEIGHBORHOODS

Squeeze Play

High prices and odd lot sizes aren't dampening infill housing growth.

Price point Expensive materials and custom designs are behind infill homes' higher prices.



When Ana and Robert Bowman relocated to Seattle with two daughters and a German shepherd in tow, they wanted two things in a home: new construction and a close-in location. The Bowmans previously owned an 84-year-old Tudor, and they were ready to put away their toolbox and weekly fix-it lists and find a more open floor plan.

That's why the Bowmans bought an infill home in Lake City, just a few blocks from Sand Point Country Club and Lake Washington. "If you want to live in the urban core and you want to live in new construction, infill housing is the only game in town," says David Neiman, primary architect at Seattle's custom home builders Urban Infillers.

Infill homes are typically built on undersized lots with steep slopes, unstable soils, or conflicts with adjacent uses, and they're popping up in Seattle neighborhoods such as Magnolia, Phinney Ridge, and Ballard. The awkward plots keep some buyers away, but developers compensate by creating designs with open spaces and large windows, using high-quality materials, and building green. The goal is to entice buyers put off by irregular, less-than-spectacular plots and to improve a home's resale potential.

For the Bowmans, the odd plot did little to detract from the lifestyle the house offered them. "You get the upside of moving into a new home in an established neighborhood," Ana says. And in Seattle new infill homes sell at a premium; on average, they fetch at least \$200,000 more than older homes in the same neighborhood. But for some buyers, the benefits are worth the price. —Ashley Griffin

Alexander, Who Used to Be Rich Last Sunday



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- Crosscut articles of the past 10 days with the most reader comments.
- Sharrows are a sham solution for bike lanes (29 comments)
- An encore for the Seattle World's Fair (22 comments)
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- The enduring wisdom of Mom & Pop (16 comments)
- Dear Legislator, Never mind. (15 comments)
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Will a new mayor think boldly about planning?

There are plenty of land-use controversies to heat up the election. But some cities are jumping beyond these block-by-block skirmishes and proposing sweeping new forms of zoning and urban design. Our turn?

By Chuck Wolfe

After Labor Day, we're beyond asking how Jos Malahan and Mike McGinn, two unknowns, advanced in the Seattle mayoral primary. The question now is whether the candidates can present multi-issue detail to single-issue voters and show the panache of leadership along the way. Recalling the moniker of the 1962 Seattle World's Fair, the campaign deserves a "Century 21" agenda.

The first McGinn-Malahan debate is this Thursday, September 10, before the business community at the Cinerama. The debate agenda looks focused on specific issues, including such things as attention to "a regulatory environment that fosters capital investment and job creation." One facet of that "regulatory environment" is land-use policy and practice. Seattle deserves an integrated approach to city planning, rather than a piecemeal focus on the viaduct, streetcars, Mercer corridor, light rail celebrations, and posturing about reduced carbon footprint.

It would be exciting to move toward a truly comprehensive platform on growth, density, community form, and values. It's happening in some other cities, where land use leadership is emerging in force (discussed below). So let's start with the current agenda of issues. Here would be my list of topics for meaningful debate on this issue by the mayoral candidates.

First, what should be the real role of the Department of Planning and Development (DPD)?

This has long been a thorny Seattle issue: Where does the real planning take place? Is DPD a code-centric administrative agency at mayoral behest, with the big policy issues reserved for the land use advisers to the Mayor in the Office of Policy and Management (OPM)? That's been Mayor Nickels' style. Or, instead, might DPD be allowed to provide a laboratory of innovative techniques for growth management matched to present times, even with a daunting budgetary reality?

In *A Better Way to Zone* (Island Press 2008), Denver consultant and author Don Elliott argues for "Ten Principles to Create More Livable Cities" and offers a range of specific "fixes" for patterned lessons of the past. How might the new Mayor ask a more broadly empowered DPD to do the same? Similarly, what role should the Seattle Planning Commission play in the



Seattle's Terry Thomas Building, at dusk

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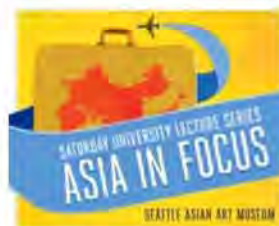
The state directs such small accessory units, to increase housing in cities. But cities get to regulate the local conditions. The fight in Seattle is joined in a few weeks.

Our region is losing the race against sprawl

New figures show that people are not moving to the regional growth centers anywhere near the rate that our 40-year growth plan predicts. It's time to craft some new approaches.

Joe Who? and Mike Who Dat?

The public had long ago soured on Mayor Nickels, but we ended up with two very unknown challengers. Here's how the political cards might be reshuffled.



The Focus

- *Post-Reality Check* Research Needs
- *Quality Growth Alliance* Local Zoning/Entitlements Committee Toolbox Needs
- The “Ask”: University of Washington College of the Built Environments, Runstad Center for Real Estate Studies
- Recommended Focus: Barriers, Solutions and Best Practices

The background of the slide features a photograph of two traffic signs. The top sign is a 'No Left Turn' sign, which is a white square with a red border and a red circle with a diagonal slash over a black left-turn arrow. Below it is a green rectangular parking sign with a white border. The parking sign has a large white 'P' in a green circle at the top, followed by the text '7AM-6PM' and 'EXCEPT BY PERMIT'. The signs are set against a backdrop of lush green trees under a clear blue sky.

