

Sustainable Development Goals may Impinge on Personal rights: The 15-Minute City and how New Urbanism will Never be Inclusive

by [John Henry](#) (March 2023)



Renaissance Conception of an Ideal City

What is formulated in Davos doesn't stay in Davos—the scrambled thinking becomes worldwide proclamations and edicts that must be followed. A continuing effort to social engineer our individual medical and collective urban status (among other things) and legislate “environmental justice” by the radical left-minded WEF and UN has been met with aversion by many who have especially suffered during the pandemic lockdowns and upon realization that most of the strong-arm tactics were unnecessary, are seeing further top-down decrees as Orwellian. There is no longer any trust in these elitist discussions.

Let me begin by saying this: all historical (pre-automobile) designed cities were never intended to be commandeered by

automobiles. The best monuments and plazas in Rome seem to be within a 30-minute walk. All older cities which relied on horse and buggy before the Industrial Revolution (which first injected trams into the main city centers aimed towards the suburbs and outer districts) had irregular streets and neighborhoods, especially those from Medieval times. You can see this in Cairo, Istanbul, Athens, London and Paris centers (the latter both reworked with radial elements following Renaissance/military conceptions after clearing older sections) and other towns and cities in Europe, the Middle East and Asia. You can see this in L'Enfant-planned Washington D.C. The beauty of the arrangement of buildings (Ringstrasse, Vienna—after demolishing the fortification) and the 'old world' pedestrian/beast of burden basis of the city is aggravated more and more by vehicular traffic: buses and autos, and without a subway system the negotiation of such with autos, as in Oxford, creates traffic nightmares and pollution.

From purely an environmental view, banning cars on certain narrow streets and perhaps all on the oldest avenues, etc. would be the best bet; now autos are parked nose to tail from Munich to Marseilles. And we now all live ideally where costs of daily transit are balanced against places of work and access to amenities. It is too late to change that unless we uproot all of ourselves. People live where they can afford to and nearest the amenities they prize the most. They try their best, over years, to move until they are satisfied.

Automobiles have allowed citizens of all countries to live farther away from work, health care, and entertainment than in any pedestrian-only historic design. Being ordered to drive here or there at certain hours and for allotted yearly quotas does not dovetail very well into how modern life has evolved. People commute for hours in order to have economical suburban living quarters and even enjoy rural life as an alternative to urban living. While the districting envisioned by the UN and

WEF work ideally in existing high density older urban centers that include public transit, this concept is not that easily worked in the low-density-zoned United States.

One other thing to keep in mind, in most cases, the New Urbanist towns manufactured over the last 30 years appear in the southern United States. Windsor, Florida, which had the goal of being a 15 minute walk from end to end, like Seaside and Celebration, are in a very temperate climate. That is no coincidence. While Florida has plenty of rain and hurricanes, the climate tends to be moderate and warm with no sleet or snow. All of the New Urbanist communities allow for gasoline powered vehicles in the event of inclement weather, which is a scant afternoon or two normally. In cold and dreary conditions, making your citizenry walk those dreaded 15 or 30 minutes is untenable.

In September of 2015, the United Nations, in order to 'save the planet' and address other altruistic social, economic and political concepts, agreed on a wide-ranging 17 sustainable development goals, or SDGs. [Goal 11](#) is to "Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable." One of the targets is to "By 2020, substantially increase the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, [and] resilience to disasters."

Building on this notion, Scotland, in January of this year, [adopted](#) a national planning framework to prioritize the creation of 20-minute neighborhoods that would allow residents to work, live, shop, exercise, and have access to educational facilities.

The bottom-line goal is to reduce carbon emissions by preventing the construction of isolated suburban communities that requires homeowners to commute or drive to work, services, and entertainment/education/hospitals. No doubt this

is a lofty goal and urban planners for years have favored the big city over urban sprawl and have written zoning codes to make subdivision construction more difficult to enact.

In addition to carbon issues is the fact that we saw stay at home work increase due to the pandemic of the last two or three years which inspired a seemingly wide-eyed resolve to maintain this live/work model and the necessity to create a more sustainable immediate range of amenities. Thus the idea to contain, I suppose, in a series of connected pods, a series of self-sufficient community living and working neighborhoods. What is really different here though than already existing infrastructure that has permitted this to work for years?

