

The Open Format and Citizen Participation in Transportation Planning

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ABSTRACT

Recent developments in transportation planning and policy indicate that citizen participation and openness may receive less emphasis in the future in favor of more closed methods of decision making and control. Have the merits and drawbacks of citizen participation and openness changed significantly recently? This is hardly so. A survey revealed that the claimed advantages and disadvantages of the open format have been virtually the same since its early history. The evaluation of advantages and disadvantages, however, has changed. Citizen participation and openness are closely related to values and power, and the very existence of the open format is dependent on the kind of power that dominates societal development in a given period of time. When the open format was introduced, a general commitment to social reform, environmental issues, and democratization of decision making dominated societal development. The open format was a result of, and well in line with, this commitment, which explains its rapid development and spread. Today a commitment to efficiency, neoclassical economics, and budget cuts dominates development in many instances. The trend for openness is being reversed along with the trend for considering social, environmental, and ethical issues in transportation planning and policy.

When citizen participation and openness were introduced in transportation planning in the 1960s and early 1970s a strong commitment existed to social reform, environmental issues, and to democratization of decision making in the public sector. The open format was claimed to result in more democratic decision making, in more comprehensive, coordinated, and effective problem solving, and in plans better adjusted to diverse and changing societal trends.

After a number of case studies of the open format in transportation planning had been carried out, it became clear that the merits of the open format may have been overestimated initially. Open planning appeared to be more time- and money-consuming than closed planning. Participants often seemed not to be representative of the political body. In some cases participation looked like manipulation; in others it appeared to lead to polarization, conflict, and stalemate of programs.

In the following sections the claimed merits and drawbacks of the open format in transportation planning will be examined. Furthermore, recent changes in attitudes toward public planning and policy and their impacts on citizen participation and openness will be described. But first a short explanation of what is meant by citizen participation will be given.

WHAT IS CITIZEN PARTICIPATION?

What is citizen participation? Although it might be expected that studies dealing with open, participatory planning would contain a fairly precise answer to this question, this is not the case. The question is, if addressed at all, often answered in vague terms. Like the concepts of democracy, freedom, equality, and others with strong ideological connotations, there appears to be, or to have been, a widespread consensus that participation is desirable, but only a few specific interpretations have been given of what participation actually means. This circumstance was observed in 1969 by Arnstein (1,p.216):

The idea of citizen participation is a little like eating spinach: no one is against it in principle because it is good for you. . . . But there has been very little analysis of the content of the current controversial slogan: "citizen participation" or "maximum feasible participation."

Later there were both theoretical and empirical analyses of participation. In the field of transportation planning the most well-known and best documented studies probably are those on the Boston Transportation Planning Review and the Metro Toronto Transportation Plan Review (2-4). Many other studies could be mentioned, both in America and in Europe (5-11); however, these studies cannot be said to agree on, or in some cases even to give a clear definition of, participation.

One could, of course, define citizen participation as Sloan does (2,p.156):

The operative notion of citizen participation is the direct involvement of people--people who are not part of any officially created government organization or structure, elected or appointed public officials, agency staffers or consultants in the employ of public bodies--in government processes normally the exclusive province of agency staffs and officials.

Or as Yukubousky does (6,p.2):

Citizen participation in transportation planning is "defined" (by this author) as the involvement in the transportation planning process of members of society who are not on the payroll of the sponsor or coordinating planning agency. Thus "citizen participation" can, for example, refer to the involvement in systems planning, project planning or design of elected officials, other government administrators at all levels of government, members of community, religious, educational, business and local civic groups, as well as private citizens.

Semantic definitions like these are typical of the literature on citizen participation in transportation planning. Even so, apart from differing, such definitions are also rather empty, cognitively speaking. They lack content in that they fail to consider citizen participation in a specific social, economic, and historical context. What the many studies of citizen participation in transportation planning--and in other fields as well--really appear to show is that citizen participation cannot be defined adequately in semantic terms. Citizen participation is best understood in the social, economic, and historical context out of which it evolved.

