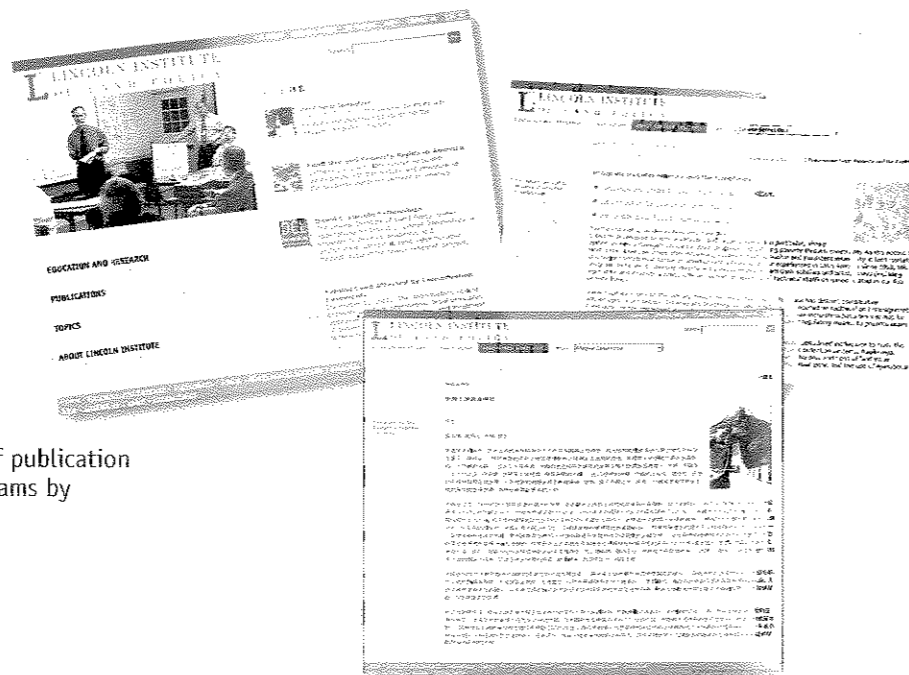


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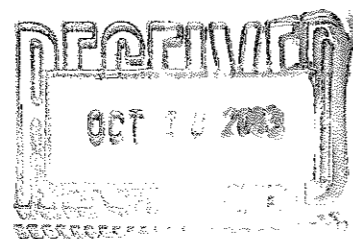
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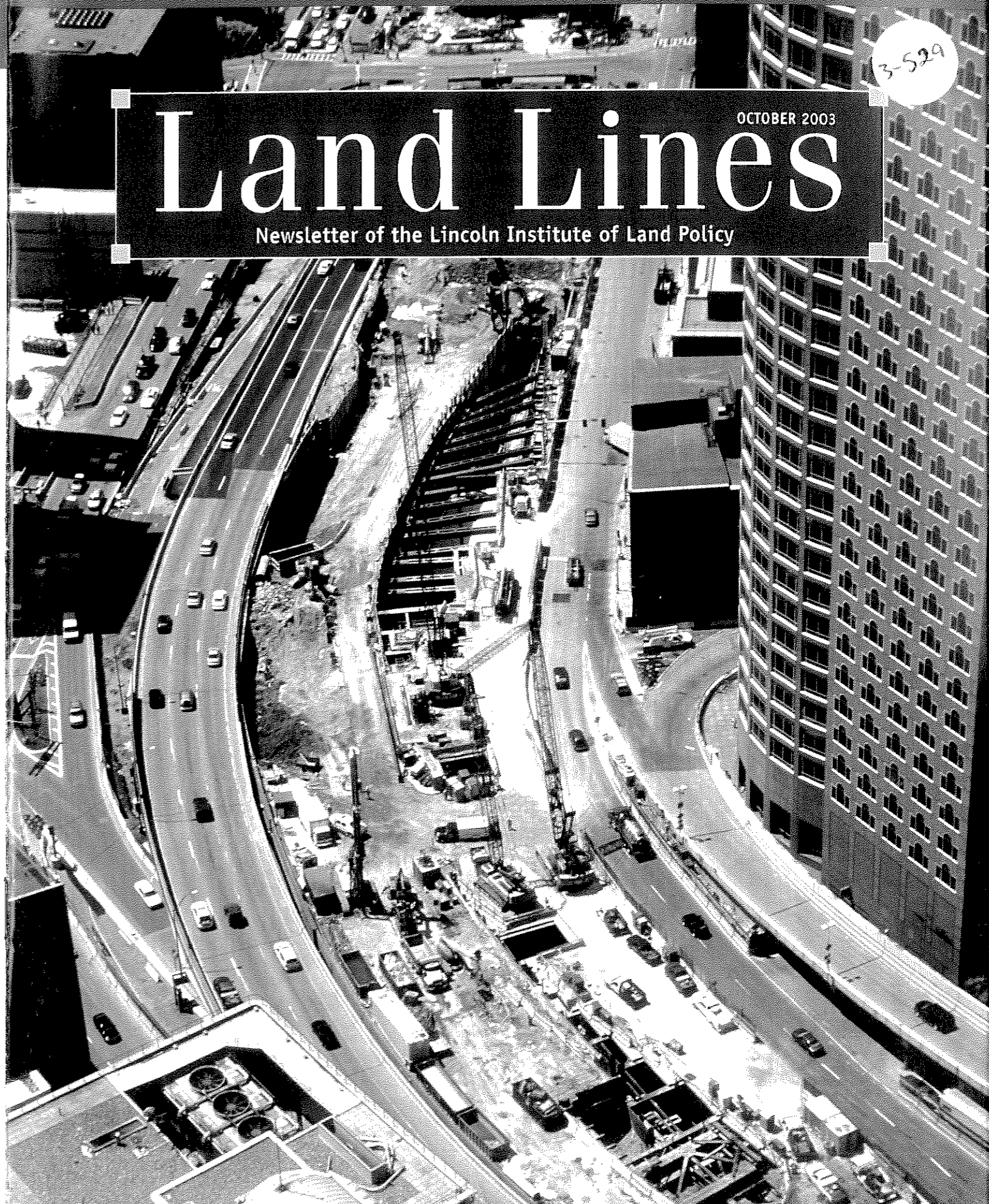


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OCTOBER 2003

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The Lincoln Institute of Land Policy is a nonprofit educational institution established in 1974 to study and teach land policy and taxation. By supporting multidisciplinary educational, research and publications programs, the Institute brings together diverse viewpoints to expand the body of useful knowledge in three departments—valuation and taxation, planning and development, and international studies. Our goal is to make that knowledge comprehensible and accessible to citizens, policy makers and scholars in the United States and throughout the world. The Lincoln Institute is an equal opportunity institution in employment and admissions.

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Cover: The Big Dig winds through downtown Boston.
Courtesy of the Central Artery/Tunnel Project

From the PRESIDENT

In preparation for the 2003–2004 academic year, the Lincoln Institute has made some changes in its departmental structure. We established the Department of International Studies to integrate the Institute's international research and educational programs that address key land and tax policy issues identified by the existing departments of Valuation and Taxation and Planning and Development. This new department's work includes the well-established Program on Latin America and the Caribbean and a new Program on the People's Republic of China, as well as ongoing programs in Taiwan, Central and Eastern Europe and other areas of the world.

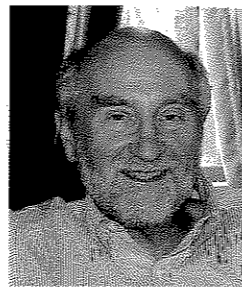
Cities in developing nations, and in Latin America in particular, vividly illustrate the contemporary relevance of Henry George's concerns about progress engendering poverty through constraints on access to land ownership and persistent informality in land markets. The ten-year retrospective article on the Latin America Program (see page 8) provides an overview of the changing context of land and tax policy in the region and a review of current Institute programs.

The new Program on the People's Republic of China addresses the fundamental problems of land allocation, land taxation and the development of land markets in one of the world's fastest growing economies. The Institute has an agreement with the Ministry of Land and Resources in Beijing to collaborate on researching and teaching land and tax policy (see *Land Lines* April 2003). Other partners in this initiative are the National Center for Smart Growth and the Institute for Global Chinese Affairs at the University of Maryland; the Development Research Center of the State Council; the China Development Institute in Shenzhen; and several university and local government departments.

China initiated fundamental and revolutionary land use reforms during the mid-1980s, addressing privately held land use rights, land banking, land trusts, land readjustments and development of land markets in both urban and rural areas. The Institute will contribute to the implementation of these reform measures by sponsoring educational and training programs for Chinese public officials and practitioners and by supporting research and publications by both international and Chinese scholars. Institute faculty with expertise in urban and regional planning, real estate development, land economics and property taxation will introduce curriculum materials designed for China that build on our work in Latin America and other regions of the world.

The Institute is also continuing its long-term educational and research programs in collaboration with the International Center for Land Policy Studies and Training in Taiwan, including the annual cosponsored course on "Infrastructure Planning and Urban Development" for public officials from developing countries. Institute faculty associated with the Department of Valuation and Taxation are involved with officials from the public and private sectors in Central and Eastern European countries as they develop and implement land and tax reforms.

I believe this new department will help us operate more efficiently abroad and better integrate our international experiences in all areas.



Jim Brown

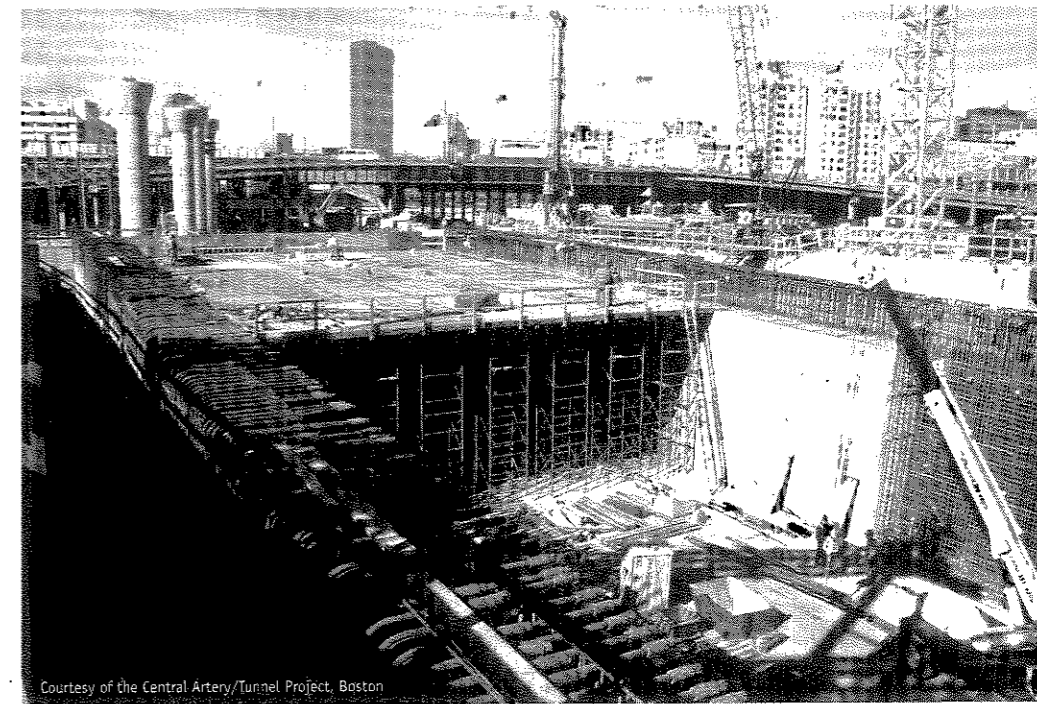
The Changing Politics of Urban Mega-Projects

ALAN ALTSHULER
and DAVID LUBEROFF

From the earliest days of the Republic, civic boosters have prodded American governments to develop large-scale facilities—mega-projects, we label them—ranging from canals and railroads in the nineteenth century to rail transit systems and convention centers today. Until the mid-twentieth century, such projects tended to involve modest public expenditures by contemporary standards and they rarely caused significant disruption of the existing urban fabric.