Historically, most cities grew up around trade, which then developed into more permanent places of commerce. Cities reduced transportation costs for goods and people by bringing them closer together. By reducing these costs, cities increased productivity and thus further evolved the city as a multiplier of culture and innovation. (As Aristotle said, "The city-state comes into being for the sake of living, but it exists for the sake of living well.") –[Lisa Chamberlain](#)

A salient and little revealed fact is that [40% of worldwide carbon](#) emissions are the result of building construction and the methods of manufacture, distribution, and erection. The manufacture of concrete and steel, aluminum, shingles and rubberized roofs, glass, and plastics, etc. creates carbon and other pollution. Energy required to deliver the material and to build houses and strip malls, mid- to high-rise buildings, storage and warehousing, etc. adds to the carbon measure—not to mention the roads and utilities that must accompany development.

There is no doubt in my mind, at least in these United States, that the massive and country-wide roll out of infrastructure for so many years to such a destructive (environmental) and wasteful (materials) degree, in order to further and maintain a notion of our "American Dream" had to finally be abated or corrected in favor of a different model. One of those models was the New Urbanist conception of the New Town isolated from the center city and somewhat self-dependent.

This country enjoyed industrial expansion and with cheap energy allowed the construction of mini-mansions on single lots outside the main city limits in order to get away from factory noise, pollution, and crime. Originally connected by efficient rail, GM and other manufacturers pushed the single automobile for independent movement (and resultant excess of manufacture and pollution). At the time, in wide open spaces, the population didn't suffer much and it was merely an extension of having a horse or two in the family stable to two cars in a garage.

A quilt of suburbia simply spreads out over many miles and requires additional roads and utilities, fire and health protection, etc., increasing the tax burden for initial build out and then ongoing maintenance on the backs of homeowners. But it also created factories and jobs for the production of asphalt, concrete, plumbing and electrical frameworks and for those who laid out the infrastructure and maintained it. This is the 'American Way.'

The urban planners, over time, realized that they could not guarantee safety and good health in the large city they idolized and promoted, despite the proliferation of suburbia which was preferred by the public, and instead heralded the advantages of culture, diversity and other lofty goals in a tight and densely populated city center. These larger cities are further deteriorating with left-minded police defunding and social programs for years that have not clearly reached their goals. Additional taxation is now pushing residents out

into a widespread migration to lower taxed, less dense, and less crime ridden states and cities operated by Republican administrations.

The problem of late comes in mandating laws to “implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change.” –per the [SDG directive](#).

Dovetailing into similar internationally formulated rules, President Biden very recently [reinstated](#) Obama’s AFFH (Affirmatively Further Fair Housing) HUD backed Regulation, which threatens to withhold funding for municipalities that restrict low-income housing in affluent neighborhoods. The 377-page regulations require authorities to take “meaningful actions” to diversify neighborhoods or risk losing millions of dollars in federal grants.

As if we do not have sufficiently complicated and bureaucratically bloated regulations, additional rules governing zoning and woke inclusionary and affirmative action rules for the control of housing construction projects will make developers simply charge more for these inane and privacy robbing regulations. But more sinister is the possibility of forced social engineering and loss of personal freedoms if municipalities mandate new restrictive measures on a population forced into the UN’s and the WEF’s idealized communities where, in 15 to 20 minutes, you can accomplish all your daily tasks and enjoy all the things you have ever dreamed of.

Supposed well-meaning international organizations have created chaos in the last two years as we witnessed forced measures to ensure public safety *vis-à-vis* the covid pandemic that have caused more harm than saved lives.

