

lines of the city limits. We are going to have to deal with the powers of the municipal corporation to affect the economic activities that go on within those city limits. We are going to have to concentrate our efforts on making the city competitive with the suburbs for a much larger slice of the private investment pie. Unless and until we do this, the money we are pouring into our central cities for ostensible economic development activities will result in nothing more than holding actions on behalf of the unemployed and underutilized population. I do not mean that we should not be concerned about suburban problems or that we should not favor regional planning. Maybe some day we will have full-scale regional governments with no jurisdictional boundary lines to give us trouble. For a long while to come, however, we will have to deal with the reality of the city and the plight of the economy as it is now.

#### COMMITMENT

I firmly believe that we have a strong commitment in this regard on the part of the present administration in Washington. Whether or not we can get the job done, whether we can really create an economic development function within the city government that is capable of mobilizing

our public and private resources and getting the necessary political support for large-scale public risk taking, I am not sure. But I do know that we are not going to turn around the investment and entrepreneurial patterns until we take sure vigorous steps. The private dollars are not going to be available for major project development within the city unless we create the appropriate conditions—unless we eliminate the long front-end delay in project development, cut down on the speculative risk, and commit ourselves to decisive public involvement. This means that there has to be a major commitment by the public to deal with those problems, to build the infrastructure, to bring in the transportation, and to make it work. If you do that, you can get private reinvestments.

I think that the new leaders in Washington with responsibility for urban programs come from backgrounds that include successful involvement in such redevelopment efforts. The pressure is going to be on the cities to respond in concrete terms. Will it be done? Or will we find 3 years from now that we were not able to build a realistic approach to joint development in the cities? Will we then go back to categorical programs that will attempt to deal with the plight of the cities from the top down? We have the opportunity to do it right.

## Technics and Ethics in Transport Decisions

*Melvin M. Webber, University of California, Berkeley*

Long-term trends rather than shifts in fashion or fad should be sought in developing principles for research and policy. The demonstrations of the 1960s led to some new concerns for personal liberties and for the needs of our multiple-minority society. The demonstrations prompted unusual roles for citizens in transportation and in other matters that had been considered technical and the province of specialists. Engineers' or economists' concerns for efficiency yielded to public concerns for equity. There is also a trend toward a high level of accessibility throughout metropolitan areas. Since virtually every place in the metropolitan area is connected to every other place, the influence of a new fixed-route transit system does not affect location decisions very much. However, high accessibility in metropolitan areas is not available to those who do not have automobiles; other systems are needed for these people.

A British friend of mine observed that Americans tend to overreact to problems of the moment. Whether in research circles or in government circles, we react as though a shift upward in the trend line is going to send the curve off the top of the chart, or a tip downward is going to send it past the bottom. Americans tend to react, he said, as though they are constantly facing crises. Some of these crises that sent us to the barricade were forgotten shortly after. I want to see us avoid this fadish mentality and to search for the longer-term trends, for the longer-term problems, and for the tenable principles that might guide our policy and research agendas.

For example, several revolts of the 1960s have generated long-lasting political changes, including changes in the setting for transportation planning and transportation investments. The popular demonstrations and revolts of the 1960s reminded governments of neglected concerns for personal liberties. Thus, unusual roles were opened for lay citizen groups in areas that had been considered the province of technicians. In effect, many

public works and public service program decisions became politicized. Typically, they had been dealt with in the past as matters best left to engineers, economists, or public administrators; suddenly they became the media for politics and politicians.

Then, when politicization of public works and public programs merged with the environmental movement in more recent years, a new populist politics emerged. In turn, the new politics has politicized concerns for externalities, turning an arcane economic concept into a rallying cry for political action inside the new environmental movement.

In turn, engineers' and economists' concerns for efficiency were made to yield before various public concerns for equity. In transport planning, as in many other fields, the determining criteria have been shifting from principles of least means to principles, however vague, of distributive justice.

I suspect that most of us have come to think differently about our professional roles as a result of these shifts. We have been learning to ask almost reflexively and almost always: What are the distributional consequences of investing in one project or in one programmatic direction versus another? Who is to pay and who is to profit? These are almost novel questions in some fields, for example, engineering. In other fields, most notably in politics, these are very old questions—perhaps the oldest and most important questions in politics.

To admit questions about distribution is to deny a competing concept, i.e., that there is one public interest or one public welfare to be served. As I will argue later, that is a potentially dangerous notion because there are several other subsidiary ideas behind this concept. One says that there is but one public. Hence, all people share

certain interests; what serves one serves all. I suggest that this idea denies the pluralism of modern societies and the diverse interests that mark them.