This pattern altered abruptly in the 1950s and early 1960s. Central city economies had, with rare exceptions, stagnated through the Great Depression and World War II, and they continued to do so in the early postwar years. Local business and political leaders concluded that if central cities—particularly those developed prior to the auto age—were ever to thrive again, they would require major surgery. Specifically, they needed to clear slums to provide large downtown sites for redeveloped office districts; to facilitate high-speed automotive movement between suburban and central city locations; and to provide larger airfields with attractive terminals for the nascent commercial aviation industry.

Recognizing that they could not finance these expensive projects with locally generated funds, urban leaders campaigned aggressively for federal assistance, and they were successful in obtaining considerable amounts of funding. We attribute their success mainly to the following factors: (1) public confidence in government was unusually high in the postwar period; (2) business leaders generally accepted the need for government activism to sustain prosperity; and (3) although cities lacked the political clout to secure expensive programs on their own, they were able to



Courtesy of the Central Artery/Tunnel Project, Boston

participate in much broader coalitions—most notably, those focused on housing (which expanded to include urban renewal) and highways. Urban aviation advocates were less successful, but as aviation traffic boomed they were able to fund new airports and expand old ones by relying primarily on revenues from landing fees and terminal leases.

During the late 1950s and the 1960s these efforts combined to produce an unprecedented wave of urban public investment. While often successful on their own terms, these projects tended to be highly disruptive as well, destroying in particular vast amounts of low-income housing and urban parkland. Project advocates maintained that the public should accept such impacts to advance the greater good. Robert Moses, New York's famed master builder, never tired of citing a French proverb: "You can't make an omelet without breaking eggs" (Caro 1974).

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, however, neighborhood activists allied with those involved in the emerging environ-

mental movement against the full panoply of mega-project programs that had come into being during the 1950s. They succeeded not just in blocking large numbers of planned expressways, renewal schemes and airport projects, but also in securing the adoption of numerous statutes, regulations and judicial doctrines, thus strengthening the hands of critics in urban development controversies. For a time it seemed to most observers that the era of mega-project investment in cities was over.

"Do No Harm" Planning

The forces committed to mega-projects have proven highly resilient and adaptive, however. While the character of such investment has changed dramatically since the 1970s, its volume has remained high. Nevertheless, mega-project advocates have had to work within new constraints; they have had to learn the art of making omelets without leaving a residue of broken eggs. We label this art, as exercised in the domain of urban land use, "do no harm" planning. Its essential components are the selection,

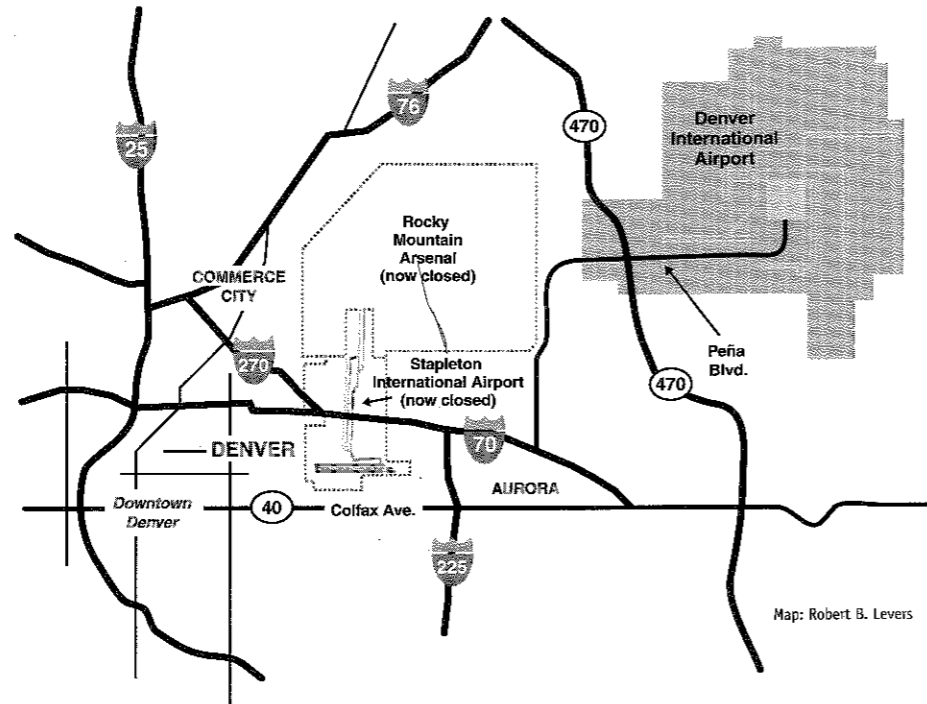
siting and design of projects to minimize disruptive side effects, and the aggressive mitigation of any harmful impacts that cannot be avoided entirely. Most obviously, governments have ceased clearing slums and building expressways through developed neighborhoods, and only one major new passenger airport—in Denver—has been constructed since the early 1970s.

Public investment in facilities such as rail transit systems, festival retail markets, sports stadiums and arenas, and convention centers has surged. Within the transportation sector, moreover, investment priorities have shifted toward the reconstruction of existing highways, new construction on suburban fringes and airport terminals rather than runway improvements. The great advantage of such projects is that they are relatively easy to site either at some distance from existing development or in older commercial districts that have few preservationist defenders.

Where cities and states have gone forward with major highway and airport projects, they have taken extraordinary steps to minimize social and environmental impacts. The new Denver airport, for example, is on a previously rural 53-square-mile site 25 miles east of downtown. Its location and scale were determined primarily by two considerations: land assembly without the disruption of existing residential enclaves; and future airport operation without significant noise impacts overflowing the airport boundary. Boston's \$14.6 billion Central Artery/Tunnel project, known colloquially as "The Big Dig," appears very different, in that it is located in the heart of downtown, but it is virtually identical in its do no harm planning orientation. It is almost entirely underground as it passes close to built-up areas (replacing a previous elevated roadway); it has been threaded into the urban fabric without the taking of a single home; and it will add significantly to the city's parkland.

Common Themes

In addition to do no harm planning, our review of mega-projects built over the past two decades identified the following themes as particularly salient.



Business Support

While insufficient by itself, strong business support has been an indispensable condition for mega-project development. Within the business community, leadership has almost invariably come from enterprises with deep local roots, particularly in real estate ownership, development and finance. The strongest supporters of Denver's new airport, for example, were those who owned property with commercial development potential near the new site; downtown businesses concerned that the city's existing airport was too small to allow for the region's continued development; and the banks and financial service firms that had lent money to many of the city's property owners and developers. Similarly, the most active and effective support group for Boston's Big Dig has been the Artery Business Committee, a coalition of those who own major buildings adjacent to the artery's corridor and several major employers with historic roots in downtown Boston.

Public Entrepreneurs

In addition to well-mobilized constituencies, aggressive, deft government officials have been indispensable to the success of recent mega-project proposals. Indeed, it

was frequently they who originated project ideas and first sparked the formation of supportive coalitions. Even when others initiated, they commonly took the lead in crafting strategies, tactics and plans; in lobbying for state and federal aid; in securing other types of needed legislation and regulatory approvals; and in dealing with project critics.

Though business groups initiated some projects, they seemed more frequently to "invest" in proposals originated by public entrepreneurs. The business constituents were by no means easy marks, of course. Like venture capitalists in the private sector, they considered a great many ideas brought to them by public entrepreneurs (and others), but invested only in those few that looked particularly good for their enterprises, were to be carried out mainly or entirely at public expense, and had a reasonable chance of securing the myriad approvals required.

Illustratively, Boston's Big Dig was conceived by Fred Salvucci, a transportation engineer who had become active in battles against planned highway and airport projects during the 1960s and then served as transportation secretary for 12 years under Governor Michael Dukakis. During the first Dukakis administration

(1975–1979), the main constituencies for a new harbor tunnel (business) and for depressing the central artery (neighborhood and environmental groups) were at loggerheads. While temporarily out of office from 1979 to 1983, however, Salvucci concluded that the politically feasible strategy might be to marry these projects, while also relocating the tunnel to an alignment far from a neighborhood that it had historically threatened. This strategy in fact resolved the local controversy, and prepared the way for a successful campaign for massive federal aid, led again by Salvucci with critical business support.

Denver Mayor Federico Peña broke a similar type of logjam over whether to expand Denver's existing Stapleton Airport or build a new facility on a large site outside the city's borders. Concluding that the obstacles, both political and environmental, to expanding Stapleton were insuperable, but that city ownership and operation of any new airport remained a critical objective, he negotiated successfully with adjacent Adams County for a massive land annexation. To achieve this objective, he accepted conditions protecting county residents from significant airport noise and guaranteeing Adams County most of the tax benefits that would flow from economic development around the new airport. With local agreements in hand he, like Salvucci, then led a successful campaign for special federal assistance.

Mitigation

Do no harm plans avoid substantial neighborhood and environmental disruption but it is impossible to build a mega-project with no negative side effects. The commitment of do no harm planning is to ameliorate such impacts as much as possible, and to offset them with compensatory benefits when full direct mitigation cannot be achieved. The boundary between mitigating harm and providing net benefits to protesting groups is often indistinct, however, so the norm of mitigation provides leverage as well for skilled activists whose demands are at times tangential to the mega-projects whose budgets they seek to tap. Mega-project champions in turn

reflected on the fate of such projects as New York City's proposed Westway, which failed because of what seemed at first a minor legal challenge. They were deathly afraid of litigation and were frequently willing to make very expensive concessions in return for agreements by critics not to sue.

During permitting for the Big Dig, for example, Boston's Conservation Law Foundation (CLF), a group whose signature strategy was litigation for environmental purposes, threatened to sue unless the state committed to accompany the highway project with a multi-billion dollar set of rail transit investments, mainly for expansion. CLF's rationale was that the transit projects would prevent the new road from filling up with traffic, which in turn would generate more air pollution. Modeling done for the project (as well as data from other regions) showed that the Big Dig would not in fact have significant air pollution effects, and that investing in rail transit extensions would be a particularly inefficient way to offset pollution effects if they did occur. Nonetheless, both Democratic and Republican state administrations acquiesced to CLF's demands because they did not want to risk litigation, which at the very least threatened project delays and might also have imperiled the breadth of local consensus in support of the Big Dig.