Quality Growth Alliance Partner
University of Washington College of the Built
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Estate Studies

Report and Annotated
Bibliography:
*From Barriers to Solutions
and Best Practices: Urban
Centers and TOD in
Washington*

**From Barriers to Solutions and Best Practices:
Urban Centers and TOD in Washington**

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The Runstad Center for Real Estate Studies
The College of Built Environments
University of Washington

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September 4, 2009

**Top Ten Barriers, Challenges, Solutions, and Best Practices for
Affecting Change**

1. **Accommodate Pedestrians.** Reflect a pedestrian-orientation in built environments. Every transit trip begins and ends on foot, dictating a pedestrian emphasis.
2. **Improve Access from Transit to Jobs and Residences.** Locate new development in proximity to transit opportunities to leverage the public's investment in transit capital and operating budgets.
3. **Move from Node to Place.** Create places for people, not cars. A place-making orientation should take precedence over creating a node for commuters and drivers.
4. **Resolve Fiscal Challenges and Barriers.** Continue diligent attention to resolution of public and private fiscal barriers. The public sector is handicapped by limited financing mechanisms for needed infrastructure.
5. **Depoliticize Transit Service.** More fully fund transit operations and focus new service in areas with the greatest demand for transit service.
6. **Integrate Views Among Actors.** Approach urban centers and TODs in an interdisciplinary fashion. To reach its potential, TOD should benefit from integrated goals, resources and policies.
7. **Enhance Leadership and Vision.** Continue leadership and articulation of a regional vision, consistent with GMA goals and objectives for development of urban centers and TODs.
8. **Enhance Transportation Demand Management (TDM) and Related Tools.** Governments should continue to moderate auto use through TDM, balanced parking requirements, emphasis on traffic calming approaches and expanded social-cost pricing mechanisms.
9. **Implement Proactive Zoning and Land Use Regulations.** Seek graceful growth and quality living environments through proactive planning. Zoning and development regulations should reflect comprehensive planning objectives and integrate with transit agency planning and implementation.
10. **Acknowledge Political Opposition to Growth and Density Imposition.** Offset resistance to density by corresponding investments in services and amenities. Public outreach should better anticipate "NIMBY" backlash and instill a sense of ownership in projects and plans.

The Roadmap

- Intended as an applied, useful tool for stakeholders
- Executive Summary
- Top Ten Barriers, Challenges, Solutions and Best Practices
- Discussion Across Four Broad Categories
- Appendices, Case Studies

The Top Ten

- Accommodate Pedestrians
- Improve Access from Transit to Jobs and Residences
- Move from Node to Place
- Resolve Fiscal Challenges and Barriers
- Depoliticize Transit Service

The Top Ten, cont'd

- Integrate Views Among Actors
- Enhance Leadership and Vision
- Enhance Transportation Demand Management and Related Tools
- Implement Proactive Zoning and Land Use Regulations
- Acknowledge Political Opposition to Growth and Density Imposition

The Four Broad Categories

- Design, Land Use and Regulatory—
Challenges and Solutions
- Continue Diligent Attention to
Resolution of Fiscal Barriers and
Challenges
- Resolving Political Challenges
- Recognize Organizational Barriers

The Premises

- Literature notes that concentration of growth in urban centers and TODs can limit negative effects of sprawl and improve quality of life
- Washington legacy of concentrated development: GMA
- Importance of values and preferences regarding density, amenities, level of transit service and guiding principles

Design, Land Use and Regulatory (15)

- Place-making perspective to leverage transit access (the three D's: density, diversity and design)
- Multi-modal grid
- Transportation Demand Management, social cost and parking management
- Progressive projects and expedited permitting and incentives

Diligent Attention to Resolution of Fiscal Barriers (32)

- Enormous
- How to capture value?
- How to fund needed infrastructure?
- Restrictions of *Washington v. other states*, limited *Washington* programs
- Endorsement of active resolution efforts, note PSRC and discussions in today's sessions

Resolve Political Challenges

(42)

- Leadership
- Coordination across political boundaries, explore reconfiguration?
- Discourse that clearly articulates plans and policies, acknowledges NIMBYism, “depoliticizes”
- Goal: Build consensus towards alternatives to conventional development

Recognize Organizational Barriers (48)

- Mission-dependent, but explore “Big Picture” thinking
- Perils of “Planning After the Fact”
- Bel-Red model
- Role of leadership to identify constraints, limitations and institutional barriers
- Technical training, electoral turnover
- Role of public and non-profits: articulate to lawmakers and build appropriate political capital for change

Conclusion

“Demonstrable implementation of the principles offered in this report will require an integrated approach and increased cooperation among actors in meeting stated regional objectives. Too often, ideas directed at solving growth related problems are focused on singular approaches rather than a holistic approach... Successful creation of... TODs results from the intelligent linkage of complementary policies with the co-development of transit services.”

The “Barriers Report”
See Course Notebook, and:

www.qualitygrowthalliance.org

www.crwolfelaw.com

