**Chapter 4: Today’s Cities and Suburbs**

* **Sprawl**
  + A sprawl references the low-density residential development beyond the edge of service and employment areas
  + the spread-out development of separated subdivisions, office parks, malls, and strip shopping centers growing beyond existing cities and towns—has thwarted public transit development, separated rich and poor, caused unnecessary travel, consumed fragile land, and generated excessive public expenditures.
    - This type of development results from unplanned, rapid growth and poor land-use management.
      * They use a lot of land that they don’t need
      * Sprawl thus identifies the cumulative effects of development that are auto- mobile dependent, inefficient, and wasteful of natural resources.
    - Sprawl creates a never-ending upward spiral of costs. Increased usage of city roads due to the increased population makes immediate improvement necessary. The city then has to provide services to the new area. Sprawling developments also impose higher costs on police and fire departments and schools.
    - Between 1982 and 1997, Pennsylvania developed 1,800 square miles of open space and natural land, a 47 percent increase in an urbanized footprint when its population grew just 2.5 percent (Brookings Institution 2003:47)
* **Why do we have sprawl?**
  + For several generations, government policies on taxation, transportation, and housing—nurtured by society’s embrace of laissez faire development—has subsidized virtually un-limited low-density development
  + Living in suburbia gives people a feeling that they “made it”
    - Owning a house, having a car, good schools
  + **Political Fragmentation**
    - the splintered governance structure of numerous local municipalities in a metropolitan region
      * This leads to governments within a municipality all negotiating land use with developers separately
* **Consequences of sprawl**
  + By spreading residences, medical and commercial offices, and industries throughout a region on large tracts of land, we increase residents’ dependence on automobiles for transportation.
  + Everything—and everyone—is too spread out to make public transportation economically feasible. Low-density development patterns now cause the average American household to drive 4,400 more miles per year than they otherwise would drive. (C&UL 88).
  + the annual mileage of the average American driver grew three times faster over the past 25 years than the growth of the U.S. population.
    - In Colorado, for example, drivers now travel, on average, 3,400 more miles than in 1980, a 31 percent increase per driver (Levy 2008).
    - Longer commutes thus take time away from families, increase gasoline consumption as well as wear and tear on cars, cause traffic congestion, and increase instances of road rage.
  + A life- style that requires a car discriminates against poor families, the elderly, the disabled, and the young.
    - Suburban teenagers, for instance, usually lack sufficient activities in their town but are unable to travel to locations
      * Parents thus spend a large part of their time chauffeuring their children to stores, cinemas
  + **Environmental Damage**
    - Developing disrupts wildlife habitats
    - According to the Chesapeake Bay Foundation (2014), the watershed area grows by more than 120,000 new residents each year.
      * With more man-made surfaces (houses, roads, shopping centers, and parking lots), these hard surfaces prevent the rain from soaking in.
        + the stormwater, or runoff, either directly through streams or through storm drain systems, sends toxins and sediments into the Chesapeake Bay
    - Destruction of wetlands also has consequences
      * They act as natural sponges
        + Sea levels rise if they aren’t there, which leads to flooding
      * Twenty-two states have lost more than half of their original wetlands
    - Despite some con- servation efforts, the water level at Lake Mead, from which Las Vegas gets 90 percent of its water, dropped to its lowest-ever level in June 2014.
  + **Traffic Problems**
    - It generates longer commutes and greater traffic congestion.
      * The 2012 Urban Mobility Report identified continuing traffic congestion in all 439 U.S. urban areas, costing each traveler an annual average of 38 hours extra travel time (up from 16 hours in 1982) and 19 gallons of fuel wastage (up from 8 gallons in 1982)
  + **Harm to Cities**
    - This out- ward migration erodes the tax base, forcing cities to raise taxes on their remaining taxpayers to continue funding city services.
    - Sprawl weakens downtown commerce by pulling shoppers from once-thriving, locally owned stores and restaurants to large regional malls.
      * Abandoned factories, boarded-up homes, and decaying retail centers dominate the urban landscape.
  + **Financial Costs**
    - The increases in tax revenues seldom make up for the increased costs of delivering new services (water and sewer lines, schools, police and fire protection, and roads) to people who live far away from the existing infrastructure.
* **Smart Growth**
  + Smart growth is the alternative to sprawl
    - comprehensive land-use planning to revitalize and build compact, environmentally sensitive communities, ones that are transit and pedestrian oriented and contain a mix of residential, commercial, and retail spaces. I
  + **Social impact analysis**
    - interdisciplinary effort to determine the likely consequences of a project before its construction.
  + For several decades now, the United States has added 5 million new housing units every five years for an additional 10 to 12 million people.
    - Over the next 30 years, it may add another 90 million new people, most of them in metropolitan areas.
      * Clearly, the question of how the nation grows is critical (Burchell, et al. 2005:6)
  + “Smart growth” public policies seek ways to stop the bulldozing of forests and farms and instead encourage reinvestment in cities and urbanized towns through sustain- ability, denser development, mass transit, and pedestrian-friendly areas.
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    - Table comparing smart growth and sprawl
  + **Urban Growth Boundaries**
    - cities designate official boundaries in order to separate urban areas from their surrounding greenbelt of open lands, including farms, water- sheds, and parks.
      * The intent is to funnel growth into areas with existing infrastructure while protecting the wide diversity of natural resources wrapped around these population centers.
    - Portland Oregon has had an urban growth boundary in place since 1975.
      * Although other cities have greater density, the Portland plan resulted in a 20 percent growth within the inner 5-mile ring, helping preserve land farther out, even though the region’s growth outpaces the national aver- age (Cox 2013).
  + **Revitalizing Existing Towns and Cities**
    - Many communities are attempting to do this by preserving their unique architecture through restoration and improving their public transportation to restore a sense of community, improve livability, and enhance economic vitality.
      * Further enhancing that vitality is the relocation of numerous corporate giants from their sub- urban campuses to city downtowns
    - As part of its smart growth plan to encourage revitalization by drawing people to the inner city, Maryland offered a $3,000 financial incentive (with equal contributions from the state, municipality, and employer) to people who buy a home close to their work site.
    - **Eminent Domain**
      * Look up Kelo ruling
  + **Transit Oriented Approaches**
    - Building more highway lanes, using “smart corridors” with synchronized traffic lights to move vehicles through congested areas;
    - Adding car pool or high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes
    - Building more rail lines alongside the highways that connect cities and suburbs.
      * These methods don’t stop sprawl tho
    - Bell South consolidated 75 scattered work sites (with 13,000 workers) into three near the Atlanta rapid transit system.
    - Safeco in Seattle offered a multifaceted approach and commuting concierges to aid its employees.
      * 90 percent of its workers no longer take cars to work.