Bottom-up Federalism

A naïve observer of American politics might assume that the federal government distributes grants to achieve national goals. In fact, however, the grantor-grantee relationship is usually much more complicated than that. Recipient jurisdictions are typically active participants in the coalitions that bring new programs into being and provide them with critical support each budget season. The programs of aid for mega-project investment that we examined were all distinguished more by their openness to local initiative than their sharp definition of national purpose. If grantee jurisdictions had a great deal of influence collectively on program structure, moreover, they had even more when it came to projects, and they were able to exercise it individually.

Every project we studied was initiated by subnational officials and interest groups, and it was they who took the lead at every stage in the decision process. While limited in their discretion by federal program rules, they were alert as well to opportunities for securing waivers, statutory amendments and add-on funds, with the assistance of their congressional delegations. Stated another way, when federal aims are diffuse and weakly defended, principal-agent theory (as applied to the intergovernmental system) needs to be read bottom-up rather than top-down.

High and Rising Costs

Do no harm designs and related mitigation agreements have tended to produce projects that are vastly more expensive than their historic predecessors. According to Brian Taylor (1995), the average cost per centerline mile of urban freeways rose by more than 600 percent in real terms from the 1960s to the 1980s, and costs were even more extreme in some of the mega-projects we examined. Whereas Taylor found that urban freeways cost on average about \$54 million per centerline mile (in 2002 dollars) in the 1980s, for example, the Big Dig cost \$1.9 billion per centerline mile. Judith Grant Long (2002) reports in a similar vein that the average cost of new stadiums and arenas more than quadrupled in real terms from the 1950s to the 1990s, and we have calculated that light rail development costs increased by nearly two-fifths from the 1980s to the 1990s.

Both older and more recent projects have been marked by a consistent pattern of substantial cost increases between authorization and completion. The projected cost of Boston's Big Dig, for example, has roughly tripled in real terms since its approval by Congress as an interstate highway project in 1987. The cost of Denver International Airport more than doubled from the late 1980s, when it received voter approval and its federal funding commitments, to its completion six years later.

While a full study of this issue was beyond the scope of our work, we judge that the consistent pattern of underestimation has two primary causes. First, project

advocates have very strong incentives to estimate optimistically as they seek political commitments of support. Second, mega-projects are often so complex—both technically and in terms of the mitigation agreements that will often prove necessary to keep them on track—that early cost estimates are typically little more than guesses within very broad ranges.

Locally Painless Project Funding

The hallmark of successful mega-project financing is that projects should appear costless, or nearly so, to the great majority of local voters. The easiest way to achieve this result is to rely on funding from higher-level governments. Where such aid is unavailable or insufficient, the challenge is to identify other sources of revenue to which local voters are generally insensitive—which means, above all, avoiding local property and income taxes and spreading the burden beyond host city residents.

This challenge became increasingly salient after 1970 with rising antitax sentiment, the end of federal renewal aid, and the surge in capital spending for such facilities as stadiums, arenas and convention centers, for which federal aid was only rarely available. In the growing domain of mass transit, moreover, federal matching ratios have tended to decline since 1980.

The revenue strategies adopted to deal with these challenges have been varied and ingenious. New terminals and runways at major airports have been funded largely by increased landing fees, lease payments, and (since the early 1990s) ticket surcharg-

es authorized by the federal government but imposed locally. Stadiums, arenas and convention centers are commonly funded by taxes that fall mainly on nonresidents, such as taxes on hotel rooms, car rentals and restaurant bills. Where broad-based taxes have been unavoidable, the preferred method has been incremental add-ons to sales taxes, which typically require voter approval. Voters have often said no, but sales tax increases provide large amounts of revenue when they are adopted—and when they are not, project advocates routinely come back with revised plans. In Los Angeles and Seattle, for example, transit advocates responded to referendum defeats by scaling back their rail plans and allocating some of the projected revenue to bus service and local road improvements.

Looking to the Future

Almost two decades ago, when New York City's ambitious Westway project died, even though its backers had helped pioneer the do no harm planning and design paradigm, then-Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan wondered whether it had become so difficult to build public projects that "Central Park could not conceivably be built today" (Finder 1985). Recent history suggests, however, that the mega-project impulse remains strong. The pertinent question is not whether the U.S. political system can still generate mega-projects but whether the projects that go forward are typically worth their costs to taxpayers.

In general, economists are skeptical about the cost-effectiveness of the most prominent mega-projects, from the Big Dig to the scores of rail transit systems, sports facilities and convention centers, built over the past 25 years. Project advocates retort that the economists miss intangible project benefits such as fostering community pride and strengthening the likelihood of smart growth practices in new development. The national coalitions in support of highway and airport improvements, which economists tend to rate more favorably than other types of projects, have argued vociferously that current environmental rules and opportunities for critics to litigate are too onerous and should be relaxed.

There is no easy resolution of these issues because they involve tradeoffs between important, deeply held values. However, our review of a half-century of public works projects in urban areas has left us with three clear impressions. First, states and localities should be required to bear half or more of the cost of projects they undertake, because great windfalls of earmarked money from higher levels of government tend to overwhelm serious local deliberation. Second, strong environmental regulation helps ensure that local pro-growth coalitions do not leave fouled environments or devastated neighborhoods in their wake. Finally, while referenda are in general a flawed instrument of policy making, the evidence seems to suggest that the requirement of voter approval for major local projects tends to have a salutary effect on the bargaining between business groups that stand to benefit financially from the proposed investments and the more general interests of local taxpayers and residents. □

ALAN ALTSHULER and DAVID LUBEROFF are the co-authors of *Mega-Projects: The Changing Politics of Urban Public Investment*. Altschuler is the Stanton Professor of Urban Policy at the Kennedy School of Government and the Graduate School of Design (GSD) at Harvard University, and director of the Kennedy School's Taubman Center for State and Local Government. Luberoff is the Taubman Center's associate director and an adjunct lecturer at GSD. Contact: alan.altschuler@harvard.edu or david.luberoff@harvard.edu.

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Urban Renewal in a South African Township

For the past six years, the Lincoln Institute has been collaborating with the Loeb Fellowship Program at Harvard University's Graduate School of Design. Established in 1970 through the generosity of alumnus John L. Loeb, the Loeb Fellowship invites about 10 mid-career professionals each year to study independently and develop insights and connections that can advance their work revitalizing the built and natural environments. The 2002-2003 fellows took their class study trip to Cape Town, South Africa, in May, focusing their inquiry on urban renewal efforts in the township of Khayelitsha.

DAVID GOLDBERG

Cape Town is as glistening a first world city as one could ever expect to see. It's also among the most deceptive.

The come-on begins with one's first view of Table Mountain, rising behind the city's modernist skyline. It literally peaks when you ride the sleek, blue funicular to the top and behold, along with the wondrous natural landscape, abundant evidence of apparent prosperity and cosmopolitanism. The seaport of this early outpost of globalization continues to bustle with levels of trade befitting an intercontinental crossroads. The gleaming Victoria and Alfred Waterfront is an upscale tourist vortex, and the massive new convention center with its adjoining international hotel help make Cape Town a glorious modern city.

One feels a twinge of betrayal, however, with the first visit to Khayelitsha, 26 kilometers (16 miles) out the N2 highway amid the sandy Cape Flats, a black African township of over a million residents and the sort of place where the majority of Cape Town residents live. Miles before any apparent settlement, one sees dozens of men and women walking along the shoulder of the freeway, making an hours-long commute to work, or in search of it. Closer to Khayelitsha, hordes of children are playing soccer in the road reserve, occasionally streaming across the multilane highway. Soon the shacks come into view, emerging from a smoky-dusty haze. There are thousands of them, amazingly resourceful assemblages of corrugated tin, recovered shipping palettes, found scraps of anything.



A view of the "formal" side of Khayelitsha from the top of Lookout Hill.

Some are drab but most are swathed in vibrant hues.

In the township itself there are more shacks, then row after row of cinder block huts. Apart from a gas station there are almost no formal stores or other nonresidential buildings. But informal traders abound at most intersections: hair stylists operating in overturned shipping containers; meat purveyors with raw animal parts lying on dusty tables or sizzling on oil-drum grills fired by salvaged wood; fruit stands; a house store selling cigarettes, drinks and not much else. Even at noon on a workday the streets are teeming with pedestrians.

If it is an overstatement to call this the "real" Cape Town, it is also true that this condition is far more prevalent than the parina of affluence in the white, Euro-

centric center. Certainly it is no exaggeration to call townships like this, with their high unemployment and AIDS rates, the greatest challenge to the still young post-apartheid government of South Africa. Recognizing this, the administration of President Thabo Mbeki is pouring resources into a program, dubbed "urban renewal" in an eerie echo of the earlier American episode, aimed at remaking these troubling legacies of apartheid into more livable places. It is this effort that the 2003 class of Loeb fellows has come to study.

Staggering Quality-of-Life Challenges

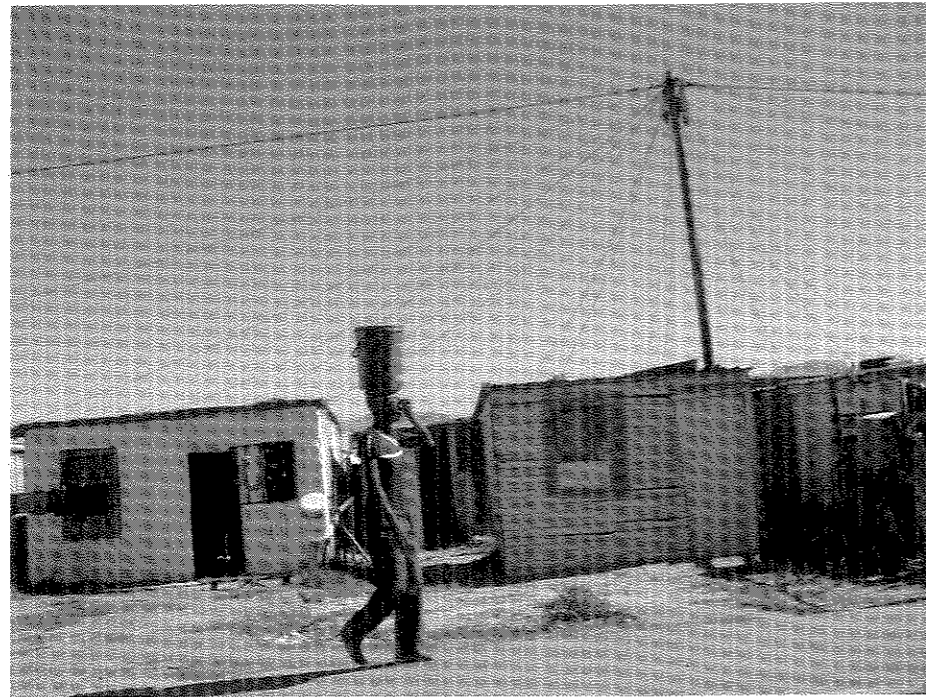
The urban renewal program was begun in 2001 to combat unemployment and crime and improve quality of life for township residents. Each of the nine provinces has identified several nodes of focus, with

more than 30 nodes nationwide. The Western Cape province selected Khayelitsha and the neighboring "colored" township of Mitchell's Plain because of the huge challenges they present. Both are large—Khayelitsha is second only to Soweto in size—and distant from the urban core and economic opportunities; together they account for one-third of the Cape Town region's population.