So why not adhere to one of the few definitions that recognize this circumstance (1,p.216)?

My answer to the critical what question is simply that citizen participation is a categorical term for citizen power. . . . In short, it is the means by which they (have-not citizens, m.r.) can induce significant social reform which enables them to share in the benefits of the affluent society.

By linking participation to power, this answer to the what question has the further advantage of pointing out that different degrees of citizen participation exist and must be considered when discussing the concept. Thus Arnstein's term, Ladder of Citizen Participation, ranges from manipulation by informing and consultation to citizen control. [See Flyvbjerg and Petersen (12) for a more general and comprehensive account of the social, economic, and historical context of citizen participation.]

TYPES OF OPENNESS

Despite a lack of consensus on the substance of citizen participation in transportation planning, there appears to be an agreement in both theoretical and empirical studies on an aspect of form, namely that citizen participation involves some sort of "openness" towards the environment of a political or administrative system.

Three types of openness can be distinguished. First, openness toward any member of the public who is expected to be affected by, or who has an interest in, a program. This could be citizens in general, political parties, interest groups, or the specific target population of a program (i.e., the users). To many writers this kind of openness is identical to citizen participation (see the quotation from Sloan mentioned previously).

Second, openness toward other kinds of planning can be distinguished. From the point of view of transportation planning this implies openness toward, for instance, urban and regional planning. Some writers include this kind of openness, together with the first type, in the concept of citizen participation [see the quotation from Yukubousky (6)].

The third type of openness that can be identified is different in character from the first two. It is not necessarily an openness toward a specific actor but toward general societal development as this is expressed in economic, political, and ideological changes. This could, for instance, imply awareness in the planning process of the impact of changes in real income, energy policy, or social values on transportation policy and planning. Because no specific actor necessarily is involved, this type of openness is often not considered; however, it may be important to the development of sound transportation programs.

It can be argued that a fourth type of openness ought to be considered: openness toward prospective

operators of a planned program. In bus transit planning for example, it may be of crucial importance to the success of a program that bus drivers be involved in the planning process at an early stage. This can be said to be an internal matter, however, as prospective operators often will be on the payroll of the planning agency. In reality, this type of openness may still be as external to the planning staff and the planning process as any other type of openness.

The employment of one or more of these types of openness is typically claimed by advocates of open planning to be an alternative to, or an improvement on, the closed traditional paradigm of rational comprehensive, expert-based transportation planning. In the following paragraphs this claim will be examined by investigating the advantages and disadvantages of open transportation planning.

Considering first openness toward the general public, it was mentioned previously that many writers see this type of openness as the most important, and it is certainly the type that has received the most attention in the literature. The reason may be that this type of openness implies an actual opening of the total political administrative system to the population that surrounds it (i.e., direct involvement in planning and politics by groups other than professionals and politicians). Studies of this type of openness have focused on three major advantages:

- More democracy in planning.
- Less scope for dominant ideologies (e.g., the technocratic paradigm of planning).
- More comprehensive, coordinated, and effective problem solving.

Direct Democracy

The argument that citizen participation results in more democracy in planning and policy making is probably the most widely used argument in support of citizen participation. A typical formulation of this argument is put this way (9,p.6):

The purpose of citizen participation is to see that the decisions of government reflect the preferences of the people. The basic intention of citizen participation is to insure the responsiveness and accountability of government to the citizens. Secondary reasons for citizen participation are: it helps create better plans, it increases the likelihood of implementing the plan, and it generates support for the agency. In the final analysis, however, its contribution to the democratic process is the significant factor.

To the extent that involving people is regarded as a positive action, citizen participation can be claimed to be valuable. Whether planning and policy making actually become more democratic through this involvement is another question. The answer to this question depends on the degree to which citizen power actually determines the product of the planning and policy process. [In this connection it becomes particularly important to distinguish between different types of participation (1).]