* + **Green Our Cities**
    - replacing diesel fuel buses with hybrid mod- els, switching to hybrid or electric taxis, and improving cycling and walking infrastructures.
    - To reduce the “heat island” effect, where cities are hotter in summer than surrounding areas,
      * cities such as Chicago and New York encourage green roofs instead of black-tar ones atop sky- scrapers, where grass, shrubs, even small trees reduce the amount of energy needed to cool buildings and capture rainwater, thereby reduc- ing the amount flowing into overtaxed sewers.
* **The New Cities**
  + Edge Cities
    - sprawling, middle-class, automobile-dependent centers that typically located at the fringe of an older urban area
      * emerged at the intersection of major highways, where little except villages or farmland existed a few decades earlier.
  + During the second half of the twentieth century, North Americans went through three waves of centrifugal movement away from the older cities.
    - Suburbanization
    - Malling of North America
      * Particularly in the 1960s and 1970s, when merchants moved their stores out to where many potential shoppers lived.
    - Companies, and the jobs they provided, moved out to where most people now lived and shopped.
  + **Characteristics and commonalities**
    - The new cities possess many of the same characteristics of older cities: extensive office and retail space, a large-scale influx of workers each week- day morning, and a mixed use of work, shopping, and entertainment (Garreau 1991:425).
      * What one seldom finds, however, is a clearly defined territorial boundary.
        + No map boundaries define where they begin and end
    - Unlike their older counterparts, new cities are spread out, requiring the use of a car, and lacking the compactness of closely adjacent buildings and high pedestrian traffic.
    - Further, many do not have a mayor, city council, or civic codes; their lack of political organization and elected officials usually means the only unifying element is a jointly shared security patrol.
    - A common feature of new cities is that they have sprouted far from the old downtowns, in locales where little existed a few decades ago except villages and farmland.
      * They typically evolve adjacent to two or more major highways, usually with shopping malls serving as anchor points.
  + **Types of New Cities**
    - New cities fall into one of three major categories:
      * (1) uptowns, built on top of pre-automobile settlements, such as Pasadena, California, or Arlington, Virginia;
      * (2) boomers, the typical new city located at the intersection of two major highways and almost always centered on a mall, usually 3 types
        + Strip Boomer City

fairly narrow and extends along a major high- way for several miles, such as along Route 128 near the Mass Pike outside Boston or Route 1 in Princeton.

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* + - * + Node boomer city

more contained and dense, such as Tysons Cor- ner in Virginia,

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* + - * + Pig-In-Python Boomer City

a combination of the other two in that it occurs along a highway strip with several nodes, such as the Lodge Freeway in the Southfield area near Detroit or King of Prussia near Philadelphia.