The magnitude of the project is stunning. Not yet 20 years old, Khayelitsha is believed to have over one million residents and an annual growth rate of 5 percent. The township, whose name means "our new home" in the Xhosa language of its dominant population, began life in the early 1980s as a planned dormitory settlement for rural African men who migrated to Cape Town for industrial jobs. Initially, wives and children were not allowed to join the men. When the dying apartheid regime lifted its pass law restrictions in the late 1980s, families came flooding into the township.

Today, unemployment officially stands at around 46 percent, but that apparently counts only those who still are actively looking. The HIV infection rate is thought to be around 25 percent. As much as one-third of township residents are living in informal housing, either in squatter shacks built illegally on city-owned land, in officially sanctioned shacks on plotted and serviced lots, or in backyard shacks behind the cinder block huts that comprise the lion's share of formal housing.

Khayelitsha has almost no jobs of its own apart from informal trade, such as unlicensed taverns known as shebeens, hair stylists and house shops, and scant tourism jobs. The commute to Cape Town is a grueling journey by overcrowded trains, and the trip is made longer by the fact that the Khayelitsha line is not direct, but a branch from the line to Mitchell's Plain. And increasingly the jobs are not in central Cape Town but in the booming edge city of Bellville, which is unreachable for carless commuters except by jitney taxi. As it happens, access to and from Khayelitsha is intentionally poor. Emerging at the height of the anti-apartheid struggle,



While most shacks are electrified, water must be hauled in from communal taps—or less savory sources.

the township was designed so that its two entrance points could be closed in the event of any disturbance.

Given the paucity of jobs in the township and the difficult commute to existing employment centers, the most appropriate urban renewal strategy might be to relocate residents to new housing near jobs and adequate transportation networks. But that task is so monumental and fraught with thorny considerations that the government has settled for now on trying to make the existing township as livable as possible.

"The question of relocation versus redevelopment of Khayelitsha is a political hot potato," says Pieter Terblanche, principal planner in Cape Town's Planning and Environmental Directorate. White residents in Cape Town and its close-in suburbs aren't eager for new neighbors, and the township residents themselves want to cling to whatever patch of ground they've been able to secure for themselves in the (probably legitimate) fear that they'll never get as much anywhere else.

Addressing the housing needs within Khayelitsha itself then becomes a top priority. About 20,000 households now live in areas with only communal toilets and water taps, though most have elec-

tricity. Most of these families need to be relocated to so-called serviced sites, with water, sewer and access to a bona fide street. Several thousand others are doubled up on serviced sites intended for only one house; these too will be relocated. To reduce the risk of the devastating fires that sometimes sweep through the shack lands, the city wants to de-densify informal areas, adding to the relocation challenge.

The rehousing program is complicated by other factors. For the vast majority of residents, the only acceptable housing is a detached hut on a privately owned lot. Multifamily rental housing is seen as a despised relic of apartheid, and mid- or high-rise apartments are anathema to these recently rural denizens. Government rental housing is being phased out as it is converted to private ownership. Most residents are waiting their turn to secure an individual lot where they can use their 17,900 rand (US\$2,400) housing subsidy toward building the standard-issue, 36-square meter, cinder block hut. With enough hands, a hut can be erected in a weekend.

Naturally, this land-intensive approach leads to what we in the U.S. would call sprawl, exacerbating transportation problems and dramatically increasing the cost

of extending water, sewer and other infrastructure. The effect, taken together with the wide arterial roads that are the primary street network, is a kind of American-style, automobile-oriented design, but without the automobiles.

Other issues are emerging, as well. "Ownership brings financial responsibilities and requirements that people aren't necessarily prepared for," said Terblanche. Many residents also were unprepared for the reality of being forced to pay rising water and electricity rates. Most had become accustomed to paying little or nothing during the late apartheid era, when the government could do little to counter the mass civil disobedience. In an echo of that era, angry poor residents today regularly participate in street protests against utility rates and collections.

Remaking the Township into a Town

With residents largely staying put in Khayelitsha, the question for the urban renewal program becomes how to make the township into something more closely resembling a real town. Step one has been to lay the groundwork for a central business district (CBD) that will allow residents to do their shopping and government business closer to home; now they must take a costly cab ride to Mitchell's Plain to buy anything beyond convenience items.

The CBD is being developed as a joint venture between the city of Cape Town, private interests and the Khayelitsha community. It spans 73 hectares (182.5 acres) adjacent to the commuter rail station. While

retailers and developers know Khayelitsha is a huge, untapped market, it is also seen as an enormous risk by financial institutions, who redline African townships. In Khayelitsha, 60 percent equity has been required of any developer or institution seeking financing. In late July, however, a tentative agreement was reached, and the Cape Town council gave approval to what will be one of the largest private-public investments yet undertaken in a South African township. A grocery chain and discount department store have signed on, but planners want to get a mix of tenants that also includes local merchants. That has required an elaborate financing scheme that allows for keeping rents affordable. Some informal traders also will be allowed in an enclosed square that planners consider the focal point of the district.

Several other planned projects aim to formalize and dignify the public realm. While the city's transport officials are resistant, one of the most urgent needs is to provide safer, cleaner and more attractive pedestrian ways, notes Barbara Southworth, manager of urban design in the city's division of development services.

In addition to building walkways and plazas at key intersections and at taxi-bus nodes, Southworth's office is working to provide some order to the informal trade areas by introducing rows of concrete, post-and-beam arches that can serve as storefronts for the trading stalls. Most of these are improvised from sideways shipping containers, and tend to lie in haphazard clusters. By leasing the favored

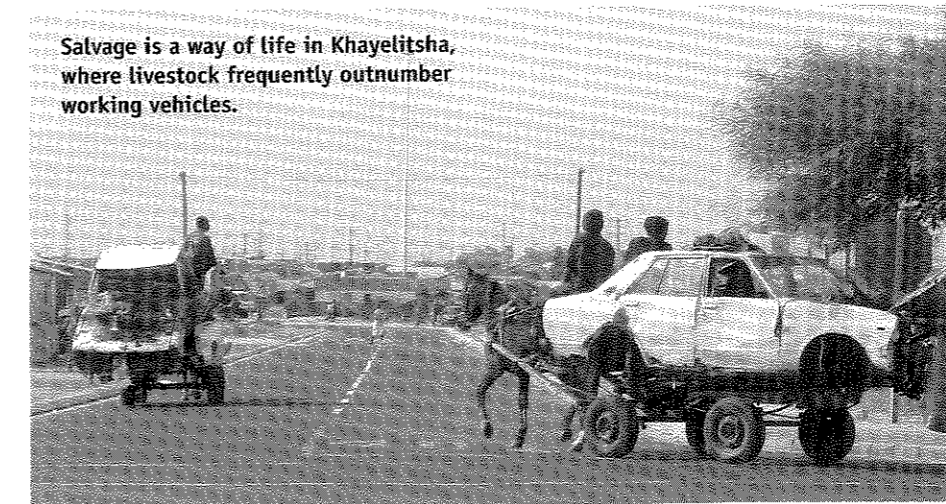
storefront positions the city hopes to introduce a modest level of control over an otherwise unregulated environment.

The government's attention to Khayelitsha has delivered other amenities as well, though not necessarily under the rubric of urban renewal. The magistrate court building that opened in early May is the most expensive government building ever built in a black township, which is taken as an important sign of progress. The national and provincial governments also contributed to the first national tourist site in a township, a cultural center at Lookout Hill. Built at the highest point in the Cape Flats, next to a fragile dune that offers a panoramic view of Khayelitsha and Mitchell's Plain, the center is expected to be the entry point for the increasingly popular township tours, estimated at 30,000 mostly foreign tourists annually. The center will feature exhibits on the origins of Khayelitsha and on the Sangoma healers of Xhosa culture and a marketplace selling the wares of local cottage industries.

Vexing Consequences

It is unsettling to think that, at the moment, the most promising economic path for Khayelitsha is to offer tourists a glimpse of the provisional landscape necessitated by crushing poverty, mass relocation and government-enforced segregation. It is equally disquieting to realize that urban renewal efforts at normalizing the township's environment could reduce some of the appeal to those tourists.

While American urban renewal often meant displacing many African-American and immigrant populations by eliminating central city ghettos, the South African variant aims to improve conditions for millions of residents who will be allowed to remain in far larger ghettos many miles from the urban core. This immediately raises some vexing questions: Should the government work to preserve these intensely segregated artifacts of an oppressive regime? There are powerful arguments for doing so, not least the extreme difficulty and unpopularity of relocating a population that has had its fill of such government-



Salvage is a way of life in Khayelitsha, where livestock frequently outnumber working vehicles.

driven exercises. But by investing in making townships more permanent, are current residents and future generations consigned to economic isolation? These questions linger even as the government proceeds with the program. **L**

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A Decade of Changes A Retrospective of the Latin America Program

MARTIN O. SMOLKA
and LAURA MULLAHY

This year marks the tenth anniversary of the Lincoln Institute's Program on Latin America and the Caribbean.

In a context of formidable changes in the politics, economics and policies of the region—as well as changes within the Institute with regard to strategies, resources and organization—the Institute's priorities in Latin America have evolved over the past decade. The program has become more focused on specific themes developed in collaboration with a broad base of committed partners, including scholars, public officials and other contributors, in response to a growing local demand.

The Institute's image in Latin America has likewise evolved; today, we are acknowledged as a reliable partner in many national and regional land policy debates. We have built relationships of mutual trust with key actors in many countries and have earned the legitimacy that is essential to our work. We have carved out complementary roles as a facilitator, a source of funding support and, above all, a provider of talented and capable leadership. Most of our faculty members are engaged in one or more of the five thematic networks that form the centerpiece of our strategy: value capture, land markets, property taxation, large-scale urban projects and regularization of informal land markets.

The growth of this program can be attributed to the confluence of several important factors having to do with the changing socioeconomic context in Latin America and corresponding implications for the land policy agenda. The Institute's goal has been to help local participants better understand the nature and implications of the issues under debate rather than to take any position on them.