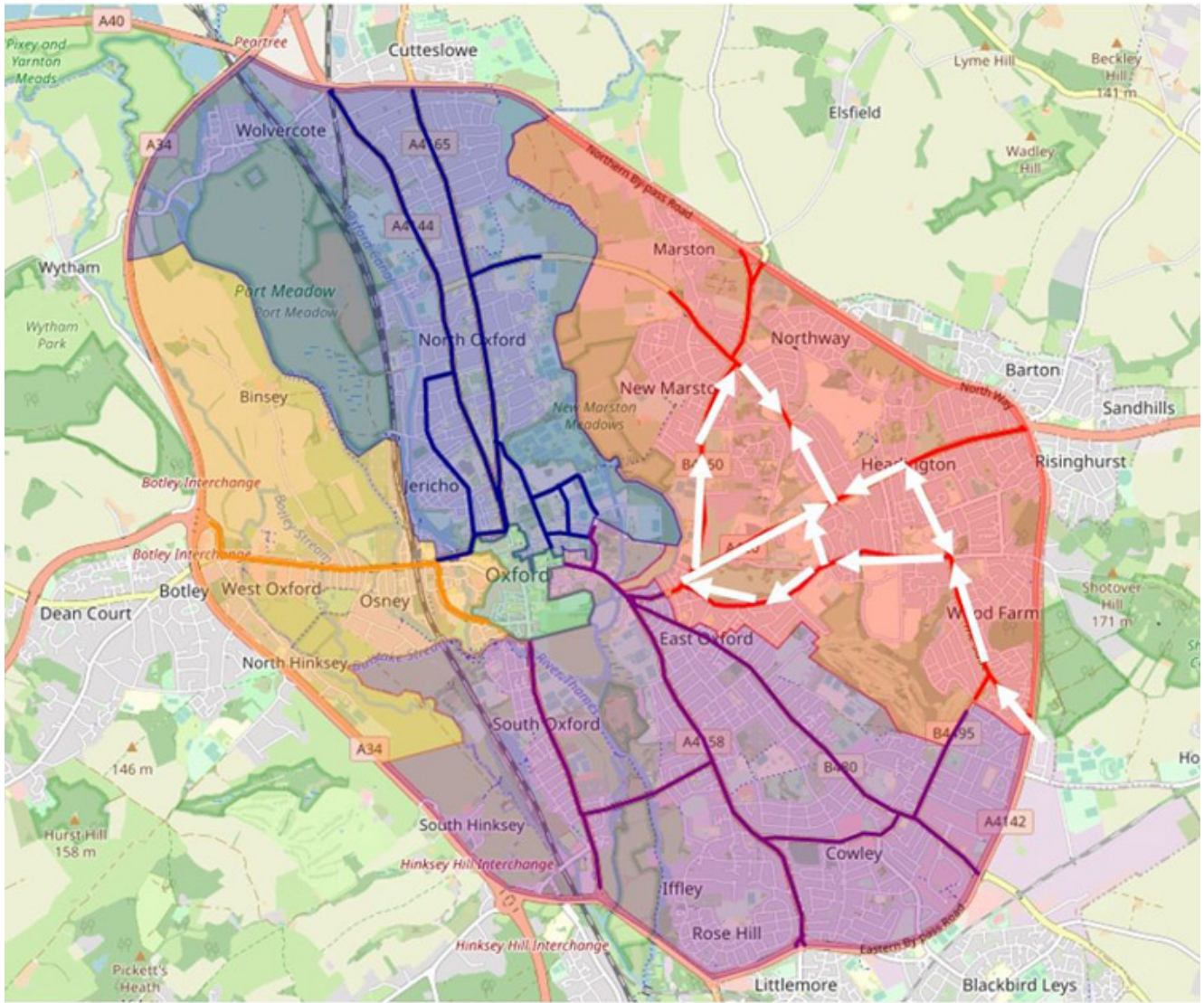
The UN and the SDG movement are planning to exert complete control over new town building in sovereign states that would

reverse organic development and settlement that identifies individual cultures and then limit housing and work options to its citizens. The World Economic Forum has backed the SDG goals and there is much pressure for nations to adopt the 17 tenets. Like the Paris Climate accords, which countries are willing to give up so much historic planning freedom of expansion and development in order to meet the SDG's goals? What measures would be taken to punish non-compliance?

The EU tends to agree on many Green initiatives and will probably be the first, as in Scotland, to start writing new directives for construction expansion that fits their collective view concerning climate issues and inclusionary tenets. The academic establishment is all in for these types of projects and in theory they seem well founded. Professor Carlos [Moreno](#) (a 1970s M-19 member), based in France, has written about smart cities and urban villages since 2016, where planned neighborhoods and communities can be designed to allow inhabitants to enjoy all essential services within a few block radius— [\(and darkly\) require a new economic model](#) in order to achieve maximum benefits. But this is not anything new. Invasive planning into self-sufficient districts mangling existing infrastructure may not really be necessary as most modern/historical urban center living offers this lifestyle and does not require any redesign. Essentially, if you prefer the lifestyle and amenities on one side of town to the other and are tired of cost of living, poor public transit, crime, lack of conveniences, etc. you simply move to another district or entertain other options. It has never been an objective of original city planning or any local government to bequeath an equal level of access, amenity, or business opportunity, lifestyle, and social commerce upon each and every citizen. There are obviously wealthier and poorer areas into which individuals and families are either born or elect to move to and must deal with the consequences. Alternatives are available.

The insidious nature of all of this is that digital identification may be required to live in these new enclaves and of course there is a tie into ESG (environmental, social and governance investing). On the surface, there seems to be a positive goal here but unfortunately the progressive woke element which promotes 'social responsibility' is behind the entire idea. The public sector is pushing the 15-minute city, but the private sector is not that interested due to the anticipated increased costs. The C40 Cities group in July 2020 published an [article](#) titled: "How to Build Back Better with a 15 Minute City." Largely financed by Michael Bloomberg, C40 partners with NREP, a large charitable European based real estate holding company with millions of square feet in their portfolio, are pushing pilot programs in several large international urban centers.

