



Why do we need cores?

To meet the great needs of society, for example:

- Create community from diverse cultures
- Efficient use of resources: air, energy, water, land, money, human
- Fair and affordable access to opportunity
- Meet growing social and economic needs
- Maintain health, reduce illness
- Attractive, affordable housing, especially for young and old

cores
are all
sizes

What are Cores or Centers?

We have some; we should have many more.

Concentrations of mixed land use that serve and draw on surrounding areas ranging from neighborhoods up to regions. These may be called:

- Downtowns, Central Business Districts
- Activity centers
- Centers
- Multi-purpose centers
- Village or town centers

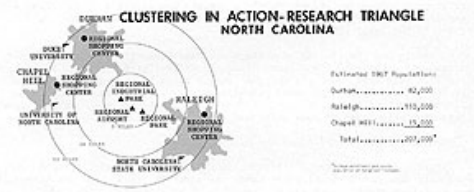
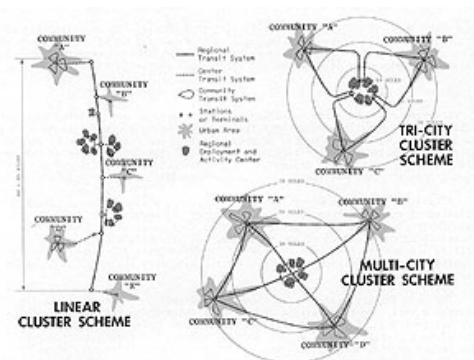
**cores
reduce
sprawl**

**cores
save
billions**

What are Corridors?

Systems of cores linked to make the whole greater than the sum of its parts.

- Corridors take many forms
- Cores are linked by more than one mode of travel
- Each core compliments other linked cores



REGIONAL SYSTEM: URBAN CLUSTER EXAMPLES 16

Cores should exist at every level...

but rarely do!

- International, national or metropolitan Regions
- Cities and towns
- Sub-regions
- Communities
- Neighborhoods
- Around other anchors (offices, universities, airports, etc.)

Cores provide many benefits

- Make it easier for people, institutions and businesses to communicate face-to-face
 - Decrease need for travel
 - Provide higher levels of convenience by concentrating destinations and putting more residents and workers within walking distance of them.
 - Create focal points around which to organize all forms of transportation systems and services
 - Make more efficient use of land through sharing of parking, open space and other amenities
- Create features that provide identity, orientation and a sense of community

Dozens of regional plans call for mixed-use cores

These are some that recognize their value:

- Los Angeles
- San Diego
- San Francisco
- Kansas City
- New York City
- Washington D.C.
- Toronto
- Minneapolis-St Paul



Many neighborhoods and communities have no mixed-use cores

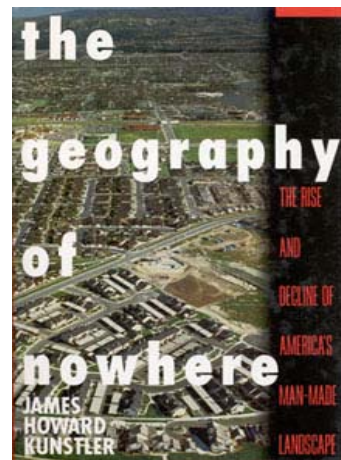
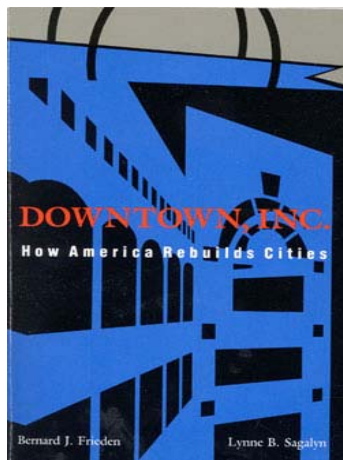
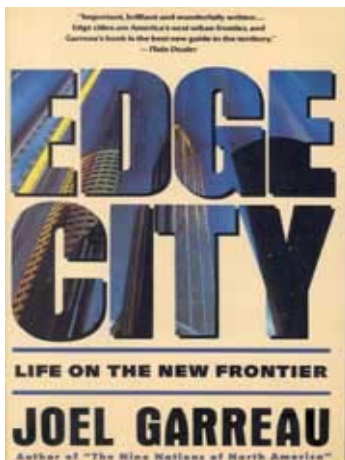
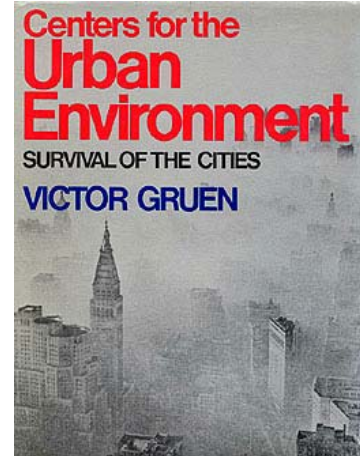
Regional plans focus mainly on regional and sub-regional centers

