Implementing Living Streets

Dena Belzer

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Starting with Some Definitions

1. Living Streets/Complete Streets

2. Corridor Revitalization

3. Shopping Mall Reuse
Living/Complete Streets

Creates multimodal streets designed for pedestrians, bikes, cars, and transit
Corridor Revitalization

Focuses on redeveloping exiting land uses along major arterial streets, involving many individual property owners
Targeted Commercial Corridors

City of Sacramento Corridor Revitalization Strategy
Shopping Mall Reuse

When old shopping malls in a single ownership are redeveloped into a new, usually mixed use project
A Key Policy Question:

How Are These Three related?
Here’s the Answer:

Malls are their own thing

Corridor Revitalization and “Complete Streets” work together
Let’s Call These: “Living” Corridors
To Address both Land Use and Mobility
Three kinds of corridors:

• Street Car Corridors
• Auto-Oriented Corridors
• Boulevard Streets
Streetcar Corridors: E. Colfax
Auto Oriented Corridors: Leetsdale Avenue
Boulevard Streets: Speer Boulevard
Each Corridor Type has its own implementation challenges with respect to both land use and mobility
But, there are major benefits to Living Corridor Initiatives that Incorporate Both Land Use and Mobility
Benefit 1:

Reduces Greenhouse Gas Emissions by Supporting Transit and Non-Motorized Trips
Land Use Changes reduces VMT

New developments that are compact, diverse and convenient will reduce the need to drive by 20-50 percent.

Doubling residential density alone reduces VMT per capita by 20%
(Source: Study – Explaining Urban Density and Transit Impact on Auto Use)

If 60% of new development was transit-oriented, GHG emissions would be reduced by up to 12% by 2050.
(Source: Growing Cooler: The Evidence on Urban Development and Climate Change)
Benefit 2

Provides healthy mobility options
people who walk or bike daily:

Reduce risk of coronary heart disease, stroke, and other chronic diseases; promotes sense of well being
Cuts potential medical costs
Benefit 3:

Saves Households Money on Transportation
New Growth in Corridors is More “Location Efficient”

The Average Family spent 18% of their income on transportation in 2002 (last year for which national data are available)
Benefit 4:

Enhances Property Values
In general, there is a negative impact on housing values, for homes located near commercial corridors:

- -13% for homes within ¼ mile of a commercial corridor
- -9% for homes between ¼ mile and ½ mile

*(Wachter and Gillen, 2006)*
However, there is also a positive impact associated with the *quality* of the commercial corridor:

- In “excellent” corridors, +36% for homes within ¼ mile of a corridor and +20% for homes between ¼ mile and ½ mile.
- In “good” corridors, +17% for homes within ¼ mile of a corridor and +6% for homes between ¼ mile and ½ mile.

(Wachter and Gillen, 2006)
Benefit 5:

Creates Greater Connectivity Between Jobs and Housing
Living corridors connect multiple activity centers
But There Are Significant Challenges for Implementing Living Corridors
Challenge 1:
Parcel Size
Auto oriented corridors have parcels that are too big for some developers, and too small for others.
Lots of Small Parcels
Support Small Scale Redevelopment
Challenge 2:

Market Demand is Often Insufficient to New Development
Exploring the Relationship Between Density and Development Feasibility

Residual Land Value per SF

Units per Acre

- Townhome
- 4 Stories over Podium
- “Dallas Donut”
- 6 Stories +

|$200|
|$150|
|$100|
|$50|
|$0|
|($50)|
|($100)|
|($150)|
|($200)|
Impact of “Place Premium” and Lower Parking Ratios

Residual Land Value per SF

Townhome

4 Stories over Podium

“Dallas Donut”

6 Stories +

Units per Acre

Residual Land Value per SF

$200

$150

$100

$50

$0

($50)

($100)

($150)

($200)
Challenge 3:

It's difficult to achieve a "Critical Mass" of development that will be transformative.
Isolated projects pop up in multiple locations
Challenge 4:

Older Commercial Corridors
Support Stores for Low Income People
Ethnic merchants and low end stores could be displaced by redevelopment
Challenge 5:

Many Property Owners are Making Plenty of Money with the “Status Quo”
Strip centers can be very profitable
Challenge 6:

There are many Public Policy Conflicts Around the Use of Streets
Who Gets Priority?

The car, the pedestrian, the bike, or the bus?
Two Quick Case Studies of Complete Streets and One of Corridor Revitalization

Sandy Boulevard, Portland Or.

Aurora Washington

San Pablo Avenue, Berkeley CA
34 blocks – street trees, landscaping, and landscaped stormwater retention, improved bus stops, small parks

Designed by URS and Nevue and Ngan
Sandy Boulevard
Aurora Washington: Before
Aurora Boulevard: After
Multiple Housing Projects Along San Pablo Ave.
A Quick Commercial:

Case Studies Courtesy of
Ellen Greenberg
UC Davis Sustainable Transportation Center Sustainable Streets Project
http://stc.ucdavis.edu/outreach/ssp.php
Some Quick Conclusions:

1. Good streets make good neighbors

2. Public investment in street improvements will have a significant payback in terms of taxes

3. Increased mobility choice benefits everybody

4. Investments related to corridor revitalization must be targeted and build off of synergies from existing activity nodes and coordinated with Living St

5. Policy conflicts regarding level of service versus other mobility measures must be embraced and put into practice