More Balanced

Closely related to the issue of democracy is the claim that planning with citizen participation leaves less scope for dominant ideologies than tra-

ditional closed planning. It is argued that involvement of different groups with different sets of values and interests reduces the likelihood that any one set of values and interests will dominate the process and outcome of planning. Of particular interest has been the challenge of the customary way planners structure and solve problems. Ralph Gakenheimer touches on this issue in referring to what he calls the intuition of planners (3,p.339):

Every professional has rules of thumb and an intuitive sense of judgment that quickly settle the unchallenging parts of a problem and guide him without delay to the aspects of the problem which need analysis or more open judgment. In the open study he is repeatedly forced to reexamine his intuition and justify it to clients. This is a healthy necessity, but it is bound to be a disturbing one.

More Effective and More Comprehensive

The challenge of customary ways and viewpoints may lead to a broader approach to planning and result in more comprehensive, coordinated, and effective problem solving. It is maintained that by involving citizens in the planning process the outcome is improved by ensuring that social and environmental considerations are adequately treated. Moreover, the combination of the technical skills of planners with citizen knowledge is seen as a means to develop technically sound plans that are politically feasible [see, for instance, Manheim et al. (13)].

Closely related to this argument is the claim that openness toward other kinds of planning--the second type of openness considered--would increase the probability of developing truly comprehensive programs. In both cases the claim is closely related to a critique of traditional, rational, comprehensive transportation planning, which is argued to be--despite its name--narrow in its approach: The benefits of high accessibility over long distances in large one-mode transportation systems have been overrated; and the costs, which are often local and socially biased, have often been underrated, if rated at all. Thus, the traditional studies have been criticized for not considering adequately pollution, noise, energy, urban environment, equity, safety, and the relationships between modes.

As an alternative, the openness of one type of transportation planning to other types of transportation planning has been seen as important to the balance of modes; this would ensure that no one mode would dominate the others. Similarly, openness toward planning and government activities other than transportation has been regarded as a means to ensure that the many, and often complex, interrelationships between transportation and other activities would be taken into account.

In Scandinavia and Great Britain the integration of transportation planning into the overall framework of urban and regional planning has been stressed as particularly important. Also, a more rigorous integration into overall economic planning (i.e., budget planning) has been advocated to ensure that transportation programs are evaluated economically on equal terms with other programs. Finally, integration of environmental planning, social planning, housing, education, health, and so forth, has been claimed to be equally important in securing a holistic view of transportation decisions.

Obviously all these kinds of integrations have strong implications for organizations and institutions. Part of advocating this kind of openness is a

commitment to organizational development and to changes in institutional structure (14-16).

Better Adjusted

Finally it has been argued that openness toward changes in general societal development (i.e., economic, political, and ideological changes) would help transportation planning to be better adjusted for diverse and changing needs in mobility.

Traditional expert-based transportation planning has been criticized for relying too much on simplistic forecasts and for not taking into account structural changes in societal development, even where they may be expected to have substantial impact on travel. For instance, the Danish National Highway Administration has been reluctant to change its basic forecasting assumptions of growth in number of cars and car use despite the oil crisis of 1973 and later economic changes. For example, a comparison of end-of-year figures with those forecast by the highway administration will show a substantially lower increase in the car fleet than that forecast. The forecast number, which is assumed to apply to each year until 1990 or beyond, will obviously bias the decisions for highway construction.

Even though the case of the Danish National Highway Administration may be extreme, studies from other countries suggest that it is not unique (3,4, 17-20). It can be understood in terms of an institution trying to perpetuate its own existence; nevertheless, it does leave the institution open to criticism and suggestions for change.