- Most sub-regional cores are mainly for shopping
- Few follow good core planning principles
- Most potential core uses are not in cores. Instead, they are:
 - In isolated single-use buildings or “parks”
 - Satellite to cores
 - Scattered

Many Cores have failed...

and the failures are well documented!

- Little variety of land use
- Not sufficiently compact
- Too divided
- Poor circulation
- Limited market
- Poor transit
- Blighted surroundings
- Lacking in support functions
- Most development located outside of cores



Since many cores fail, how do we proceed?

- Abandon the 'cores' concept? NO!
- Find ways to make existing cores work? YES!
- Create many more good cores? YES!
- Follow core planning principles? YES!

What must a core have to be GOOD?

Seven principles:

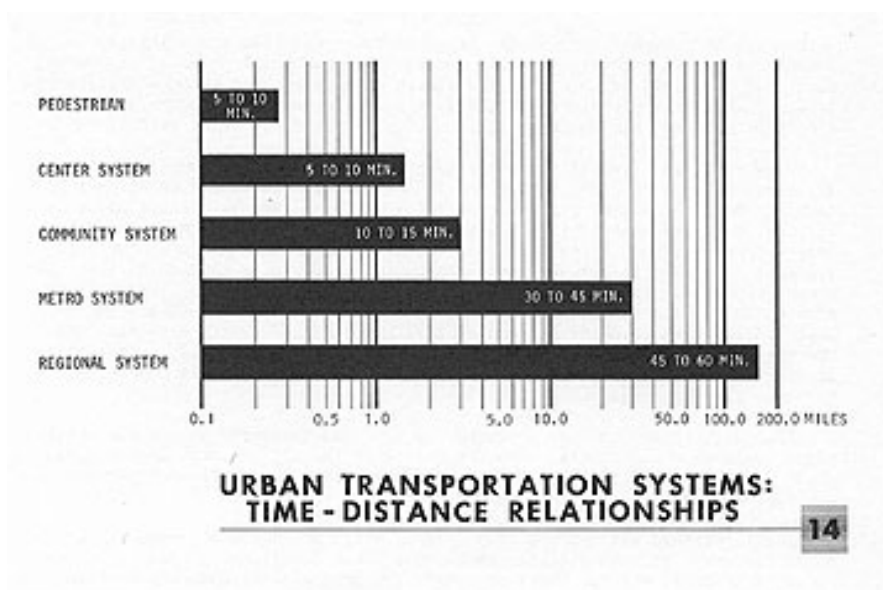
- Compactness; of whole and parts
- All forms of access: transit, auto, pedestrian
- Mix and variety of functions; public, private, business, housing, etc.
- Good internal circulation; predominantly pedestrian
- Amenities and symbols
- Strong supporting uses
- Good management

The meaning of 'Compactness'

Scale which encourages and permits walking between functions

A reasonable walking distance depends on how long/far you are willing to walk? That depends on:

- purpose of trip
- time of day
- weather, shade, protection
- age, ability, etc.
- route safety and ease
- amenities, barriers and attractions
- norms for area, big or small city, etc.
- any special facilities provided (ie: bridges, escalators, etc.)



What is the normal walking speed/distance?