An Oxford, England, 15 minute city [program](#) scheduled for 2024 intends to monitor by camera inhabitants of 6 planned neighborhood zones and will fine vehicles who stray out of their own district over 100 times per year. 93 percent of those surveyed opposed it completely. The council investigated those who criticized the pilot on social media in addition to stating the survey results had been interpreted incorrectly, though it had not been (watch revealing [video](#) above and read survey [here](#)), and insisted only 8% opposed it. Not surprisingly, when Yann Zopf, Head of Media for the WEF, was asked for comment, he responded, "The WEF has no agenda pushing a project that would not allow people to travel, confine them in a certain area and fine them if they leave it." This does not seem to be the case in Oxfordshire, see below, containing a medieval city center.



Districts historically are divisions of working/commerce/living within a city on an economic basis. The SDG ideology continues to promulgate this 'problem' so how is this making the situation more equitable?

Christian Britschigi [concludes](#) that: "15-minute city proponents' plan of clustering jobs and residents together is doomed to fail at the stated goal of reducing travel. Living next to an office complex doesn't guarantee that there's a job for you there. You also might not want to rent an apartment next to your work or move every time you change jobs." The ability to get on the subway in major urban center in order to get to your favorite restaurant, clothier, or entertainment facility sort of quashes the idea of compact and self-

sufficient neighborhoods. Yes, basics might be across the street or around the corner, but public and private methods of travel—even walking a few more blocks—offer a far wider range of amenities and experiences. And it makes life richer for both urbanites and suburbanites.

The left, predictably, sees opposition to a seemingly innocuous planning concept as part of a larger conspiracy linking to the Great Reset and lumps criticism with white supremacists, radical libertarians, anti-vaxxers and the like.

The fact remains that the Oxford County Council of Oxfordshire claims the “new traffic reduction system will restrict drivers from accessing certain main roads during daytime hours through the use of “traffic filters.” The city will utilize traffic cameras to track and fine drivers who drive in certain areas and at certain times.” –USAToday fact check

[Writing](#) in allisrael.com, Cookie Schwaeber-Issan comments on the WEF’s push of the 15 minute city: “It’s all tempting and looks so good, yet, this is nothing more than the creation of a global ghetto—one where the movements of people are completely monitored at all times. Yes, in short, it’s another freedom being chipped away from a free population. It tells you where you can go and when you can go.”

Another legitimate criticism from Toronto-based urban planning lecturer Jay Pitter is that (a similar Edmonton, CA plan) simply worsens inequality by spurring gentrification.

Another online comment ridicules the idea: “Who wouldn’t want to live within easy walking distance of shops, cafes, schools, theatres, and swimming pools?” (Moreno’s thesis.)

So the plan is to build new schools, theaters and swimming pools in every 15 minute zone? I must have missed that part of the plan.

While the 15-minute walking city is not a new concept and it

is concerned with transforming existing infrastructure, the idea is a stepchild of New Urbanism, which in general is concerned with building entirely new infrastructure from scratch. In order to evaluate this idea we have to see how New Urbanism has worked over the last 30 years.

There are some good reasons we do not hear much about New Urbanism of late. Several notable developments are fully built and populated and one can experience the pros and cons of creating a sliver of utopia in these insulated communities by a cursory visit. Some have specific goals: a subdivision of nice private houses and minimum amenities in order to enjoy coastal living (Seaside, Watercolor), or something a bit larger to resemble a “real” functioning town with a city center that would include single family to multifamily houses, schools, some restaurants and retail, offices and even hospital facilities (Celebration and Baldwin Park, Florida, and Poundbury, England, for instance.)

The idea that one can walk to the city center or from town edge to edge in 15 minutes is achievable, especially in the smaller enclaves. This is not necessary but optional as there are roads for vehicular traffic. EVs are encouraged as well. And there are parks, hike and bike trails, commons, etc.

Why exactly is it that important to do everything possible within a 15-minute reach? To save time? To force one to exclusive pedestrianism for health reasons? What about 20 or 30 minutes? Wouldn't it be healthier to walk longer than 15 minutes to get to where you wanted to go? Obviously, the idea to reduce pollution from auto traffic was an initial concern. In many existing urban areas, auto traffic still permeates and causes traffic nightmares in dense centers, but in some neighborhoods you can get pretty much all the basics in under 10 minutes.