Another proposition underlying the notion of one public welfare holds that there are larger communal interests overriding individual interests. That the majority should rule is one expression of this notion. Another is Jeremy Bentham's formulation, "the greatest good for the greatest number." This concept is either a nonsense proposition or a very dangerous doctrine. These are principles potentially justifying the reign of a tyrannical majority and justifying the denial of rights to minority groups. Fortunately, the U.S. Constitution is very clear about these matters; the courts have been very clear about them most of the time; and effective citizens' groups are defending principles of individual liberty over those of collectivities.

One outcome of the revolts of the 1960s was to put these questions at the top of the political agenda and to reopen questions about individual rights and the rights of minority groups. I do not mean only minority racial or religious groups. I mean the minorities whose interests, values, behaviors, habits, or preferences are somehow different from other groups. I include among those minority groups people who like different styles of music, clothing, residential environment, and social, sexual, and interpersonal behavior. Each of us belongs to many minority groups.

I do not suppose that many professionals are yet ready to yield to the proposition that their customers are always right. To do so would be to assume that professionals and experts know what is right for their customers. I do expect though that the recent attacks on the professions in virtually every field of public service are sensitizing us all to the restiveness of individuals and members of minority groups everywhere. Despite our best intentions, a great many people are not satisfied with the quality of their lives, the quality of governmental services they are receiving, or the opportunities that are open to them.

As a further result of these diverse public expressions of dissatisfaction, many of us have been learning to ask different questions: What are the alternatives that might lie ahead? What are the likely consequences of pursuing any of those alternatives?

Of course, among the outcomes of alternative options are varying distributions of incomes and rewards. To examine alternatives and to analyze repercussions is the essence of the planning idea. Many of us are beginning to understand that idea and are learning to think as planners. It has taken a long time for planners to internalize the cognitive style that compels them to look for potential outcomes and to pursue distributive justice. In this sense, this style of planning has a built-in ethic, an ethic that contends the customer is right and that the larger community has to yield to individual customers' preferences, not the other way around as city planners have long maintained.

That all strikes me as a very good idea and a very fortunate sign. Although I have no way of being sure that this is a stable trend, I hope it is. A number of signals suggest that it may be. Certainly more and more people are thinking that way now than ever before.

If that is so, if I am right, and if my hopes are reasonable, what might be some implications for transit planning? To attempt to answer that, I need to identify a number of more concrete trends that are not going to be pushing us off the charts in the next few years. They are not short-run fads but long-run stable possibilities. Perhaps then we can search out some of the principles that might guide public policy and a research agenda.

First, and perhaps most important for us, I expect

that the automobile-highway system is going to be the dominant transportation system for a long time. Ours will continue to be an automobile-dominated civilization; our cities will be built around it, despite rising fuel costs, some improvements in transit service, and whatever efforts state, federal, and local governments make to deter automobile use.

We will continue to maintain a high level of accessibility, homogeneously, throughout our metropolitan areas. Thus, I suggest that it is too late to use fixed-route transit systems in the ways we have attempted before. It is too late because virtually every place in the metropolitan area is connected to every other place and because the accessibility surface is so high and so homogeneous that to add a few additional transit stops will not sufficiently increase accessibility to affect many locational decisions.

Second, I suspect that there will be some movement of middle-class persons back to the central city, particularly people without children. However, mass migration back to the city is not likely. Suburbanization is a long-term trend that is going to be with us, along with exurbanization, for a long time. Moreover, there will be explosive growth in the suburbs, resulting from the recent boom in new households formed by postwar babies, who are themselves now having babies.

Third, the costs of housing, fuel, and transport are going to remain explosive. This will pose some intractable problems, particularly because some of the consequences of those cost rises and price rises are contradictory. Predicting the net effect of those consequences and the vector of those forces will be very difficult.

Fourth, given the huge investment in present metropolitan areas, it is not likely that metropolitan areas will be rebuilt very soon. It is not likely that any dramatic change in the overall spatial structure of the metropolitan areas will be made. Metropolitan areas are with us in essentially their present form for a long time, whether we like them or not.

Those who anticipate that rising energy costs will cause massive recentralization of metropolitan areas and widespread abandonment of the automobile-highway system are, I suspect, fantasizing at best. I am guessing it would take a fivefold or tenfold increase in fuel prices to make a dramatic change in automobile use patterns, and a comparable increase in heating costs and cooling costs would accompany rising gas prices. But, since we have such a large investment and such a stable set of preferences, I doubt it will make much difference.

Obviously, at the margin, it is already making some difference; that is the nature of marginality. Some people have changed from automobiles to buses because of petroleum prices. Some people have moved to different kinds of housing because of the heating and cooling costs. But most people have a high tolerance for these increasing prices, particularly when wages are also inflationary and when their preferences are so deep seated.

If we are to respond to consumer preference, we must continue to provide the sort of transport, housing, and environmental conditions that people are choosing. At the same time, however, we have to widen the array of options that are open to the average consumer and to the deviant consumer, because (a) everyone does not want the same thing and (b) a lot of people cannot now get what they want.