As mentioned previously one suggestion has been to open the transportation planning process so that it will reflect societal changes (21-23) (i.e., less reliance on simplistic and self-perpetuating questions and methodology and more on broader analysis, to promote discussion of changing needs and the development of adequate measures to accommodate these needs).

Along with this type of openness, and for the same purpose, openness toward changing values has been stressed as a central characteristic of open transportation planning. The criticism that has been made of traditional, rational, comprehensive transportation planning has been that this type of planning adheres, with great rigidity, to the values of expert-based, elitist planning and social organization while changes in society are making ever stronger demands for more open and political planning.

A STRONG CASE FOR OPEN PLANNING?

The preceding sections focused on claimed advantages of open transportation planning. A first impression from the many studies that point out these advantages and explain how to organize and implement the open format is inevitably that the case for open transportation planning is a strong one. This impression is sustained by the number of studies that argue the case for the open format versus the number that argue against it or studies that evaluate both the merits and the drawbacks.

Yet, a close look at the latter kind of studies reveals an interesting fact: for each claimed advantage of open transportation planning there appears to be at least one claimed disadvantage (and vice versa). The following sections point out the disadvantages and contrast them with the advantages in order to reach tentative conclusions about the conditions under which the different claims hold true.

Nonrepresentative

One fundamental criticism of planning with citizen participation has been that often the participants have not been representative of the political body. Empirical studies reveal that people with low incomes and few years of education are less likely to be participants than people with higher incomes and more years of education. Moreover, women are less likely to participate than men and older people are less likely to participate than younger people. In short, a participant most likely will be a young middle-class male professional, implying that citizen participation is not very successful in meeting the claim of strengthening direct democracy in planning (2,5-7,24-27). Another argument used against this claim, and against the claim of less scope for dominant ideologies, has been that small, but highly vocal, pressure groups tend to dominate the process and outcome of participation (2,3,28).

Manipulation

Also weakening the argument for direct democracy are the case studies that indicate the established political administrative system may be unwilling to give away power in determining the outcome of planning. A detailed study of citizen participation in the Downtown People Mover Project in Los Angeles concluded that the interest of local government in obtaining federal funding for the project overrode the intentions and obligations for citizen participation. Citizens were able to affect the planning process, but not the planning product (24,p.57):

. . . , CRA's (the Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of Los Angeles) orientation toward obtaining DPM (Downtown People Mover) funding did not leave the agency open to making program changes that would be responsive to citizen input. Herein lies the strongest basis of CAP's (Citizen Advisory Panel) inability to affect the product of the C/DS (Central Business District Circulation/Distribution System) Program.

Other studies have come to similar conclusions, leaving the overall impression that citizen participation is sometimes used to justify decisions already made. In such instances what is named citizen participation would more properly be called consultation, informing, or even manipulation. At a certain level evidence like this clearly weakens the argument for citizen participation. If the two main parties involved--the citizens and the political administrative system--act in ways that hinder successful participation, why bother about participation at all?

Responsibility of the Political Administrative System

The question is posed too simplistically, however. First, the behavior of the citizens and the political administrative system may be interrelated; i.e., citizens may not participate because they do not expect that they can influence decisions, or the political administrative system may not take seriously the involvement of citizens because participants are not expected to be representative.

Second, there have been actual examples of successful citizen participation (i.e., cases where the participants have reaped some of the claimed advantages of citizen participation). Examples have been

reported, for instance, of local experience influencing programs to make them more reflective of local needs and thus easier to implement. Studies of these examples indicate that the claimed advantages of citizen participation are most likely to occur where the program at issue is specific in character, where it concerns a relatively homogeneous population in a small geographical area, and where the major parts of both benefits and costs fall on the population involved (10,27).

Furthermore, because participation is often institutionalized by law and carried out on the initiative of the political administrative system, this system clearly has a strong influence on the success of participation. A substantial degree of commitment to the participatory process by the political administrative system appears, therefore, to be a prerequisite for successful citizen participation, at least if participation is to be an integrated part of institutionalized planning. Lack of commitment may result in counter-planning (i.e., participation outside and contrary to government programs).