The thinkers behind NU developments have considered ‘the ideal environment for living’ and the built efforts to date are good

to have as examples of what works, what doesn't, and why.

New Urbanism is not a 21st century concept. It is not even a 20th century goal. You can go back to Miletus in now western Turkey to see one the most ancient settlements occupied by Greeks when they believed the grass would be greener on the other side of the Aegean.

The organic method (based on agrarian living—our oldest settlement model) was to congregate with like-minded folk in an area that seemed promising (good weather, construction materials at hand (forests for wood or stone to build dwellings), water, land viability, safety in order to congregate for self-preservation while livestock and fields were conveniently nearby. The animals would graze and create trails from one pasture to another. These trails over time evolved into winding streets and as more inhabitants were attracted to the area they built their houses on either side of the trails. In its basic form the initial settlements evolved into the charming hill towns and cities of Tuscany and Provence. This model is not eurocentric by any means and can be found worldwide.

In contrast, a people who wished to move everything to a seemingly better locale more often than not selected a grid system on which to lay out their towns. This included early settlers to the eastern seaboard from England and Europe, and the Spanish and Portuguese who inhabited central and south America for example. They modeled their new settlements on ancient Greek and Roman new town grids, and thus towns and cities from whence they came and with which they were most familiar. A common area and religious buildings were situated at the center, with public edifices nearby.