⇒ 150 to 250 feet per minute or 3 to 4 minutes for a 600' block

In general, the larger and more interesting the city is, the more time people will walk.

Examples:

- Largest cities: 10-20 minutes
- Medium-sized cities: 5-10 minutes
- Small towns: 2-4 minutes

Walking distances establish the useful sizes of cores and centers

and make the best of them quite compact.

For example:

- Chicago loop: 350 acres
- Denver CBD 200 acres
- Minneapolis CBD 150 acres

Most suburban centers are too large to walk in conveniently or safely

especially for the amount of development they contain.

For example, these three suburban Phoenix centers:

- Encanto: 350 acres
- East Camelback: 300 acres
- Metro Center: 600 acres

The meaning of ‘all forms of access’

All forms feasible and common to the area should be provided.

We rely almost solely on auto access, often blocking pedestrian movement.

⇒ This is true even at the neighborhood level where a close relationship between adjacent housing and the center is almost essential.

We must provide access to supplement that of autos.

⇒ In some circumstances, other forms are given priority over autos. For example, theme parks, ski resorts, CBD centers.

A good mix of compatible functions

The mix of functions in a center may vary widely; no listing can be complete.

Retail and office functions anchor most centers.

However, many other uses may anchor a core, such as:

- Educational, health, governmental or other institutions
- Recreational, tourist, travel or resort facilities
- Company headquarters, research centers, etc.
- At the neighborhood or community level are schools, village halls, recreation centers, drug stores, post offices, etc.

Good internal circulation

- Primarily this means a good, fine-grained path system for pedestrian movement, with separation from vehicle traffic in some instances.
- Special "assistors" in the form of moving walks and special transit in specific instances where grades or distances are excessive.
- Attractive, safe environments that invite walking and make all movement enjoyable.

Amenities and Symbols

These are almost the most important needs, distinguishing cores that have them from other urban areas.

Including everything from good landscaping and signage to meaningful, significant and inspiring symbols of culture and values.

Supporting Development

Facilities that enrich and support major functions, for example:

- Colleges, schools recreation, cultural facilities, churches, conference facilities; when large and important enough, such functions can also serve as core functions or anchors for cores
- Business services, special offices, open space, amenities
- Housing, to provide customers, employees, patrons, life and activity

⇒ Uses that compete with core functions should not be located where they interfere with access or support uses

Management and Implementation

- Strategies and policies to help achieve a system of such areas in a city or region
- Strategies for individual areas
- Communities often have no programs to assure that plans for cores will be implemented
- Third, strong, well understood principles
- Sustained support of an organization and leadership dedicated to their achievement.

Requirements for the success of cores!

- Application of greater knowledge and commitment
- Better recognition of core benefits and values
- Broad commitment to sound principles
- Policies, strategies and programs dedicated to the achievement of the vision of strong centers and cores
- Effective financial incentives
 - Skilled planning and coordination
 - Proactive support for implementation
 - Organizational support to guide development and management of cores

States, cities, and regions need to establish new and stronger guidelines and powers

New powers and tools for financing, taxation, land ownership, joint public-private action, and management.

Examples:

- Tax increment financing and special taxing districts
- Joint development and new town requirements and powers
- Tax or revenue sharing legislation and methods
- Selectively invest to meet core needs and objectives

Information for core planning and development

Is available from many organizations but especially the following:

APA: American Planning Association

Offices of “Main Street” programs in several states and at the Federal Level

ULI: Urban Land Institute

IDEA: International Downtown Executives Association

Pro-core policies can greatly help smart growth

- Revitalize areas in decline
- Encourage development where it is wanted
- Reduce pressure on sensitive neighborhoods and environments
- Use infrastructure more efficiently
- Help meet many urgent social, economic, and environmental needs:
 - Improve sense of community
 - Encourage a more healthful life style
 - Enrich life in cities, suburbs and rural areas
 - Meet critical housing needs
 - Improve affordability

The nation, states, regions and cities should adopt pro-core policies

Policies that will create vital cores at metropolitan, regional and community levels:

- Create better business, transportation, education, health, tourism and environmental
- Create strong, centers around which well-planned neighborhoods can thrive

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Version 1.1