The political administrative system may also institute measures to make up for apparent biases in participation such as lack of representativeness among participants. One such measure could be local ballots as they have been used in Switzerland and other parts of Europe.

An example is the claimed biased character of environmental groups, which has been challenged by recent research. Nordkolt (29-31), which up to this time is the most comprehensive research project on urban transportation in the Nordic countries (sponsored by the Nordic Council of Ministers from 1972 to 1978), strongly implies that the role of environmental groups should be reconsidered. What these groups have been pointing out since the early 1960s--that urban transportation policy has been narrow, one sided, and biased in favor of the car--is demonstrated to be true. Detailed studies of eight medium-sized towns in Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and Finland have demonstrated that the social and environmental costs of the current urban transportation system, as compared with two more balanced alternatives, are too high to justify the higher mobility (by car) in the current system. It is demonstrated that traditional transportation planning has contributed significantly to this state of affairs. Seen in this light, it appears that the viewpoints of environmental groups should have been considered in policy making and planning at an early stage. There are reasons why this has not happened, however, as the following paragraphs will show.

Polarization, Conflict, and Stalemate of Programs

It has been argued that openness may lead to polarization and conflict, which could be unpleasant to established politicians and planners and which could also lead to a stalemate of programs.

Conflict may arise between citizen groups and the administration, between different citizen groups, and between different parts of the administration. This is likely to be unpleasant to politicians, who typically benefit from the impression that their decisions have positive impacts for the many and negative impacts for only a few. It could also be unpleasant to planners, because conflict often reveals there is no objective conception of, or solution to, the problem.

Nevertheless, it has been argued that real conflicts should not be glossed over by planners with artificial compromises. Conflict may indeed be necessary to obtain some of the claimed advantages of open transportation planning, that is, more demo-

cratic decisions and more comprehensive, coordinated, and efficient problem solving (3,p.340 ff.)

In some instances it could be true, of course, that the political administrative system and certain interest groups are not interested in actualizing these advantages. That is, the "advantages" are not seen as advantages, but instead as obstacles to the attainment of the goals of a specific agency in the administration or a specific interest group. It is likely that resistance to open planning is often caused by the fear of established agencies that they may lose power, and this fear may be well founded, because the outcome of planning is less predictable in an open process. Also there is less likelihood that specific interests will be taken into account.

If the open format leads to polarization and conflict and this in turn leads to a stalemate of programs, one could say that the open format only achieves negative results (2,p.162):

It could be said of the participatory process in Boston that it achieved only negative results--to block a program that was quickly falling out of favor. The question is whether a participatory process can produce positive results. Can decisions be made to do something, rather than to block something? On this the evidence from Boston is scanty.

Again, a stalemate could be seen as real progress when compared with the proposed action from the point of view of some interest groups; for example, this would be the point of view of a local citizen group attempting to prevent heavy rail or a freeway from running through its neighborhood.

In any event, the impact of participation on decision making is strongly related to the specific organizational structure of the political administrative system. For instance, a comparative study of 12 cities in the United States, Canada, and Europe indicates that the lack of a single political entity in U.S. cities has made it difficult to organize and implement successful citizen participation and has resulted in the Boston experience described by Sloan. In cities with a single powerful government, on the other hand, the decision making process was found to be much more sensitive to citizen input and to allow not only for stopping projects but also for formulating and carrying out alternative policies. The 12 cities included in this study by Colcord (14,pp.97-99) were Atlanta, Minneapolis-St. Paul, Miami, Seattle, Toronto, Montreal, Hamburg, Manchester, Leeds, Stockholm, Gothenburg, and Amsterdam.

More Time- and Money-Consuming

Finally, it has been argued that open planning is more time- and money-consuming than traditional planning and, in this sense, less efficient.