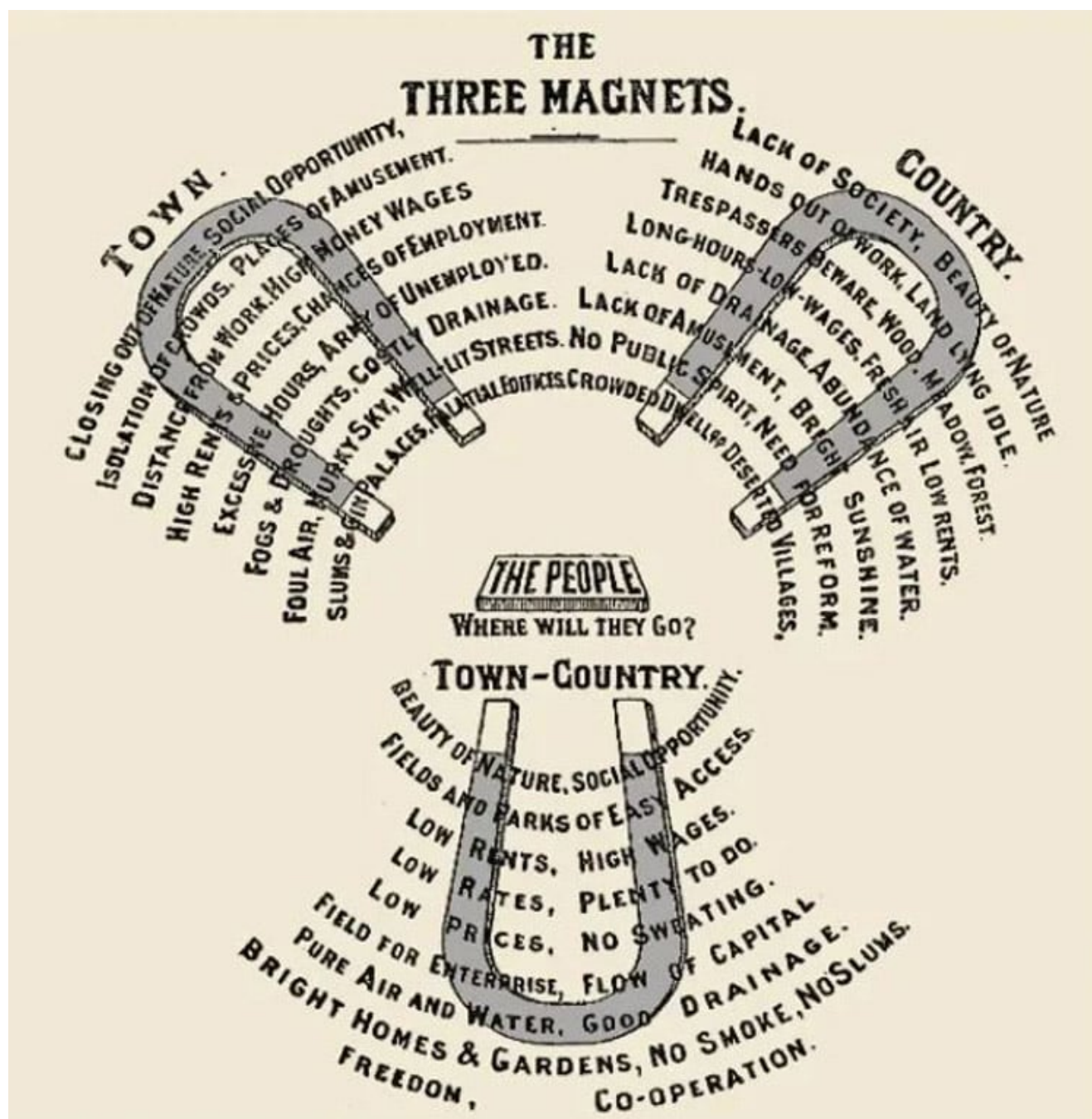


Plan of ideal Renaissance City

We now come to the philosophical method of town planning, which is a modern and enlightened notion. While the first method was practical, simple and instinctive and the second mimetic and taken for granted (based on working historical models), the third wave was rationalized, keeping in mind many factors which initially included health, welfare, quality of life, a good family house, easy access to work and field or workshop, etc., but now in our modern era also compounds the equation with diversity, equity, and inclusiveness.

The Garden City movement was proposed in the English countryside by Ebenezer Howard in 1898. It was designed for a working middle-income populace who had to negotiate a newly industrialized world. This is one of the early models that New

Urbanists examined to see how they could fashion a modern version to suit new needs.



Ebenezer's idealized Garden City would "house 32,000 people on a site of 9,000 acres (3,600 ha), planned on a concentric pattern with open spaces, public parks and six radial boulevards, 120 ft (37 m) wide, extending from the centre. The garden city would be self-sufficient and when it reached full population, another would be developed nearby. Howard envisaged a cluster of several garden cities as satellites of

a central city of 58,000 people, linked by road and rail.
–Wikipedia

Thinkers during the Italian Renaissance also envisioned geometrically controlled idealized cities based on fortifications or simple geometry. Note that this was a time before subdivisions so the houses tended to be built next to each other and density was much higher. An extensive yard was a sign of wealth in fact.

Ebenezer's first town, Letchworth, about 30 miles outside of London, was built using funds solicited from vested donors who recovered their initial financial outlays from rents and other real estate finagling. It was a successful model that was repeated. There was a socialist tinge about them, an altruism.



Letchworth today

Note that the Garden City was not a large metro center but a satellite of one. Most New Urbanist communities of the last 30 years are similar to this model as you will find scant hospital facilities on site, gas stations, manufacturing of any kind, new or used car lots, 7 Elevens, auto repair or body shops, strip malls or large box stores, theaters, junk yards, waste areas or water treatment plans, railheads, large footprint storage or warehouse facilities, etc. And the area for our NU towns is much larger and the density quite a bit less.

You cannot have any of the behind the scene 'dirty' amenities in a 15 minute walking city in fact, whether carved from existing infrastructure or created brand new. Most New Urbanist communities appear pristine as they slough off the dark side of things to adjacent fringe areas that supply all of these necessary evils for modern day convenience and survival.

So these small community enclaves tend to be rather exclusive and elitist as the housing is more expensive by 30% than the nearest older subdivisions. While many large NU developments tied into the larger street grid must be open to all traffic, even the smaller density towns have no gates as in simple high-end single-family subdivisions. Gates are verboten, a humanitarian consideration.



Celebration, Florida

While Celebration (above) was an offshoot of Disney's EPCOT (Experimental Prototype City of Tomorrow) due to the impossibility of integrating a living city in the middle of a theme park, its purpose was to exemplify a future-thinking clean, simple, traditional model for living outside a large metro area. Other motives for New Urbanist communities include, for example, Dancing Rabbit Ecovillage where, "We enjoy sharing discoveries and ideas of sustainable living with people who have a wide variety of lifestyles," based on sustainability and the following ideals as taught in their workshops:

- *Natural buildings and green construction*
- *Renewable energy*
- *Permaculture design & organic gardening*
- *Feminism and consent*
- *Inner sustainability & communication skills*
- *Ecovillage decision-making and governance*

The above is a sort of 'themed' enclave. And more of these will be built to fulfill economic calculations, and cater to social and political mores that will be shared by their occupants. Most people would love to live in an affordable, low density, and safe/easy to navigate environment, free from toxic air and water, low in crime, with amenities that make day to day living interesting with healthful outdoor activities, and cultural interests to pursue, while limiting an automobile dependency. That is called a utopia, Shangri-La. But it comes at a cost, especially when starting from scratch.