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* + - * (3) greenfields, a master-planned city by one developer on thousands of farmland acres
        + such as Irvine, California, and Las Colinas, Texas, near the Dallas–Fort Worth airport.
* **Gated Communities**
  + the first planned gated community in 1853 at Llewellyn Park in West Orange, New Jersey.
  + Beginning in the 1980s, gated communities increased rapidly
  + What makes them different from suburbs?
    - gated communities are actually defended by walls, with access con- trolled either by electronically operated gates or by 24-hour guards and grounds patrolled by pri- vate security forces.
      * the reasons why residents choose gated communities usually center on fear of crime and attempts to establish economic and physical security, free from the problems of traffic and noise.
    - residents enjoy their own pay-as-you-go services.
      * They share responsibility for common areas and for enforcing the numerous rules and regulations, often through homeowners’ associations, rather than relying on conventional elected local gov- ernments for many common services.
    - Accelerate segregation
  + **Types of Gated Communities**
    - lifestyle communities,
    - prestige communities
    - security-zone communities
    - each promotes a particular combination of four social values
    - (1) a sense of community (preservation and strengthening of neighborhood bonds)
    - (2) exclusion (separation and protection from the outside)
    - (3) privatization (the desire to privatize and internally control public services)
    - (4) stability (homogeneity and predictability)
* **Lifestyle Communities**
  + Lifestyle communities are an expression of conspicuous consumption and a new leisure class.
    - They emphasize amenities and include retirement communities, such as the nationwide chain of Leisure Worlds, all of which offer senior citizens the chance to engage in a wide variety of activities close to their homes.
  + Gold and Lesiure Communities
    - the gates cordon off the lei- sure resources for the exclusive use of commu- nity residents. Lifestyle commu- nities attract those who want separate, private services and amenities within a homogeneous, predictable environment.
* **Prestige Communities**
  + Status-oriented enclaves, such as those in affluent Pacific Palisades in San Clemente and Conyers Farm in Greenwich, Connecticut
  + Prestige communities attract those seeking a stable neighborhood of similar people where property values will be pro- tected. For these residents, concerns about sepa- ration and privatization of services are secondary
* **Security Zone Communities**
  + Security-zone communities are “enclaves of fear”
  + They are a defen- sive measure reflecting a fortress mentality, with walls, gates, closed streets, and various secu- rity systems.
  + often located in inner-city and lower-income neighborhoods
  + Security-zone communities seek to strengthen and protect a sense of commu- nity, but their primary goal is to exclude those people their residents perceive as threats to their safety and quality of life.
* **A Sense of Community**
  + living in segre- gated and isolated enclaves diminishes social life, claim these authors.
  + All residents can do is compare their own material gains with those of their neighbors to piece together some idea of “how they are doing.”
    - Keeping up with he Jonses
  + Because these barricaded neigh- borhoods exclude the lower classes not only from living there (through prohibitive housing costs) but also from even casually passing by, they effectively limit social contact among different members and groups of society.
    - Such class sepa- ration is often de facto racial segregation,
  + Despite their promise, the quality of com- munity appears not to improve in gated devel- opments.
* **Common Intertest Developments**
  + A close relationship exists between the two phenomena (CID and GC’s), but they are not the same thing.
    - CID require membership in a self-governing homeowners’ association— include suburban planned-unit developments of single-family homes, urban condominiums, and housing cooperatives
  + Builders find CID housing profitable, because it is a mass-produced commodity and enables them to concentrate more people on less land
  + Buyers are willing to accept smaller lots and narrower streets, because the development contains open spaces and desirable amenities, including facilities owned in common by all residents—such as swimming pools, gyms, parks, golf courses, social centers, and often even exclusive access to shopping centers and their own schools.
  + Public officials are willing to issue building permits for these high-density, designed communities, with their private infrastructure, because they add taxpayers at minimal public cost.
  + CID residents pay a heavy price, because they surrender much of their other freedoms and privacy.
    - They live under the rule of their corpo- rate board of directors, an elected group of neigh- bors enforcing a set of restrictions created by the developer
  + **Case Study; Portland Oregon**
    - In the 1960s, Portland fell victim to the same ills afflicting other U.S. cities. Its econ- omy nose-dived as industries closed.
      * Portland’s leaders drew a line around their metropolitan area, ban- ning any development beyond that point
    - tearing up its downtown riverfront freeway and then converting the area, along with abandoned warehouse sites, into one of the city’s most-used parks
    - It also limited downtown park- ing spaces and created an award-winning mass transit system with North America’s first mod- ern streetcar system, the MAX light rail and the TriMet bus system.
      * No Portlander is forced to ride buses, MAX trains, or WES trains, but 78 percent of those who own cars choose a pub- lic transit option instead. U
        + An average of 315,000 riders commuted weekdays on buses or trains in fiscal year 2014— making its metro region eleventh per capita in ridership among U.S. cities even though it ranks 24th in population.
    - Portland set aside 1 percent of public construction funds to enhance the phys- ical attractiveness of the area through outdoor public art.
    - Portland reviews the urban growth bound- ary for its seven-county metropolitan area every six years
    - To keep “big box” stores from springing up in industrial areas, Port- land’s plan also limited retail outlets to 60,000 square feet