It is apparent that it does take time and money to arrange and implement citizen participation, collaboration with other planning agencies, and surveys of general societal development. In addition, the planning process may develop less efficiently when citizens and other agencies are involved; some issues may have to be iterated over and over in the process, and participants may raise new issues for consideration that were not originally planned for. It should be mentioned, however, that participation could take, and has taken, forms under which participants accomplish a major part of the work involved, for instance in data collection. In extreme cases one might find institutionalized planning replaced by the work of volunteers.

It is difficult to arrive at definite conclusions as to the resource requirements of open versus closed planning as it would take controlled experiments, the conditions of which would be difficult to establish in practice. A Norwegian study of 16 cases of open transportation and land use planning tentatively concludes that the planning process tends to be more time- and money-consuming when organized in accordance with the open format but that this may be offset by smoother implementation and less need for revision of the outcome (10).

ON BALANCE . . . HISTORY DECIDES

The examination of claimed advantages and disadvantages of open transportation planning reveals one thing clearly: there is no simple bottom line to the question of whether the open format is desirable or not. The question is too fundamental in character, involving, for instance, classical (direct) democracy versus representative democracy and equity versus efficiency. Thus the question concerns ethics, values, and vested interests, i.e., it is a political question.

Using the ideal of classical (direct) democracy as a measuring rod, it is difficult to make a case against open planning. This type of planning is more in accordance with the classical ideal than closed, expert-based planning. In retrospect it is easy to understand, therefore, that the open format appeared on the planning scene in a historical era, the 1960s, when democratization and equity movements were strong. It is equally easy to understand that the open format is vulnerable today, when the main trend demands more efficiency, more reliance on market mechanisms, and less public involvement in societal development. Recalling Arnstein's (1) linkage between citizen participation and power, it can be observed that the very existence of citizen participation depends on which kind of power dominates societal development in a given era.

Reformism

During the 1960s it became increasingly clear that economic growth resulted in substantial negative impacts and that growth was not unequivocally beneficial to all citizens. Representative democracy was endangered by conflict, protest movements, and in some cases by outright riots that approached civil war. In the big cities of the United States and Great Britain, openness and participation were actually introduced as a kind of social engineering aimed at dampening conflict and urban crisis.

Open planning spread from these cities rapidly and with an impact that, for a while, made the open format an established part of the dominant paradigm in transportation planning and also in other forms of planning. Thus, in the mid-1970s an American transportation researcher could write with confidence (3,p.330):

Is it here to stay? I believe the answer is that in its essentials the open study is clearly here to stay. Abandonment of the open format would require the substantial change or reversal of the major national trends that have given rise to it.

This conviction, which is typical for the late 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s, is closely related to the previously mentioned problems of representative democracy and to a belief that these prob-

lems could be solved by supplementing representative democracy with elements of classical democracy. In a larger context the conviction is related to a belief (generally held at that time) in social and other reform, that is, a belief in public involvement in the regulation of spontaneous development with the aim of controlling economic growth and obtaining a more equitable distribution of the social product.

In the field of transportation this reformism has manifested itself in regulations for more equality in the geographic and social distribution of services. The supply and pricing of public transportation has been used as an important means in this endeavor, for instance, creating better services for the transportation disadvantaged. Other methods are traffic management schemes, standards for air quality, safety, and--since 1973--energy preservation measures.

This author's view is that the open format is best understood as an integrated part of reformism, which has been developed to increase equality and democratization in the planning process.

New Liberalism

Today, the mainstream attitude toward reformism has changed. Regulations and other public involvement in societal development are under severe attack. What could be called a "new liberal" trend is gaining force in the political administrative system and in society in general. Up to the present, this development has been most pronounced in Great Britain and later in the United States. In these countries one could ask whether the "major national trends", referred to by Ralph Gakenheimer in 1976 as the sound basis for open planning, have not been reversed, even if this may have appeared unlikely in the mid-1970s to ever happen.