Changing Land Policy Environments

The structural or macroeconomic changes in the region have been affecting the land policy agenda in both direct and subtle ways. Latin America is coming out of a difficult period of adjustment to both global and internal financial turmoil and, in many countries, a return to democracy. Although the region's chronic high inflation problem has apparently been curbed, there remains a definite frustration with the mediocre GDP performance and the high social costs associated with structural adjustment programs (all-time high rates of interest, unemployment, informality and so forth). Moreover, there is a clear sense that these programs not only failed to resolve some major problems but also left some critical issues untouched or even worse off. Clearly the record on urban poverty, informal or irregular land occupation, the quality and extension of urban services, and urban violence did not improve much. World Bank indicators of extreme poverty (percent of population living on US\$1 a day or less) over the last decade show lack of improvement only in Latin America and Africa.

Although the opening of the region's economies has introduced a greater degree of competitiveness to once overly protected or subsidized local industries and commercial activities, the extent of the incentives and "sweet deals" used to attract foreign investments in urban infrastructure and privatization of services often creates uneasiness. At the urban level, we have observed a crisis in comprehensive planning and concomitant commodification of urban life that has influenced a shift toward management policies that represent a change of rhetoric and focus from universalization of services to strategic projects, from social participation to public/private partnerships, from inclusionary equity to exclusionary efficiency,

and so on. The traditional indigenous property development sector has been opened to international firms, and with that a mushrooming of upscale, sophisticated housing and commercial developments for the privileged few, mainly in gated communities and giant shopping centers that emulate the sprawling land use patterns of developed economies. Many such developments actually compete for locations otherwise used by low-income families in the urban peripheries, adding to the already inflated price of land.

Not all cities have benefited from their apparent increasing competitiveness. In spite of generous fiscal incentives many have been left behind, and cutthroat incentive wars among municipalities have further eroded their already weak fiscal base. That explains the apparent paradox of the most economically vigorous municipalities being the same ones with higher increases in the formation of new slums, illustrating the gap between generated local revenues and social needs.

The result has been an overall disenchantment with neo-liberal reforms that have not delivered what was promised and often created perverse consequences. For example, in Peru former President Fujimori's liberalization of land laws to eliminate city boundaries actually facilitated new pirate subdivisions. Another unintended outcome is urban violence, which has reached unprecedented levels in many countries. Until recently Argentina was the richest country in the region, but now it is struggling with civic unrest and problems of hunger as over 45 percent of its population has been drawn into poverty. Uruguay, once considered the "Switzerland" of the region, is experiencing a 10 percent annual increase in informal settlements, unemployment at all-time records of over 18 percent, and a 30 percent drop in wages. Similarly, more than half of the Brazilian labor force is now working outside of the formal labor market, and remittances from emigrants in the U.S. constitute the main source of hard currency in El Salvador.

It is nevertheless still debatable (for some at least) whether many of these negative results are due to the adoption of a

wrong or inadequate model (the stigmatized neo-liberal agenda built according to the so-called Washington Consensus), or whether it simply did not go far enough. Some analysts claim that the reforms were truncated too soon, or were only partially implemented. Modernization reforms had some relative success in privatization

Independent of this debate, frustrations are reflected in two major trends. On one hand countries are moving away from the indirect neo-liberal approach by releasing free-market institutional constraints. They understand that social challenges can be addressed only with direct interventions to promote strong economic growth



Faculty and participants in the week-long course on Value Capture gather in front of Lincoln House in September 2002.

(despite debates over agreed prices and other issues) and in deregulation of certain sectors. Yet other pressing needs, such as revisiting the longstanding fiscal and administrative structures and the pension and social security systems, have not yet found a socially and politically acceptable or effective path toward full-fledged reform.

A more middle-of-the road position argues that in spite of all the social and political costs, the region is now in a better position to resume economic growth and attack its fundamental social problems. It is argued that, at the macro level, most countries in Latin America have accomplished an adequate platform to promote growth: no inflation, relatively low public deficit (or at least a deficit under control), realistic or favorable exchange rates, openness to international investments, and so forth. Similarly favorable environments are found at the micro level: a healthier business structure with an emphasis on productivity and competition.

through increased productive capacity, new employment-generating initiatives, and active public interventions such as minimum income and basic needs policies. Many countries, including Brazil, Mexico, Peru and Chile, are also reestablishing national programs to provide subsidies for low-income housing that were largely discontinued during the 1990s.

There is in addition a growing uneasiness with the sociopolitical unsustainability of the brutal cuts being made in public expenditures in order to keep public debt under control; in Brazil debt payments have reached the scandalously high level of 4.5 percent of GDP. One immediate consequence of this streamlining is the disconcerting situation of many governments being unable to tap into the funds available through various multilateral agencies, in spite of the urgent need for investment funds to address the accumulated so-called "social debt," in the form of housing deficits, malnutrition and so forth.

On the other hand some important changes are occurring in the political arena, as candidates associated more with ethical probity than administrative experience are becoming more successful. As part of the democratic consolidation of the region, voters seem to be punishing politicians associated with former or existing regimes, such as Menem in Argentina ("que se vayan todos"), and are searching for credible politicians, even if they have limited administrative experience, such as Lula in Brazil, or in spite of their populist image, such as Chávez in Venezuela.

Implications for the Land Policy Agenda

Urban issues are not yet high on the national development agendas of most Latin American countries, although Brazil's new Urban Development Law (the City Statute Law) of 2001 and the recently created Ministry of Cities are promising initiatives. In some countries (e.g., Chile, Colombia) important land policy proposals have been put on hold to give more latitude to the housing and building industries to perform their presumed role as generators of economic growth. However, many such actions are the result of misconceptions or prejudices, thus providing important opportunities for the Institute's educational programs to offer other perspectives for broad-based solutions to urban land policy dilemmas.

From the alternative bottom-up perspective, the last few decades of structural adjustment programs (i.e., fiscal restraints and drastic reductions of central government responsibilities and investment in social capital) have forced local administrations to find more endogenous responses to increasing demands from organized civil society. As a result, there has been a proliferation of alternative and noteworthy experiments at the local level, marking a break with the traditional, monolithic, one-size-fits-all model of addressing urban management problems. Perceived as part of a quiet revolution, localities have become breeding grounds for an impressive number of new and promising initiatives.

The debates surrounding the following land policy themes form the basis for specific courses and other educational programs

supported by the Institute to help address both national and local challenges in the land policy realm.

Regularization of Informal Settlements

Many central governments have taken positive steps affecting the urban realm, as seen in the growing number of national regularization programs. These efforts are often made under the influence of multi-lateral agencies such as the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank that perceive regularization as a component of poverty alleviation, an issue high on their priority lists. Nevertheless, the effectiveness and full implications of regularization policies and other alternatives to provide housing to low-income families still are not fully understood. Given the magnitude and expected rate of escalation of irregular land development, little progress can be expected unless such curative initiatives are accompanied by bolder income and employment policies, as well as more preventive policies that effectively change the rules of the game in the real estate and land markets. These policies could involve improved property tax systems, better regulation of land uses, particularly at the urban peripheries, and alternative instruments for financing the provision of urban services (Smolka 2003).

Property Tax Reform

Relevant tax reforms have yet to be implemented in most countries in the region, and property taxation policies show a mediocre performance overall. A few countries have taken important steps toward a new fiscal environment, however. Brazil has succeeded in approving and implementing a new, quite sophisticated and strict law for fiscal responsibility, although it has obtained only meager results in reforming the existing tax structure, which has many overlapping and inefficient taxes. Mexico also has legislation in place that is conducive to significant fiscal decentralization. Nevertheless, positive results in property tax collection apparently are not well correlated to the socioeconomic or demographic profile of municipalities, suggesting that the problem rests less in

material conditions than in the will or ability of local administrations to implement improvements in tax collection (De Cesare 2002; page 13 in this issue).

Value Capture Instruments

In the absence of stronger means to enhance their local revenues, many jurisdictions are now contemplating the use of various tools whereby land value increments (*plusvalías*) resulting from public actions are mobilized to finance and promote urban development. Although far from being assimilated in the legal, urban and fiscal policy arenas, these instruments are finding fertile ground as a means to legitimize incentives for private developers in the form of flexible zoning ordinances, additional density allowances and the like. Some socially responsible local administrations have come to consider the use of the value capture principle as both a regulatory device to discipline predatory practices in informal land markets and as a means to provide services to low-income areas. Some interesting experiments in Bogotá and Porto Alegre are described below.

Large-scale Urban Projects

Following an apparent global trend, most large and some mid-sized Latin American cities are betting on the multiplying capacity of large-scale urban projects to reposition the city's competitiveness and attractiveness, or at least to serve as a catalyst to mobilize latent economic forces and resources. Stimulated by the crisis of comprehensive planning and concomitant commodification of urban life described earlier, these projects are typically being developed under some public/private partnership scheme. Some critics believe the public is bearing the lion's share of risk through large subsidies that result in limited benefits for the public interest. Furthermore, the implementation of these projects often focuses more on their symbolic and aesthetic values than on rigorous and comprehensive analysis of their cost effectiveness, let alone any evaluation of their overall social, economic or environmental opportunity costs. The cynical acceptance of resulting gentrification as an

unavoidable if not intentional outcome goes hand in hand with a superficial assessment of the real social and individual costs associated with such development. There is nevertheless ample room for debate over whether these large-scale projects are intrinsically bad for society, whether the negative impacts result from problems associated with otherwise avoidable misconceptions or sociopolitical vulnerabilities in their implementation, or even whether they are just so complex that they defy any reasonable methods of evaluation.

The Lincoln Institute Agenda

As an educational organization, the Institute continues to place great importance on teaching to address the issues raised in these land policy debates. However, we have discovered an enormous need to enhance teaching capacity within Latin America, as well as through our own classroom programs at Lincoln House. Thus, much of our work involves formulating and implementing programs designed to "train trainers," while also developing and organizing relevant curriculum to generate appropriate pedagogical techniques and materials. The Institute's programs create learning opportunities for active faculty, including those already teaching in universities and those working in professional and government settings.

Professional Development Courses

The primary instrument through which we currently structure the substantive component of our program and accomplish our educational goals are the week-long professional development courses that we have held at Lincoln House since October 2001. These courses address five core topics: value capture, land markets, property taxation, large-scale urban projects, and regularization of informal land markets. In addition to the valued experience that they provide our participants, the programs have been very effective in permitting us to:

- Identify new faculty. Many participants request permission to replicate the courses in their own country or region.
- Update teaching materials. Participants are required to bring and present cases

and to engage in exercises representing the situation in their country or locality.

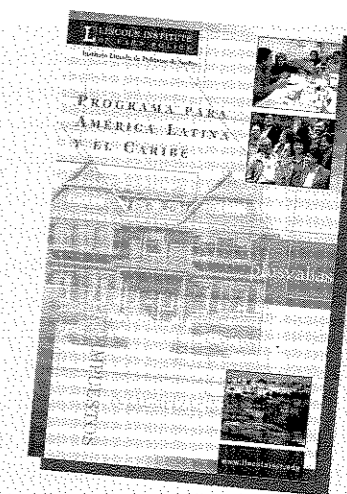
- Create opportunities for interaction and networking among peers. Typically one of the most valued attributes of these courses is the opportunity to meet, interact and network with professionals from other countries working on similar topics.
- Detect gaps in knowledge and research. Our courses frequently make us aware of areas in which we can provide support to generate some useful research or product (for example, texts on key topics written in accessible language).
- Strengthen our curriculum through the development and dissemination of course materials, teaching manuals and other documents.
- Market the courses more broadly. Alumni of our courses are instrumental in identifying new participants.

