“Density is the benefit...”

Rail-Volution, 2009

DAVID DIXON, FAIA | GOODY CLANCY | david.dixon@goodyclancy.com

DOING DENSITY RIGHT
Not all visions represent progress
The past represents the dream of a different America...
...and the present represents the dream of a different world
The demographics of housing demand have changed dramatically: 1950s-90s...
...and an aging population creates new challenges...and opportunities

GROWTH IN UNITED STATES POPULATION 25 AND OVER FOR EACH DECADE FROM 1960 TO 2030 (IN MILLIONS)


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AGE GROUP ACCOUNTING FOR LARGEST AMOUNT OF GROWTH

- 55–64 = 3.1 million
- 25–34 = 12.1 million
- 35–44 = 12.0 million
- 45–54 = 12.8 million
- 55–64 = 11.8 million
- 65–74 = 10.5 million
- 75–84 = 8.3 million

Ages 25–64 | Ages 65 and older
AVERAGE ANNUAL PERCENT OF PERSONS BUYING AND SELLING HOMES IN EACH AGE GROUP, FOR THE UNITED STATES, 1995 TO 2000

NOTE: ON AVERAGE, 8.8% OF PERSONS 80 AND OLDER SOLD HOMES EACH YEAR.
Changing Values: congestion is now viewed as undermining quality of life

Average commuter today spends more than an entire workweek per year stuck in traffic. — TEXAS TRANSPORTATION INSTITUTE

BOSTON REGION CHANGES, 1990-2000

The Boston Globe reported that more than 75% polled now report that a shorter commute would be a primary factor in choosing a next house.
A growing awareness that compact communities are healthier

- CDC: Denser communities have less obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure
- According to a recent national health survey, sprawl and low density correlate more highly with reduced health than...
  - race
  - reducing income by 50%

**Sprawl’s Association with Higher Number of Health Problems**

- BOSTON
- ST. LOUIS
- DALLAS

Number of chronic conditions per 100 persons
Sustainability has become personal

Positive proof of global warming.

Housing demand is moving toward density

DEMAND FOR...

LARGE LOT SUBURBAN HOUSING...

2007

2030

SMALL LOT SUBURBAN AND URBAN HOUSING...

2007

2030
The value of mixed-use, walkable developments is rising

GROWTH IN RENTS 2000-2007 FOR MIXED-USE, WALKABLE DEVELOPMENTS: +35%

GROWTH IN RENTS 2000-2007 FOR SUBURBAN OFFICE PARKS: 0%
Walkability adds value

- CEO’s for cities: for each additional Walk Score point housing prices increase $600 to $3000

- Boston top 10 Walk Score neighborhoods:
  1. Back Bay/Beacon Hill—97
  2. South End—97 ($600/SF)
  3. Fenway—96
  4. Central—95
  5. Allston-Brighton—86
  6. Jamaica Plain—84
  7. Charlestown—81
  8. North Dorchester—80
  9. South Boston—80
  10. Roxbury—78
  11. South Dorchester—77
  12. Roslindale—73 ($300/SF)
The case for density: building blocks for livability

- Early cities
- Europe in the Middle Ages
- …and the Renaissance
- New World cities
- The Industrial Revolution
- Reaction

Plan for Miletus, 5th century BCE
BUILDING BLOCKS FOR LIVABILITY

1. BUILD COMMUNITY
2. ADVANCE SUSTAINABILITY
3. PROMOTE HEALTH
4. EXPAND CHOICE
5. MAKE PLACES FOR PEOPLE
Creating community in the midst of a much more diverse America
Density revives Main Streets

• In most neighborhoods residents now spend less than 1/5 of their retail dollars in local commercial districts…much less than before WWII

• 1,000 to 2,000 new housing units within a 10- to 15-minute walk needed to support a block of new Main Street—more in low-income neighborhoods
...and is essential to creating financially and socially viable diverse communities

St. Paul’s Quadrant, Norfolk, VA
Advance sustainability
Density supports the costs of revitalization of grey and brown fields.

Assembly Square, outside of Boston
...and supports the infrastructure of smart growth—transit and walkability

Houston, Texas (above) and Bethesda, Maryland (right)
Enhance Personal Health
Density is critical to bringing housing, retail, and other resources to older neighborhoods.

Boston’s “newest smart growth corridor”,
Goody Clancy
...and supports the destinations that encourage people to walk

Adding “eyes on the street” with denser development and pedestrian-focused design increases security.

Plan for the area around Emory University, Atlanta
Expand Individual Choice

New Orleans
Density supports diverse housing options

...and enables people to age in their communities
...provides the critical mass to support a transportation choices

- 71% of older households want to be within walking distance of transit.
- By 2025, 14.6 million households are expected to want housing within a half-mile of fixed-guideway transit.
Make Places People Love
Don’t borrow inspiration from other societies: instead of iconic sculpture
...iconic community-building
Anonymity at the threshold of walkability 15 to 25 units per acre...

An anonymous apartment complex...
Uplands, new mixed-income neighborhood, Baltimore
A Las Vegas vision of traditional urban densities 50 to 100 units per acre
Crown Center in Kansas City
Boston’s historic South End

Langham Court, Boston
Density can be a tool for creating people-centered streets...from uses that lack life.

Parking garages in Albuquerque and Columbus, OH.
...bridging differences...in uses, people, and eras
...and celebrate human nature

Millennium Park, Chicago