The term liberalism is used here in the original sense of the word (i.e., meaning reliance on private initiative, competition, and the free market in the allocation of scarce resources). This is the sense of the word used by Adam Smith and the sense used in Europe since then. In the United States, however, the term has come to stand for something close to the opposite of its original meaning, namely, the same as what is called reformism above.

Generally speaking the content of new liberalism is the reestablishment of market mechanisms and private initiative in the capitalist economy. The background for this can be seen in the breakdown of Keynesian interventionist macroeconomic policy in a situation where inflation, unemployment, and deficits in the balance of payments are simultaneously high. Macroeconomic policy appears to fail on its own assumptions.

After a period in which economic policy was paralyzed on the one hand by the inability to stimulate demand because of inflation and the balance of payments and on the other by the incapacity to tighten up fiscal and monetary policies because of the social and political effects this would have, the outline of new liberalism has become increasingly clear and powerful. Fighting inflation, dampening rising costs, and securing a sufficient profit level is at the heart of the new paradigm for economic policy.

As a consequence, growth in the public sector must be limited and the use of public funds made more efficient. Neoclassical economics (i.e., economic efficiency) becomes sovereign again after a period of economic policy based on both efficiency and equity. This line of development is taking place more or less parallel and more or less pronounced in all developed capitalist societies that receive strong policy recommendations from international

organizations such as the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development, International Marketing Federation, General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, and the World Bank (32,33).

Like macroeconomic policy, transportation policy has been weak and incoherent. Public transportation has been planned and operated in economically inefficient ways in many cities and has not lived up to expectations of increases in ridership, reductions in urban automobile use, or more equity in the availability and price of transportation. Programs for the transportation handicapped have proved to be uneconomical; also programs for safety, air quality, energy, and--as mentioned previously--citizen participation have been blamed for lack of success in achieving goals (34,35).

This state of affairs is well suited to support arguments for cuts in public involvement in transportation; and, indeed, it is used in this way with the result that social, environmental, and democratization considerations get less emphasis in transportation policy and planning. A Danish transportation researcher reports from Great Britain, which until now has been the country where the new liberal trend has had the greatest impact (36, pp.84-85):

The Buchanan-like comprehensive town and traffic plans are things of the past. . . . The traffic planners work persistently with traffic planning techniques, that by and large focus on bringing as many cars as possible, as safely as possible through the road network. And the town planners are occupied with the individual land-parcel, where regard to private profit interests of individual land owners carries great weight. In this game long-range goals are left unconsidered, and what is more, the collaboration with citizens, that was one of the important goals of planning, cannot be carried out.

In this connection it is interesting to recall that citizen participation was introduced in the 1960s partly with the purpose of dampening conflict and riots in big cities, and it is discouraging to note that in 1981 riots reappeared in Great Britain only a few years after new liberalism was introduced as the dominant policy paradigm in that country (37).

If the consequences of greater efficiency and increased reliance on market mechanisms are increases in social and economic inequality, further strain on the environment, and the possible reoccurrence of riots, the policy paradigm of new liberalism should, in this author's view, be critically reassessed. The concept of efficiency may, in this case, turn out to be too narrow and too related to specific interest groups to justify its use in the public domain.

In the field of transportation there were cogent reasons for the trend of the 1960s and 1970s that enlarged the scope of the traditional paradigm of policy and planning to include the relations between modes, social and environmental considerations, participation, and ethical issues. It may be that attempts to include these issues in transportation policy and planning have not always been particularly successful. This does not mean, however, that the need for a holistic view no longer exists or that a more narrow view will be more successful in solving the problems. To break or reverse a trend, developed through so many years, may backfire. The question should be asked whether it would not be a more sound line of development to learn from mistakes as well as from successes and thereby improve programs instead of giving up programs altogether.