Comprehensive Programs

As the Latin America Program expands and matures we are moving toward more comprehensive partnerships in selected countries. Rather than offering only isolated, occasional programs, we are developing packages that integrate various initiatives designed to identify critical issues in the country's agenda, reach out to a broader group of stakeholders, disseminate ideas through new media and vehicles, and build capacity in both academic and policy-making spheres. In other words, we are integrating our education, research and publications efforts around key issues by working closely with local partners. These more inclusive programs are being developed in two modes: the first focuses on the coordination of many different single-country or regional policy issues in one local institution serving as a surrogate Lincoln Institute branch; the second focuses more directly on a critical land policy topic and may involve many local institutions and partners.

Country-based Programs. Chile's unique experience among Latin American countries in land and housing policies provides the background for a program to develop a better informed national debate on the

interrelationships among land policy, urban financing and social integration by introducing policies such as value capture and land use controls into the national agenda. Cosponsored with long-time Institute partners at the Catholic University of Chile's Institute of Urban and Territorial Studies (IEUT) in Santiago, the program offers national and international seminars, workshops and courses on land management issues to the key actors influencing land policy: members of the Parliament, representatives of government ministries, faculty at leading educational institutions, representatives of NGOs and the business community.



Latin America Program Brochure

The Institute has produced a new Spanish-language brochure describing the Program on Latin America and the Caribbean and the four core courses offered at Lincoln House: Large-scale Urban Redevelopment Projects, Property Taxation, Value Capture and Informal Land Markets.

The brochure also includes a series of questions and answers about the Institute's educational and research programs for Latin American audiences, descriptions of its faculty, and other information to assist those who may wish to participate in programs offered throughout Latin America.

To request a brochure, email lac@lincolinst.edu or visit the Latin America section of our website at www.lincolinst.edu/aboutlincoln/.

We are also working with the Central American University (UCA José Simeón Cañas) in El Salvador and Rafael Landívar University in Guatemala to enhance the land management component in the urban development agendas of the six Central American countries (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama). Program activities for academics, public officials and members of the private sector include the development of curriculum materials, publications, graduate-level courses, workshops and seminars on land policy-related topics.

Topical Programs. The second type of comprehensive capacity building program addresses the challenging issue of access to serviced land by the urban poor and its corollary, persistent informality. We have selected two projects for their potential replicability, innovation in both conceptual and implementation aspects, and above all significant pedagogical value: the urbanization of the Nuevo Usme locality in Bogotá, Colombia; and the new "social urbanizer" legal instrument in Porto Alegre, Brazil.

Both are complex projects involving multiple partners who seek to offer a "third path" to facilitate access to serviced land by the poor. The other two traditional paths—tolerance of informal occupation followed by eventual curative urban upgrading and tenure regularization; and subsidized social interest housing and sites-and-services programs—have not proven to be reliable over time as they fuel land prices and actually contribute to increase informality.

The Nuevo Usme project is being developed with an understanding that *plusvalías* (land value increments) resulting from lower-income urbanization can actually benefit the residents without having to pay in full for the quasi-rent they generate to the land subdividers. It involves reinforcement of the country's value capture legislation and policies (Maldonado and Smolka 2003). Porto Alegre's new social urbanizer program has been designed to offer an alternative for the production of irregular occupation. It recognizes the contributions of diverse stakeholders: infor-

mal subdividers who cannot realistically provide basic services without increasing prices and with that excluding the lower-income segment from their market; and formal developers who have no incentive to operate in the lower-income market as they cannot make a comparable profit providing the same package of services.

These projects are the products of innovative local administrators with a long history and experience who came to realize the limits of conventional regularization programs. They admit from the outset that private agents, both formal and informal land developers, subdividers and others, should be allowed to operate with a proper level of profit making. The resulting gains from urbanization should be shared in a win-win arrangement with the public, which is ultimately responsible for the provision of such services. The Institute's main role in these new initiatives is to promote training and education to help these players understand the nature of the challenges and opportunities posed by the implementation of these projects; conduct studies and field research as required to generate the adequate data information; and document all phases and components of the process as case studies.

Final Comments

Over the past 10 years, the Latin America Program has sponsored more than 150 courses, conferences and other educational programs that have directly served more than 5,000 participants from 15 countries. Thus, while we are constantly striving to develop new programs and partnerships, as described above, we are also deeply committed to maintaining our existing network of well-established programs. In fact, this year's schedule includes a rich collection of such activities: a 120-hour course on urban land policy in Argentina; a replication of last year's successful program on property tax, and now including value capture, with the Institute for the Technical Development of Public Finance (INDETEC) in Mexico; two land market seminars for the Uruguayan Parliament and business community; a set of programs on land markets and land policy in devel-

oping countries in collaboration with the World Bank, both in Washington, DC, and other locations; and the land management module we have been sponsoring for several years in the World Bank Institute's Urban Management courses. We will also continue to support professional association conferences, such as the International Property Tax Institute (IPTI) and professional urban and regional planning associations in Colombia and Brazil.

We welcome new ideas and are open to new roles we may be called upon to play to fulfill our mandate to stimulate and enhance the land policy debate. More than representing a new direction, our more recently established programs constitute a broadening of our activities in the region. They reflect the Institute's commitment to collaborate with our partners to uncover and promote opportunities to address the relevant and pressing issues in the land policy agenda. Furthermore, we seek to devise practical training initiatives that will make a difference in the role land policy can play in advancing the progress of the Latin American community at large and in the mitigation of urban poverty in particular. ■

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FACULTY PROFILE

Claudia De Cesare

Claudia De Cesare is a property tax adviser to the Secretariat of Finance for the municipality of Porto Alegre, Brazil, and she teaches courses on valuation and property taxation in the postgraduate program of the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul in Porto Alegre. She has been a course developer and instructor in the Lincoln Institute's Latin America Program for more than five years. She is also a member of the advisory board of the International Property Tax Institute (IPTI) and is the former technical director of the Brazilian Appraisal Institute (IBAPE).

Land Lines: Porto Alegre is known internationally for its innovative and democratic local administration. What is unique about this city compared to others in Brazil or Latin America?

Claudia De Cesare: Indeed, Porto Alegre has initiated many pioneering actions in public administration, including the use of the property tax as an instrument for value capture; the sale of building rights (*solo criado*); the use of building rights in place of cash to pay for expropriations of real property; and the collection of rents in exchange for the use of public space by infrastructure networks, such as telecommunications, cable TV and gas. For instance, five years before the approval of the national City Statute legislation regulating the use of progressive rates for the property tax, Porto Alegre passed local legislation to address this matter. Although the Supreme Court later ruled against this local action and in favor of the need for national legislation, the city has played a leading role in promoting debate on many polemic issues, including private rights, property rights and the public interest.

I think the reasons for Porto Alegre's innovations include a clear definition of the policies and goals to be achieved, as well as "guts" by local leaders to tackle issues even when conflict is likely to occur. Public officials have maintained an overriding vision that the city must be planned democratically for the community at large and a conviction that public assets must be taken seriously. Not all initiatives have succeeded, but citizens now have a better understanding of the local government's responsibilities and its limitations. The



fact that one political party, in this case the labor party (PT), was elected to lead the city government for more than 15 consecutive years also contributed to the continuity and coherence of these public actions. This kind of political legacy is quite unusual in Brazil and Latin America in general.

LL: How has this proactive atmosphere affected the administration of the tax?

CD: We can identify two periods in terms of property tax performance in Porto Alegre. Before 1989, local revenue from the property tax followed the typical pattern in Latin America. It was mainly symbolic, characterized by a low level of effort in administration, negligence in local tax collection, and extreme dependence on revenue transfers from the national and state levels. Following major property tax reforms that revised exemption policies, introduced progressive rates and established a new assessment list, the property tax collection rate grew more than 300 percent over the

first two years. A major public education campaign emphasized the arguments for regular property tax payments, the importance of the tax for the provision of public services, and the reasons why the local authorities would not tolerate tax evasion.

A change in attitude by the city administration also led to more effective enforcement of property tax payments and legal actions to address tax evasion or disputes over assessed values. It was made clear there would be no amnesty for property tax debts. The participatory budget process also contributed to the rehabilitation of the property tax in Porto Alegre, as overall confidence in public administration increased (see Goldsmith and Vanier 2001). Since the early 1990s, the annual revenue collected from the property tax has been stable, representing nearly 0.95 percent of local GDP. At the national level, by comparison, the property tax represents only about 0.5 percent of GDP. Subsequent improvements in the property tax have not taken place, basically because the legislature has rejected several proposals for either reforms or major revisions.

LL: How important is the property tax in Latin America?

CD: Although the simple answer to this question is "it depends on the country," the property tax is not a significant revenue source in any Latin American country, even though most countries have long established property tax systems. Only in Argentina and Uruguay does the revenue collected from the property tax represent more than 1 percent of GDP. In Brazil the average performance is close to 0.5 percent,

and in Mexico and Costa Rica it is around 0.3 percent of the GDP. Moreover, in relative terms, there is great variability in the importance of the property tax within countries and cities that is not directly explained by the local GDP or population size. Part of the performance depends on political will, which varies enormously among cities.

LL: *In your opinion, what are the main controversies related to property tax collection?*

CD: I would say that the controversies include the real goals to be achieved with the property tax; the degree of universality in its implementation; the changes needed to take into account social, economic and cultural concerns; and the distribution of the tax burden for regulating the tax according to ability to pay. Concerning ability to pay, principally in Brazil, there is much discussion about application of progressive rates that vary according to assessed values. The underlying issue might be how simple the system should be.

Other issues have to do with the lack of consensus about the transparency of the system, local autonomy versus a national system for tax collection, and general political and economic instability that affects property value maps and other data. Furthermore, the public disclosure of information on the property tax, such as individual property characteristics, assessed values and annual tax payments, is not always considered secure.

LL: *What would it take to improve property tax collection?*

CD: In my experience, the successful performance of the property tax depends on a combination of adequate fiscal policies, a consistent legal framework for tax collection and an efficient administrative structure. For instance, the application of confiscatory (high) rates to vacant sites to promote land development is likely to stimulate tax evasion instead. In addition, political will and the capacity for negotiation with stakeholders are essential for the introduction of reforms or revisions in tax administration. Making the connec-

tion between public services and revenue collected from the property tax more evident to taxpayers is likely to contribute to a better collection rate. In other words, the role of the property tax would be enhanced if the community is accustomed to paying the property tax and understands its effect on improving public services. Finally, a trend toward a participatory fiscal culture, in which the community takes part in the decisions about public revenue collection and expenditures, could increase the acceptability of the tax, making its collection easier.