The transport planner's task then, I believe, is to influence the transport system mix so that most, if not all, individuals can find the services and the modes they prefer. The task also requires that those whose choice is constrained—whether by reason of income deficiency, age, motor and cognitive skill deficiencies, or whatever other cause—be supplied with those service packages

that best suit their capacities and their preferences.

The fantastic success of the automobile-highway system should provide a clear and unambiguous signal. It has beaten out its competition during the past 70 years because it provides a superior transport service to those persons who are able to use it. Its success makes it the standard against which alternative systems aimed at those who do not have automobiles will have to be tested.

Given the high value that almost everybody places on ease of movement and door-to-door, no-wait, no-transfer service, it looks as though alternative modes had better be competitive with automobiles on these service characteristics and not others such as top speed. If those who do not have automobiles are not to remain transportation deprived, we shall have to find some alternatives to present transit services and to automobiles that meet these criteria as closely as possible. If we are to develop effective alternatives for those who cannot drive or for those who cannot afford to drive, public transport systems must be designed that approximate the service characteristics of automobiles.

We do have such a model already, of course, in the taxi. Despite its high user fees, I understand its major customers are poor people. If that is true, I wonder if we do not already have a ready-made solution that might simultaneously improve accessibility for those who are without automobiles, while also creating tremendous new employment opportunities for those who are jobless.

The problem here of course is not one in mechanical engineering. It is not even one in the traditional formats of transport planning. The solution is patently political. Extended use of the automobile as a public transit vehicle, e.g., as taxi or jitney or some other paratransit variant, is not going to happen on a large scale unless the political interests that now control those industries are somehow enticed into opening them up.

The right answer, it seems to me, is not a technical one; it is inevitably a political one. It depends on whose

interests are to be served, on which segment of the public welfare is to be enhanced and which reduced. Inevitably, somebody wins and somebody loses. That is the nature of the political world.

In that sort of setting there are no correct answers. Technical skills will not answer the questions or solve the problems. They are inevitably questions and problems that are political in their fundamental character, and political, or distributive, questions and problems do not yield to technics.

In that context, too, there is no right way to finance public investment. But the principles of equity would compel a political solution favoring progressive rather than regressive forms of taxation. Typically, that would drive us to something like federal and state income taxes rather than to county and city property and sales taxes. That of course shifts the locus of authority and raises a hornet's nest of political and jurisdictional issues. But I suggest that issues of equity will compel that kind of political contest. In this sense, the emergence of UMTA's financing represents a major advance over our prior modes that were relying primarily on property taxes rather than on the federal income tax.

On the basis of our experience with the great new cities of the South and the West, it seems that an automobile-based, highway-dominated system works very well. Those cities and most of their citizens are prospering.

Metropolitan areas that developed with automobiles need not rid themselves of automobiles in favor of transit services. The problem I suggest is not that metropolitan areas need nonprivate automobile systems, but that some persons do. The transportation problem is that some have and some have not. It represents a problem that clearly shapes one of those long-term trend lines. Fortunately, we do have some principles to help us contest it, and it might then become a trend that can be deliberately pushed below the bottom of the chart.

## Transportation Policies

*William Rafsky, Philadelphia City Planning Commission*

The narrow definition of efficiency of the past, based on aggregated total regional minimizations of travel time, is not really a very efficient way of distributing public funds or implementing public policy. In calculations of efficiency, land variables must be included. It is imperative that a land-related impact (positive or negative) be included in calculations of cost and benefits; if this is done, a large portion of the equity question may be answered.

There is little argument from professionals over the concept that transportation must be considered in terms of land development and urban policy. However, in practice, it seems that we are doing very little about achieving such a relationship.

Transportation in this country is being planned by people with backgrounds in engineering, traffic, land appraisal, and related fields. By training or experience they are not able to grasp the key relationship of transportation to land development. I am not being critical because this is true in any field. It takes a real effort to see the broader point of view. In the United States we have been able to achieve some successes, but it has

meant forcing these people to recognize the importance of that relationship.

About 10 years ago, the Federal Highway Administration, then under the U.S. Department of Commerce, released a study relating transportation to land development. So the concepts were known and understood, but they were not followed.

Basically, what happened was that the primary yardstick became direct cost. It became the efficiency factor. This has been our guide and our policy. Any successes, in terms of departing from a straight cost or efficiency factor, have come about because of political reasons. The people who have been affected adversely by transportation have protested. So they have been able to save a historical monument in the path of a highway or to save a park or some residential subdivision that would have been adversely affected by some transportation development. As a result, our decisions have not been made on merit or sound planning; they have occurred because the group having the loudest voice and the greatest political clout has urged them. So often, decisions have been