In this author's view, current development in Europe as well as in the United States indicates that the holistic paradigm of transportation policy and planning is essential if the transportation sector is to solve the problem of mobility of society in the long run.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Transportation planning with citizen participation and openness has been introduced as an alternative to traditional, expert-based and closed transportation planning. The advantages that have been claimed to be associated with the open format can be summarized in a number of partly overlapping points: (a) more democratic decision making, (b) less scope for dominant ideologies, (c) more comprehensive, coordinated, and effective problem solving, and (d) plans that are better adjusted to diverse and changing societal trends.

On the other hand, transportation planning with citizen participation and openness has been associated with the following disadvantages: (a) participants are not representative of the political body, (b) citizen participation can be used to manipulate the public, (c) open planning may lead to polarization, conflict, and a stalemate of programs, and (d) open planning is more time- and money-consuming than closed planning.

The examination of claimed advantages and disadvantages makes it clear that there is no simple bottom line to the question of whether citizen participation and openness are desirable in transportation planning. Each claim holds true under its own specific circumstances. It does appear to be clear, however, that citizen participation and openness are desirable when the classical (direct) ideal of democracy is used as the measuring rod.

It appears equally clear that the benefits of citizen participation can best be achieved when the program at issue is specific in character, when it concerns a relatively homogeneous population in a small geographical area, and when the major parts of both benefits and costs fall on the population involved. Moreover, a strong commitment by the political administrative system to the open format is an important prerequisite for successful citizen participation.

When the open format was introduced in the 1960s and early 1970s, this commitment existed together with a strong, general commitment to social reform, environmental issues, and to democratization of decision making in the public sector.

Today commitment to the open format is often absent or weaker than before and is exposed to a commitment to efficiency, neoclassical economics, cuts, and more closed methods of decision making and control. The trend established in the development of transportation planning and policy during the 1960s and 1970s--including citizen participation and openness--is being reversed in ways that to this author often appear as retrogression. To break such a long-standing trend may backfire, and the question must be asked whether it would not be a more sound line of development to learn from past mistakes and successes so as to improve programs instead of giving them up altogether or cutting them back to a state in which the likelihood of malfunction is very high.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The research for this paper was made possible by grants from the Fulbright Program, the Danish Social

Science Research Council, and the University of Aarhus, Denmark. The author gratefully acknowledges the assistance and helpful suggestions of Marty Wachs, Graduate School of Architecture and Urban Planning, University of California, Los Angeles.

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Publication of this paper sponsored by Committee on Citizen Participation in Transportation Planning.

Automobile Restricted Zones in Downtowns: Lessons from UMTA's Demonstration Program

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ABSTRACT

The implementation process, though critical to the success of any project, is not well understood by transportation planners. Implementation of innovative programs is a costly and time-consuming process. The experience from an innovative transportation program is summarized in an effort to contribute to better understanding of this important process and communicate some lessons to planners and decision makers. In 1975 UMTA's Office of Service and Methods Demonstration launched a program to test the concept of automobile restricted zones (ARZs) as a means of revitalizing the downtown environment. This would be achieved by improving transit access, pedestrian amenities, and circulation. A status report of the progress for the four demonstration sites--Boston, Memphis, New York City, and Providence--is presented. Information is based

primarily on reports from planners in those cities responsible for the ARZ demonstration program.

Restricting automobiles in the central business district (CBD) by establishing pedestrian or transit malls is still considered an innovative and controversial technique because it attempts to solve downtown problems through structural change; however, it is not a new idea. Separation of pedestrian and vehicular traffic has been applied successfully in many European cities since the middle 1940s in response to high congestion in dense, historic urban centers. U.S. cities slowly have developed an interest in the technique as a means of improving the economic vitality of urban centers. Examples of other objectives of automobile restricted zones (ARZs) are to improve traffic conditions, encourage public transit and nonautomobile modes of travel, achieve better urban design, create a more relaxed and pleasant atmosphere for pedestrians, improve