

Planning – this is much shorter than economic growth paradigm conflict or the ATS. Look at **older cities** in Europe and the US or just about anywhere for that matter. They had to be small to work for pedestrian traffic and animals and they work better than what we have now. Enter the automobile and petroleum which seemed to obviate the need for compact cities. But there is **no such thing** as a free lunch.

This is indicative of good planning – much thought and planning and permanence. Not a Dogloo or Weber grille – move it around when the mood suits you and throw it out when it gets a little old, dirty or you're tired of it and buy another one.



The best way I can think to say it – suburbs, auto-dominated transportation and surface parking are the vinyl siding and asphalt shingles of city planning. They are **cheap, don't last long**, and don't take much thought or skill to do – they are easy and look nice enough on first glance (literally on the surface), but the implications are far-reaching, from the structure of the community rotting under the surface to the expense of doing it all over when it inevitably fails and so much of the material ending up in the landfill or having to be recycled at great energy and labor expense. A compact, timeless city has an interactive dynamic that takes many levels of thought to realize unlike scrape and pave which is more related to **volume** (quantity) than anything well planned (quality).

My vision – is in response to current planning practices (which are changing slowly, in some places, kind of) as well as my studies of **classic city planning** both in school and in “real life.” I'd like to see at least half the street sold to private developers/property owners and on that land build (as “infill”) shops/businesses/services for the first floor or two – above that build apartments (5 or more stories) and on the roof top have terraces and gardens. There would be a walkway that would tie the roofs together civically as an elevated walkway. This would provide a **built-in user group** for conveniently located shops and services while eliminating high-maintenance/infrastructure cost roadways. The part of the street left would be for running/biking and moving equipment late at night/early morning – the sidewalks would be left as is mostly for walking and street vendors. Suburbs would no longer have need of roadways so that land would have infill housing/apartments with roof top gardens and shops/services/home businesses for the neighborhood. The suburban houses would have the opportunity to use some of the land currently used to grow turf for smaller houses/home offices as well as gardens for vegetables, **permaculture** (nut and fruit trees/shrubs), wildlife habitat and flowers. As the homes get older they would be transitioned into more classical city planned areas. The cities and suburbs would be redeveloped on a case by case basis with a general goal in mind of less city infrastructure and convenience for walk/bike-ability and strengthening community. It would be a time to undo bad planning – such as buildings in flood prone areas, parking lots and large traffic corridors/highway interchanges etc. that divide cities. The physical structure of the ATS would provide a platform to run updated/more secure/reliable power grid and communication systems – in need of work too. The old phone/power poles and wires would be gone from the landscape. There would be enough land available to accommodate development with in cities for a long time with the goal being to stop outward expansion then slowly shrink the population and city size as we reclaim natural order with trees, prairie etc. to the point that we **live in balance** as far as needs vs resources – a sustainable city/society. As we rebuild and redevelop we insulate/make environmentally responsive, energy efficient buildings and eliminate unhealthy materials and building/planning methods. These are the kind of before and after transitions we'd like to investigate and depict with the funding. The land would have to be **sold slowly** to keep values up and the sale would include foreign investors so we would end up with an **integrated global economy** eliminating a lot of the “us” vs “them” – it would all become “we”.

What if we could suddenly teletransport ourselves using only our mind – wouldn't our sprawling cities look very wasteful and poorly planned? **We can't** teletransport but the cities still look incredibly inefficient and inconvenient. In a well-planned city for people you don't need teletransportation – you do need some exercise which is provided via the short distances you get to walk or bike.

Is climate change real? Do we want to find out? I say let's plan so that it becomes less of an issue and less of a possibility while improving everything (except maybe some of America's corporate cash flow and bank balances). With the installation of the ATS, greenhouse gas production would be greatly **reduced** provided that "slack" was not picked up in other industries – but the effects of climate change and the slowing of their effect will take time. If ALL man made greenhouse gas producing activities ceased tomorrow there would be a lag time as to when the atmosphere would balance its self to pre-industrial levels. If we don't do something and something of major significance or even increase the production of greenhouse gasses climate change will definitely happen. Relative to the ATS and city planning though it is not an argument that needs to be addressed. The ATS would make cities more livable as they are – if the ocean levels rise the ATS is the only thing I can think of that will allow our cities to be used during a **transition time**. The bottom of the system will be above the highest possible ocean level rise. All of its power and support systems are above that. If the ATS is not installed and ocean levels rise it will require much faster transitions (exodus of coastal regions) and valuable real estate will be lost quickly. The ATS **hedges our bets** from many perspectives while getting a much better system.

Installation of the ATS would be similar to installing a subway or high speed rail. It would be a disruptive and expensive investment – but for a big return. And unlike the subway or rail – the ATS solves and/or better yet gets rid of problems. It is also up off the ground and has a much smaller footprint than surface transportation so it can be installed while the current system remains functional. If there is climate change and rising ocean levels the ATS will **not be affected** unlike subways, rail or surface transportation. The ATS frees up the ground plane instead of dividing it and is infinitely more accessible for work/maintenance and modification than a subway. Much of the maintenance and construction would be automated at least partially.

In a well-planned city the small roadways serve an incredible number of PEOPLE – not cars. The density of the city means walking is more convenient than cars. Roadways and vehicle infrastructure are expensive to install and maintain. And the more there are the more that are needed. Look at a big highway with service roads paralleling them, as well as the size of the interchanges. All that hard surface causes **water runoff problems and heat islands** as well and of course you have to have lots of surface parking too – which increases the cost of doing business for the stores and the city.

Cars are **inconvenient** – driving from here to there takes time as opposed to a short walk in a denser planned city. Less time means the need for helpers like drive-through fast food, pharmacies (to pick up the meds for your heart condition brought on by bad food and not enough exercise), coffee etc.