LL: *What is changing in the region to influence the prospects for tax reform?*

CD: I believe tax administrators understand and care more today about the property tax. They are aware of the pressing need to increase revenues through better performance of the tax, in spite of challenges due to its high visibility and historically poor performance record. They also recognize the need to break this paradigm, in relation to both taxpayer expectations and the role of the property tax as a component of the national taxation system. Several isolated yet promising experiences have made it clear that property tax reform in Latin America is viable, but it requires political will, innovation and a commitment to overcome perceived barriers to its implementation.

LL: *What are the main differences in the property tax environment of Latin America compared to North America?*

CD: The U.S. and Canadian systems are certainly more mature and transparent than most Latin American systems, largely because information is available in the public domain and technology is easily accessible. Some of the important differences observed in Latin America are illegal occupation patterns, the lack of reliable information on land tenure, the large number of informal property transactions and the prevalence of progressive housing construction. All of these characteristics of Latin American land use present distinct challenges to developing procedures to assess

property values and administer a fair and consistent tax policy. Concerning the use of technology in the administration of the property tax, last year I learned about a cadastral system in Mexico that is as effective as the best systems used in the U.S. However, this is unusual; there is great variation in the use of technology among different local authorities in Latin America.

LL: *Based on your research, what are some of the positive and negative impacts of switching to a land value-based tax system for residential properties?*

CD: The conclusion of my study was quite unexpected, since the hypothesis supported the opposite argument. Using a database from Porto Alegre, I found that the main result from using land value as the tax base was the tendency toward more regressivity in the distribution of the tax burden, with low-priced houses clearly identified as the potential losers. The fact that part of the tax burden would be transferred from high-priced to low-priced properties is a real cause of concern. However, further investigation is necessary to address imperfections in the valuation model used to estimate land values and to examine other databases. In any event, the lack of knowledge about the use of land value as the tax base and its perceived advantages was identified as a major obstacle for its application in Brazil.

LL: *How do you use various assessment tools and techniques to determine land value?*

CD: One of the main arguments against the use of land value as the tax base is the great difficulty in estimating the value of improved sites. In my study, the use of hedonic models (MRA) for estimating land values was found to be viable. To compensate for the lack of data on undeveloped sites in highly developed areas (central areas and business districts), I used a reasonable number of houses that were sold for new development. Their market value was determined entirely by the potential of the site for future development, as well as by the neighborhood characteristics.

Therefore, the findings support the hypothesis that eventual difficulties in land assessment do not prevent the use of land value as the property tax base, at least, in the case of Porto Alegre. Nevertheless, a lower degree of assessment uniformity was observed in the valuation of undeveloped sites, since site prices tend to suffer strong random variations and are highly influenced by the particular characteristics of the buyer and seller involved in each transaction.

LL: *What are the greatest challenges facing Latin America in the next five years?*

CD: As discussed before, a major challenge is to pursue more effective property tax systems. I think the promotion and implementation of national programs for the improvement of the property tax is essential to reinforce the property tax at the local level. On a more personal note, my goal is to develop a web-based system for collecting and disseminating information on property taxes in Latin America, allowing comparative analyses among municipalities according to predefined

criteria. The system would have property tax administrators fill out data on the performance of the property tax on a regular basis, allowing for evaluation over time. This would greatly advance the project, now being supported by the Lincoln Institute, which uses conventional questionnaires to survey property tax information in the region. □

■ REFERENCE

Goldsmith, William W. and Carlos B. Vainer. 2001. Participatory budgeting and power politics in Porto Alegre. *Land Lines* 13 (1): 7-9.

Latin America Fellowship Programs

The Latin America Program supports two fellowship programs for university students, designed as investments in the next generation of educators and policy makers in Latin America. These programs complement the Lincoln Institute's Dissertation Fellowship Program for doctoral students (see page 16).

The City Studies Program (PUEC) at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) offers the *Fexsu* fellowship program to increase the number of people with specialized knowledge in urban land policy and to raise the level of debate on these issues. *Fexsu*—an acronym for *Formación de expertos en suelo urbano* or formation of experts in urban land—grants fellowships cosponsored on a 50-50 basis by the Lincoln Institute and PUEC to students who plan to write their undergraduate, masters or doctoral theses on subjects directly related to urban land policy.

Students applying for *Fexsu* fellowships come from different academic backgrounds and are generally pursuing degrees in city planning, finance or economics. They meet in monthly seminars conducted by a specialist from PUEC, and Lincoln faculty members visit Mexico periodically to discuss the students' projects. Based on the experience of the first group of students and the increase in demand, the require-

ments for *Fexsu* fellowships are being revised for the second round; applications will be accepted only from masters and doctoral candidates, and the program will reach out to students at universities around the country, not only in Mexico City.

The success of the *Fexsu* program has inspired the Lincoln Institute to develop a pilot program of fellowships for masters and doctoral candidates in other Latin American universities. The Latin America Program's faculty network has long argued the need to support masters level students in particular, since few universities offer a doctoral program and the masters is in fact a terminal degree. Furthermore, many graduate students enter these masters programs after several years of work experience, so they tend to be older and already focused on their careers.

The Institute launched a pilot initiative for Latin America fellowships last spring and selected eight students from throughout the region. Like the *Fexsu* model, the Institute program will include an evaluation meeting for all students and their advisors in a Latin American locale for a presentation and critique of the thesis projects. For information about future fellowship opportunities, contact lac@lincolnst.edu. □

2003-2004 Recipients

Doctoral Candidate

Analida Rincón
Institute of Urban and Regional Research and Planning (IPPUR)
Federal University of Rio de Janeiro

Masters Candidates

Alicia Artigas Muñoz
University of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay (UDELAR), Montevideo

José Bassul Campos
University of Brasilia

Yasna Contreras Gatica

Institute on Urban and Territorial Studies, Catholic University of Chile, Santiago

Jaime García Leal

National University of Colombia, Medellín

Patricia Goldaracena

University of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay (UDELAR), Montevideo

Henrique Lopes Dornelas

University of the State of Rio de Janeiro

Andrea Pulici

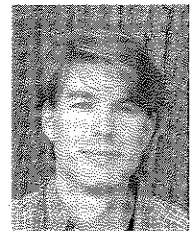
Institute of Urban and Regional Research and Planning (IPPUR)
Federal University of Rio de Janeiro

The Lincoln Institute's Dissertation Fellowship program assists Ph.D. students whose research is closely related to the Institute's interest in land and tax policy. The program provides an important link between the Institute's educational mission and its research objectives by supporting scholars early in their careers. Dissertation fellowship awards are \$10,000 each.

During the 2003–2004 academic year, seven students are receiving fellowships to pursue their thesis research.

Planning the Green City: Forty Years of Growth Management in Boulder

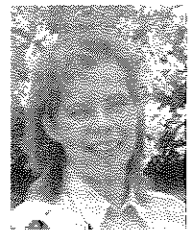
Mark D. O. Adams
Department of Geography
University of Wisconsin–Madison



Many planners and activists advocate growth management programs to achieve environmental protection or social equity objectives. Critics charge that such programs transform communities into elitist enclaves. This research evaluates these generic claims in a historical case study of Boulder, Colorado, where city and county governments jointly manage one of the most enduring and comprehensive local growth management programs in the country.

Analyzing Mature Suburbs through Property Values: Excessive Sprawl, Scarce Reinvestments and Racial Disparities

Katrin B. Anacker
City and Regional Planning Program
Austin E. Knowlton School of Architecture
The Ohio State University, Columbus



This project will analyze the specific factors that influence property values of single-family homes located in mature suburbs. It will also analyze how these influences vary among different kinds of suburbs, and to what extent property values in mature suburbs have paralleled property values in central city neighborhoods.

Property Taxation without Representation: The Economics of Second Homes

Nathan B. Anderson
Department of Economics
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor



Do vacation properties influence property tax rates set by local jurisdictions? Vacation home owners cannot vote in local elections and, in general, do not use local public services. The collection of a unique data set on municipal property tax rates allows for the merging of these data with detailed census information on population and housing characteristics for several states.

Volunteering to Be Taxed: Business Improvement Districts and the Consequences of the Local Provision of Public Goods

Leah Brooks
Department of Economics
University of California at Los Angeles



The advent of Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) has enabled neighborhoods to levy binding taxes on themselves, a role usually restricted to governments. BIDs generally provide security, cleaning and marketing services. I will use data on property values, crime and lobbying behavior, as well as information about all of the 52 BIDs in Los Angeles County, to evaluate the consequences of this private provision of public goods.

Toward a More Efficient Market for Urban Land

Kevin Gillen
Real Estate Department, The Wharton School
University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia
One of the most significant and recognized practical challenges associated with administering land value tax is the accurate appraisal of land values. Characteristics such as relatively low liquidity, lack of standardization and substantial transaction costs may cause the market for land to be "inefficient" in the classical economic sense. This research proposes to parameterize and characterize the magnitude

of pricing errors in the valuation of urban land by applying an innovative empirical strategy to transactions-level data on land and property attributes covering a 23-year time period in a large U.S. city.

Translating Interaction Urbanity Theories in Usable Planning Knowledge: New Guidelines for Planning Compact Live-Work Areas

Annet Jantien Smit
Department of Urbanism
Delft University of Technology
The Netherlands



Interaction urbanity theories explain the location of households and firms based on their dependence on frequent professional and personal contacts, and on proximity to amenities on a daily basis. Recent studies reveal that compact live-work areas are only desired by specific clusters of households and firms. Both theory and practice will be translated in new guidelines for planning compact live-work areas.

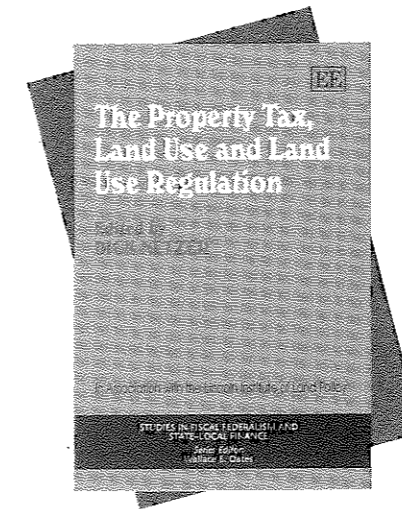
Growth Finding Its Way: Impacts of Development Regulations on Housing Spillover among Neighboring Jurisdictions

Xifang Xing
Department of City and Regional Planning
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill



This study assesses the impact of regulatory stringency on housing spillover and analyzes regulations that limit housing and land supply and facilitate development. Using data from a national survey of jurisdictions in 57 large metropolitan areas, the study estimates an OLS regression model to test the effects of regulations on a jurisdiction's change of share in metropolitan housing construction between 1990 and 2000, controlling for demand, supply, quality of life and location. It then uses the results from this model to calculate metropolitan spillover indexes. □

The Property Tax, Land Use and Land Use Regulation



This comprehensive volume of essays by respected scholars in economics and public finance explores the connections among the property tax, land use and regulation. The authors examine the property tax as a partial substitute for land use regulation and other policies designed to affect how land is utilized. Like many economists, the contributors see some type of property taxation as a more efficient means of helping to shape land use. Some of the essays analyze a conventional property tax, while others consider radically different systems.