This combination is very difficult to find in reality and only a few of these idealized communities are available to the general public. Most are completely built out and occupied. Due to incredible high up front infrastructure costs expended at a rapid rate the cost of any house, apartment or condo in NU communities is extremely expensive. NU loses inclusivity through simple number crunching reality. Not many more are being considered. That leaves the rest of us to deal with suburbia, commuting, high taxes due to extended infrastructure, and stress—or for an inner-city dweller dealing with congestion, high density, higher crime rates, and failing infrastructure.



Baldwin Park, Orlando Florida

These are the issues with New Urbanism:

- *Unlike in a large dense city, where the population is diverse, and face to face inter-cultural interaction becomes a vibrant method for intellectual growth and other social and even technical/economical development, the inhabitants of smaller theme related New Urbanist sanctuaries are essentially blinded like horses to any new idea or interaction from a 'stranger' –at least ideas from anyone who manages to feel comfortable entering their sanctuary city and walking around with a chance meeting and discussion. These will always be places where the like-minded will meet and talk to each other, as in golf or other athletic themed communities or private clubs. These people are isolated and probably prefer it that way.*
- *There is a tendency for NU communities to be populated*

by similar incomes and the same race. This is an embarrassing proof which is antithetical to today's left leaning equity minded culture and probably why NU's tenets aren't widely lauded by current academics and practitioners. The Westworld effect was alarming during early construction as Disney was bussing in tourists to encourage investment in Celebration. It was said that actors were paid to jog together to give the place some sense of life.

- Unfortunately, despite maturing groves of magnolia trees, the fiercely controlled architectural design covenants result in bland, pastel, and boring repetitive streetscapes and questionable bizarre downtowns. Only a few architects are allowed to participate and the allowed 'styles' are limited. All at once we have a complete inventory of similarly executed styles built in a short period of time. There is nothing historic to see, well, there really is no history. Alice Bucknell [writes](#) of Windsor in Florida: "Windsor seems to remain suspended somewhere between a false utopia and a luxury ghost town." Despite so many front porches, intended for communal interaction, most of these places are occupied on a seasonal basis and at times very few people are seen in the off season. Some of the worst and unnerving architectural statements are from highbrow by-invitation-only architects who seeded their nonsense in town center buildings.
- Unlike Italian or French or German townships which are known for either their wine, bread, beer or craft festivals, these towns have absolutely nothing of cultural interest to offer. Nothing. They are truly subdivisions on steroids and completely disconnected from their surrounding infrastructure. No one goes to these preserves to learn anything or enjoy something specific to the region unless they are sponsoring antique car fests or holiday celebrations. Subsequently, it is ironic that their meager retail stores are

constantly out of business and have to be replenished, like blood drives in order to keep a quivering corpse alive.

- While a few have 'business centers' that look like real mid-rise offices, that offer lease space purportedly for the inhabitants, most citizens commute in and out of town as necessary or work from home or in cafes on their computers. Remember, these towns (at least in Florida) tend to be seasonal. One town that is a bit more diverse, modeled somewhat like Celebration and designed by a few of the principles who worked at Disney, is Baldwin Park located east of the Orlando downtown on a recycled navy base. Most of the people living there, especially in the higher percentage of town homes and apartments, are younger working families. The high density of the development is punctuated by 'commons' which are enjoyed by parents and children. A large lake borders the northern edge on which the 'downtown' is massed with views to the water. A wonderful hike and bike trail circles the lake and a large grocery store is also on site. But just outside its periphery on the south is the typical strip mall and fast-food establishments that everyone drives to on a daily basis.
- The bottom line for economic viability and growth is that NU developments tend to be far away from any economic density of the larger metro city and therefore while they look like a 'real town' they are simply facades and meager shells that lack essential support services and are therefore a cotton candy concoction masking an upper-class residential development aimed at keeping property values high and any low income housing out. The inhabitants are never there year-round and the retail cannot survive, especially since tourists and any other interested parties have no real reason to visit their paltry raison d'être and will spend no moneys there. To be fair, Celebration has added some offices, a fire station, hotel, and medical clinics on the

periphery and Baldwin Park offers integrated office space but the lack of density in both and in all of these NU developments simply cannot sustain normal street businesses and shopping.

It is claimed that Florida's Seaside was one of the first New Urbanist communities envisioned like Celebration, Baldwin Park, and Windsor (built later). I personally prefer the more 'real' look and feel of England's Poundbury, encouraged by then-Prince Charles at about the same time as Celebration.