Snowball syndrome. In a sprawling, automobile-dominated city the infrastructure grows exponentially relative to population. A four block area of commercial in a small town with houses outside of that serves few people and has two streets – no need for traffic lights, turn lanes etc. People might even walk "downtown". If you add a row of blocks around the city center you've added 10 blocks of population and needed to tear down residential buildings to do that and upgrade the infrastructure for added vehicular traffic. The city center now handles about four times as much traffic – add traffic lights. Add another row of blocks around the perimeter – quadruple the traffic again – tear down and rebuild, add

turn lanes and traffic cameras and make sure emergency crews are available. There is also a need for holes in the urban fabric for parking lots and other non-people friendly “amenities” (vacant lots). Sometimes land owners do this on purpose to wait until land prices have risen (land banking) – but people do not like to walk by empty lots and so they drive and the driving phenomenon grows its self – snow balling. If you start with shops and commercial on the ground floor and living above that and continue to expand the city, it will be quite some time before having to upgrade infrastructure because everyone walks or rides bicycles because everything is nearby. There is less paving for water runoff and all the development is **tax base** rather than ever larger streets which are a tax liability for the city.

When cities are well-planned **the countryside** is never very far away even in large cities – not suburban parks but real countryside.

Exercise – **cars** are not conducive to exercise which is now artificially accomplished (sometimes) as opposed to part of everyday life. And bike riding or running is taking your life into your hands when hurried, distracted people are involved in large, heavy machines such as cars. And the drivers are not used to pedestrians or bikers – this is backwards relative to a healthy city designed for **people**.

Why is it like this? The **most lucrative** part of development is turning cheap land into high-value land. The easiest way to do this is with farm land – no demolition (the best farm land is near the city which is why the city grew there). Buy hundreds of acres at agriculture prices – subdivide, add infrastructure (that is turned over to the city to maintain at taxpayer expense) and increase the price of the land by a factor of at least a hundred. Why not put a development tax on the land; because the city is hooked on growth too for some reason – buy design. And the cities **institutionalize** sprawl in the way of required parking, “green space, maximum lot coverage etc. They use the money from current development to pay to maintain existing development – an ever bigger hit to maintain the high, and when it stops growing it collapses under its own weight or at least struggles. **Sustainable cities** do not have these extremes – they are sustainable. Change the code to minimum site coverage for starters and prove how the development makes the city stronger and healthier before permits are issued.

ATS will give the opportunity to undo the negative effects of bad planning – selling off the streets means shops and living units can be built there close to needed services – within walking/biking distance and much less city to maintain. **Everyone says** they want smaller governments, lower taxes, to be healthier and pay less for medical coverage – here is a great way to get there. It turns high cost road/infrastructure maintenance into **tax revenue** generating base.

It is impractical to try to support **public transportation** with low density development – the numbers just don’t work – it has to be subsidized – basically sprawling development, which makes the most profit for developers, is subsidized by tax payers/home/business owners. Actually it is impractical to support (city) infrastructure in general with low density development and it becomes more expensive/less affordable as the city grows and sprawls - infrastructure needs expand exponentially with sprawl – they don’t expand with dense development. **Ironically** the city planners don’t make planning decisions (they advise and recommend) the city council does and invariably at the direction/suggestion of the developers (they are VERY adamant about getting their buddies on the council). It is similar to the school

board directing the school designers. It is like an audience member bringing a kazoo to a concert and works as well and is **equally appreciated** by the orchestra conductor. The ATS would eliminate a lot of traditional public transportation because it can be quite inefficient – the ATS uses many small, ultra-light weight vehicles rather than few large ones – economy of scale. Need a ride at 3AM – no need to have a bus driving around empty – just call a public pod with your phone – it comes to your door – **or even inside** – it is electric.

Many more and **higher quality amenities** can be afforded (including parks - with swimmable lakes) with denser planning. People tend to vacation in vary nature oriented or very city oriented places not sprawling suburbs. People want to do and experience diverse things – lacking in the burbs. They are a disease which can turn into blight which is a great development opportunity – everything bulldozed goes into the landfill though. I am watching slums being built where I live now – big growth boom due to university expansion. When the development starts to **look shabby** you sell it and move onto greener pastures – to scrape and pave.

Mobile (transitional) housing pod – don't trap people in economically depressed/high unemployment areas with fixed housing – make it so they can move around for work or weather in their own incredibly affordable housing with docking stations with waste/water/power/internet hook ups. **What a way** to see the country.

Dense city planning allows for large city parks and amenities – in Pittsburgh PA (Euro style down/midtown) they had parks big enough to get lost in and they had truly wild places in them. It is or was a more Euro style planned city – the new suburbs are new development sprawl though. Now they apply the suburban development standards to the inner city and mid-town so **they tear down apartment** buildings for parking lots for grocery store expansions – the lots are virtually empty because most people walk in the older parts of town, but the affordable housing in walking distance of amenities is gone.

I recently went to **Spain** for a couple weeks - many cities and the country – it was very different in a wonderful way. What an eye opener - no sales tax, no tipping, reasonable to good prices and walking, incredible civic amenities, permanent development, biking and convenient public transportation everywhere. And I **always felt safe** even late at night. Can we even try planning like a classical city – before cars? Pretty much time tested – the jury is still out on our version and they are starting to ask hard questions and question everything – even very slowly adopting some classic planning ideas. You know, can we plan and build a city (or redevelop) like the ones everyone one wants to go to on vacation? **The ATS will provide that chance** – selling the majority of the streets means shops can be put in at ground level and apartments above for a livable, walkable cut with lower maintenance/infrastructure needs – less need for mass transit among other things; more opportunity to **experience life**.