Following an introduction by the book's editor, Dick Netzer, the first paper sets the stage by modeling taxes on land and buildings in the context of a dynamic model of real estate markets. The remaining papers

examine how various tax mechanisms and non-tax alternatives to regulating and determining land use, such as zoning and private neighborhood associations, complement or substitute for one another. Urban planners and economists interested in local public finance will welcome this wide-ranging review and analysis.

Contents

Introduction, by Dick Netzer

1. Taxes on Buildings and Land in a Dynamic Model of Real Estate Markets, by Alex Anas
2. The Effect of Tax Increment Financing on Land Use, by Richard F. Dye and David F. Merriman
3. Preferential Assessment: Impacts and Alternatives, by John E. Anderson
4. The Influence of Local Fiscal Structure and Growth Control Choices on "Big-Box" Urban Sprawl in the American West, by Robert W. Wassmer
5. Is Zoning a Substitute for, or a Complement to, Factor Taxes?, by William T. Bogart
6. Taxes versus Regulation: The Welfare Impacts of Policies for Containing Urban Sprawl, by Paul Chesbire and Stephen Sheppard
7. Land Use Regulations and the Property Tax: Cost-Benefit Analyses, by John F. McDonald

8. The Rise of the Private Neighborhood Association: A Constitutional Revolution in Local Government, by Robert H. Nelson
9. The Rise of Private Neighborhood Associations: Revolution or Evolution?, by William A. Fischel
10. Frontage Tax and the Optimally Compact City, by Peter F. Colwell and Geoffrey K. Turnbull □

DICK NETZER, a leading public finance economist specializing in state and local issues and urban government, is professor emeritus of economics and public administration at the Wagner Graduate School of Public Service, New York University. He organized a conference sponsored by the Lincoln Institute in Scottsdale, Arizona, in January 2002 and edited the papers presented at that conference for this volume.

The Property Tax, Land Use and Land Use Regulation

Edited by Dick Netzer
Published by Edward Elgar Publishing as part of its Studies in Fiscal Federalism and State-Local Finance series, in association with the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy.
2003. 336 pages. \$130.00 (cloth)
ISBN 1-84376-328-1

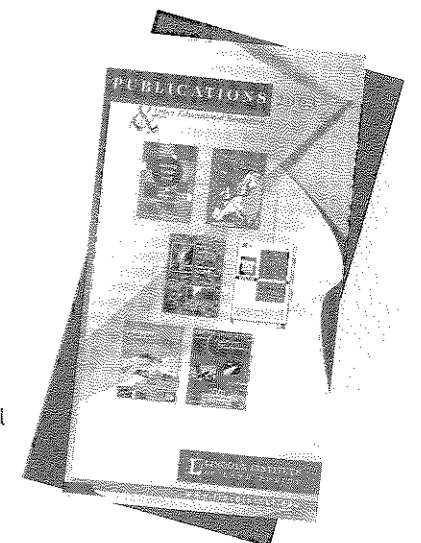
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Contact Edward Elgar Publishing at www.e-elgar.com

Publications Catalog

The Lincoln Institute has published a comprehensive catalog listing nearly 70 books and policy focus reports that address a wide range of topics in land and tax policy. Most of the publications, as well as a number of multimedia resources, are published by and available from the Lincoln Institute. We also list a few books that have been copublished with other publishers, as well as a selection of books in Spanish and Portuguese that explore land use and taxation issues in Latin America.

To request a copy of this free catalog, contact help@lincolninst.edu. The complete catalog is posted on the Lincoln Institute website as a pdf file, and information about each individual book or multimedia resource is also posted (www.lincolninst.edu).



Courses and Conferences

The courses and conferences listed here are offered on an open admission basis and are presented at Lincoln House in Cambridge, Massachusetts, unless otherwise noted. For more information about the agenda, faculty, accommodations, tuition fee and registration procedures, visit the Lincoln Institute website at www.lincolninstitute.edu or email rhoff@lincolninstitute.edu.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 20

Land Use and Property Rights in America
Harvey M. Jacobs, Department of Urban and Regional Planning and Gaylord Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison

In the 1990s, the property rights movement played a significant role in the land use and environmental arena. This national coalition helped pass legislation in 27 states that restricts the right of state and local governments to enact and enforce land use and environmental regulations and planning programs, and reshaped public dialogue on the appropriate balance of private and public property rights. This course, intended for land use and environmental planners and managers, citizens seeking to influence policy, and elected officials and their advisers, acquaints participants with the history and structure of the property rights movement; approaches that restrict land use and environmental planning and policy; strategies to engage in constructive dialogue; cutting-edge policy techniques that address the concerns of property rights advocates; and the future of property rights in local, state and national politics.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23

Racine, Wisconsin

Land Use in America:

The Roots of Land Use Planning, Its Strengths and Limitations

Harvey M. Jacobs, Department of Urban and Regional Planning and Gaylord Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison

This introductory course explores the historical and cultural bases for land use in America as the foundation for contemporary

challenges in land use and environmental planning. It then reviews the principal set of policy approaches used by local governments for managing privately owned lands, and assesses why so few creative planning and implementation tools are actually adopted. The policy, legal and developer perspectives on local land use are discussed in detail.

THURSDAY-FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 6-7
Denver, Colorado

THURSDAY-FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20-21
Santa Rosa, California

THURSDAY-FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 12-13
Lincoln House

Mediating Land Use Disputes (Mediating Land Use Disputes Series I)
Lawrence Susskind, Consensus Building Institute, Cambridge, Massachusetts

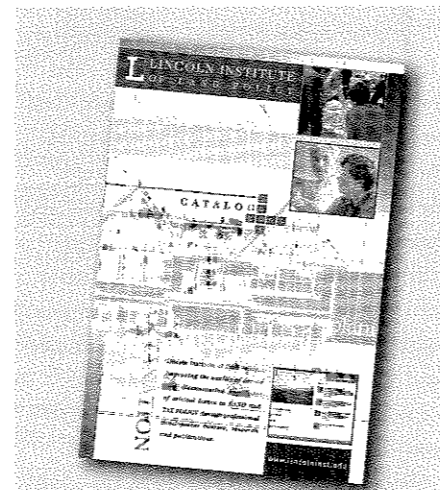
Land use disputes tend to be among the most contentious issues facing communities throughout the United States. Local officials struggle to find ways of balancing environmental protection, economic development and private property rights. There are thousands of mediators in the U.S., but very few have the specialized knowledge and skills required to successfully mediate land use disputes. This two-day introductory course for planners, policy makers, public officials, developers and community advocates presents practical experience and insights into negotiating and mediating solutions to conflicts over land use and community development. Through lectures, interactive exercises, gaming and simulations, participants discuss and work with cases involving land development and community growth, designing and adopting land use plans and evaluating development proposals. Questions of when and how to apply mediation to resolve land use disputes are also explored.

NOVEMBER 17-21

Informal Land Markets: Regularization of Land Tenure and Urban Upgrading Programs

Martim Smolka, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy; and Edésio Fernandes, International Research Group on Law and Urban Space (IRGLUS), London, England

Participants from diverse professional backgrounds examine informality and the land tenure regularization process from different perspectives, through the analysis of Latin American and other international cases presented by the participants. Areas of analysis include understanding the formal-informal urban land market nexus; legal issues associated with the security of tenure; property rights and housing rights; alternative policy instruments; new institutional settings; managerial procedures leading to alternative modes of project implementation, including community participation; and assessing and evaluating programs at the project and city levels.



2003-2004 Course Catalog

The Lincoln Institute's annual course catalog incorporates department descriptions and listings of courses, conferences, fellowships and other education programs. This illustrated publication offers a comprehensive overview of the Institute's mission, its activities and faculty for the current academic year.

To request a free copy of the catalog, contact help@lincolninstitute.edu or call 1-800-LAND-USE (1-800-526-3873). Updates and additions to the course offerings are posted on our website (www.lincolninstitute.edu) for easy reference.

Planning Tools and Techniques Series

Series Coordinators: Armando Carbonell, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy; and Michelle Thompson, Ithaca, New York

Through hands-on exercises, technology demonstrations and interactive presentations, this week-long series of courses on planning tools and techniques provides urban planners and designers, public officials, citizen stakeholders and developers with a set of principles, tools, methods and techniques to effectively engage communities in the planning process. The series approach allows participants to attend either individual sessions or the complete program.

MONDAY-TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1-2

Visualization and Visioning

Michael Kwartler, Environmental Simulation Center, New York City; and Gianni Longo, ACP-Visioning & Planning, New York City

Visioning has become an accepted technique to build broad-based agreement on goals and strategies for the future of a neighborhood, city or region. When used in conjunction with visualization techniques, visioning is a powerful tool that allows stakeholders and citizens to make informed decisions on the physical quality of future development. This course defines principles for effective visioning, reviews three case

studies, and includes a hands-on workshop segment to allow participants to experience visioning and visualization techniques in a realistic situation.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 3

Using Systems of Plans

Lewis D. Hopkins, Department of Urban and Regional Planning, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign; and Gerrit Knaap, Department of Urban Studies and Planning, University of Maryland, College Park

The Systems of Plans approach rests on three ideas: (1) there are always many different plans pertinent to any discussion or decision; (2) the World Wide Web provides an interface and information access tool well suited to accessing the content of these plans; and (3) tools that enhance a plan's usefulness in routine situations, such as writing staff recommendations or supporting planning commission meetings, are more immediately effective than tools for making a plan. The workshop explains this approach, reviews state-of-the-art urban planning websites, and identifies principles for designing web-based interfaces and data access to support the use of plans. It is intended for local planners who work with planning commissions, consultants who develop plans and planning systems for local communities, and technical staff developing planning websites.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4

Visualizing Density

Julie Campoli, Terra Firma Urban Design, Burlington, Vermont; and Alex MacLean, Landslides Aerial Photography, Cambridge, Massachusetts

As smart growth initiatives gain momentum across the country, one of the persistent obstacles to compact development is the public's aversion to density. Misplaced concerns over density often prevent the construction of urban infill projects or the revision of zoning regulations that would allow for compact growth. Part of this aversion is based on an inability to imagine high-quality, high-density living environments. This workshop offers planners, designers and community development officials specific tools for understanding residential density, as well as graphic techniques for illustrating it. Using aerial photography and computer graphics, it focuses on the link between urban design and density and explores how various design approaches accommodate different levels of density.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 5

Redesigning the Edgeless City

Robert Lane and Robert Yaro, Regional Plan Association, New York City; Patrick Condon, Landscape Architecture Program, University of British Columbia, Vancouver; and Dan Marckel, College of Architecture and Landscape Architecture, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis

Presented in collaboration with the Regional Plan Association and based on the handbook *Redesigning the Edgeless City*, this course introduces planning and policy advocates, city and state officials, developers and citizen stakeholders to principles and techniques that can be applied in different metropolitan contexts. Previous courses on this topic have dealt with such cases as the design of a sustainable suburban highway corridor and ways to redesign mature suburban areas into pedestrian-friendly, transit-oriented centers with a strong sense of place. □



Kathy Foulger