Poundbury, Dorset, UK

A more organic example of Old Urbanism that better fulfills basic human interest and livability is Winter Park, originally a suburb north of Orlando. The city center consists of an outlying group of high-end houses around a series of connected

lakes on the north and east, and an older Black community slowly being gentrified on the west.



Winter Park, Florida

The main activity centers through a scant group of streets, the main one being Park Avenue with a train depot and tracks to the west of a donated park on which one side is low rise retail and restaurants. One does not need to live in Winter

Park to enjoy the ambiance and the offerings of a few shops and eateries and outdoor living. In fact, people from miles away will drive every morning to enjoy a walk in the park and the camaraderie found in several coffee and sweet shops. Similar to many other such micro communities in large urban centers, it is a destination that is worth getting to.

The buildings are unique and no building code limits or designates style. The street layout is a simple grid which is easy to manage. One does not feel a stranger there and the tourism easily outpaces anything in the nearby New Urbanist communities. Parking is convenient. You can spend hours walking the shops and enjoying the park. There is a boat tour that explores the connected clean water lake system. Winter Park has a treasure of Tiffany works and arts and crafts furniture and glassware in the Morse Museum. A highly touted University, Rollins College, is on the south edge of the city which means young people are constantly on the streets. The mix of all ages and cultures, income groups and nationalities is invigorating.

The simple fact that not everyone can live and work in Winter Park is not some kind of a deterrent or negative attribution. The entire area is surrounded by subdivision development and older neighborhoods and was originally a commuter suburb north of downtown Orlando. It is a great model, though, and the fact is that for those who don't live right there (expensive condos are nearby), most have to drive to enjoy its amenities. Again: the American Way—reliance on the automobile. While there is a short run train line for commuters north and through Winter Park to downtown and beyond, the car is king.

Creating a 15-minute walking city appears to me at least to be a boondoggle as the ills of a completely planned and worked out group of buildings and amenities is simply not worth the inorganic stuporific end effect it has on inhabitants and visitors, especially as witnessed in the NU-styled communities built in the last 30 years here in the United States. 15 or 20

minute districts reworked in existing urban centers can never be packed with equal amenities and opportunities including like-quality health care facilities, education, shopping, recreation, and work centers. It simply is not possible. Some areas will be valued higher than others due to evolutionary economics or the location to existing older facilities and amenities. Newly reworked districts will cause further obstruction to existing routines, can only offer nearby pedestrian access to the minimum daily needs of a population. Why force people to do anything but rather allow them to naturally go about their day with options for exercise and rest/relaxation. Still, there are those who will buy into these isolated enclaves for safety and prestige, and a higher return on their housing investment.

Back to Scotland's new planning initiatives for "20-minute neighborhoods." In order for any of these developments to be built, the government requires 25 percent of the new units to be offered at rates affordable—in order to be inclusionary. This essentially puts a tax on development and will make it more difficult for contractors and investor/developers to participate. No matter the intent of our enlightened public servants, if the market does not see a profit, the most wild-eyed notions will never be built. Of course this means that the government stewards will simply use tax funds at enormous expense to create these unsustainable districts.

Accelerating the establishment of ideal communities comes at a high initial cost and only the upper end of the market can participate, whether for inhabitants, shop keepers, or office landlords. They can never be inclusionary when built on a green field and will be only marginally achievable when reworked into an existing urban grid.

The elites (leftist educators, lofty politicians, wealthy merchant kings and highly leveraged corporations buying into ESG and other UN and WEF conceptions under the guise of social justice causes) continue to conjure a more perfect world with

no real way to make it work.

The simple citizen must be aware of the shadow cast by Big Brother's propensity to socially engineer their world. No doubt the big money supporting WEF programs anticipates huge profits from instituting these perfect worlds and everything they propose must be taken with a huge grain of salt.

If Americans would like to know if this movement is going to find traction here: In a "a newly published [study by moveBuddha](#), mid-size American cities of 250,000 to 750,000 residents dominated the rankings of the top 25 future [15-minute cities](#) in the United States, with a few large cities known for engaging in urban planning on the neighborhood level, for instance Chicago and Philadelphia, also making the cut."

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John Henry is based in Orlando, Florida. He holds a Bachelor of Environmental Design and Master of Architecture from Texas A&M University. He spent his early childhood through high school in Greece and Turkey, traveling in Europe—impressed by the ruins of Greek and Roman cities and temples, old irregular Medieval streets, and classical urban palaces and country villas. His Modernist formal education was a basis for functional, technically proficient, yet beautiful buildings. His website is [Commercial Web Residential Web](#).

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