

Sprawl Speak: Word and Concept Glossary

Alternative Transportation: All types of transportation that do not require highways--rail, buses, bicycle and walking paths.

Best Practices: Widely accepted and taught models for conducting business.

Bog: Wet, spongy ground containing rich plant residue. Bogs filter and cleanse water that seeps into our groundwater and provides a habitat for many animals and birds.

Brownfields: Contaminated land, usually old industrial sites.

Cluster Housing: Planned housing developments with homes in close proximity while much of the land is retained as natural areas or developed as parks.

Common Good: The well-being of the larger community taking precedence over individual preferences.

Comprehensive Planning: Official planning that considers a range of issues and the impacts they have on each other; e.g., highways' impacts on business locations. It's the policy basis for all regulations (laws) if a government has written and adopted such a plan.

Congestion Pricing: Charging a fee per car each time it's driven into an urban area.

Cosmopolitan: A city composed of individuals from many parts of the world.

County Charter: A form of organization that allows counties since 1933 to hold powers of governance. Cuyahoga doesn't have a Charter, therefore, it does not have *Home Rule* (see below). The Commissioners' salaries are set by the state and must follow state regulations and standards. The chain of accountability for officials is more visible to the public with a *Charter*.

Earmarking for Highways: The Ohio Constitution states that all car license taxes and gasoline taxes must be used for new highways or maintenance of them. Trains and buses must compete for funding in the *General Fund* of the state. There isn't a *level playing field*.

Edge City: When a suburb becomes complex enough to serve its residents' work, cultural and recreational needs without dependence on the central city.

Enterprise Zones: Legislation designed to give tax relief to depressed areas, but due to broadening of the law to include land that is merely undeveloped, it no longer gives depressed areas extra help, as originally intended.

Equity Issues: Public policies that create unfair tax burdens lack equity; e.g. one sector pays for public work in another sector that brings no or negative benefit to the former--new sewers in outlying areas, new roads, etc.

Grassroots Organization: An organization that is organized at the local level to work for a common cause.

Growth Cap: A law passed by a city to control development in a prescribed area.

High-density development: A built area designed to make efficient use of land and create populated, walkable neighborhoods.

Home Rule: In 1912 the Ohio legislature passed the Home Rule amendment to the Constitution that gave cities the right to frame a *charter* that would give them "all powers of local self-government." Today, cities often use this Rule to resist programs that require cooperation among cities and counties.

Ideologue: Someone who adheres to a particular set of ideas and theories; the ideas at times seem more important than what happens when a theory is put to use.

Incentives by Government: Grants, loans and investment of public funds can be used to encourage the private sector to act in preferred ways; e.g., *incentives* favor highways over trains or transit in Ohio because there are dedicated funds for building them (see *Earmarking* above.).

Infrastructure: Basic structures and institutions of a community; e.g., sewers, water, roads, schools.

Interchange: Road pattern connecting two or more limited-access highways.

Intermodal: Planned coordination among various types of transportation; e.g., cars, trains, buses, planes, bikes.

Level-playing Field: It is easier to build on farmland and more difficult to build in cities because of cleanup expenses and the difficulty of assembling large tracts of land. The state needs to *level the field* by offering *incentives* to build in cities; e.g., help pay for land acquisition so it doesn't cost builders more to build in the central city.

Long-range planning: See *Comprehensive Planning*.

Low-density housing: Single-family homes built on one or more acres of land. This is housing that has a poor ratio between people served and the amount of land used.

Mandate: When one level of government requires by law that a lower level must do a certain thing; e.g., if the state required 8 counties to come together for *comprehensive planning*. (unfunded *mandate*--government requires something, but does not help fund it.)

Mixed-use Zoning: Local regulations that allow businesses, homes and public institutions to occupy the same area to encourage pedestrian-friendly communities.

New Urbanism: Designed communities that encourage transit, mixed incomes, multi-use and walkability.

NIMBY: Not in My Backyard--an attitude many people have; e.g., resistance to having a Group Home in a neighborhood.

Non-point Source Pollution: Runoff of pesticides from lawns, farms, roads and parking lots drains into our rivers and lakes and enters our ground water. It's a relatively newly recognized problem that is much harder to tackle than point pollution; e.g., industrial waste being dumped from a pipe into a lake.

Outmigration: People moving from the urban center to the suburbs; then to rural areas, leaving fewer people in the center city.

Pedestrian-friendly: Developments that offers sidewalks, benches, on-street parking; an easy walk to businesses, public buildings, and public transportation.

Public Policy: The rationale behind our laws and regulations; a guide to present and future government decisions.

Public Transit: A general term referring to buses, the Rapid, community circulators, etc.

Quality of Life: All the variables taken together that make a place good to live in--homes, stores, culture amenities, air quality, parks, schools, transportation, work.

Regionalism: A concept of governing that recognizes the many important functions that operate on a multi-city and county level; e.g., the economy and the environment. It encourages collaboration among jurisdictions for the *Common Good* (see above).

Revenue-Sharing: A regional agreement to set aside an amount of taxes, which is then distributed to the neediest communities, based on a predetermined formula. The goal is to keep the region healthy and reduce competition among cities.

Smart Growth: The state designs a master plan for how and where growth and development can or should occur and where land needs to be protected. Then they create policies that encourage people through incentives (usually taxes or tax-breaks) to conform to the plan. Smart growth does not *mandate growth boundaries*.

Sprawl: Poorly planned, low-density, auto-dependent development that spreads out from the center of communities.

Smog: Dirty air caused by a haze of chemical and particulate matter, usually created by industrial emissions and automobile exhaust.

Subsidies: Taxes collected from one population and used to benefit another; e.g., Cleveland citizens' tax dollars used to build highway 422 out to Solon.

Sustainable Communities: Cities that balance growth, renewal and preservation in ways to maintain a high quality of life over time.

Tax Abatement: Removing taxes for a period of years in order to entice development to locate in an area. This practice leads to competition among cities for development projects.

Taxbase: The money governments collect to run city operations. When businesses and home owners leave, collection of property taxes goes down; when workers leave, collection of income taxes go down.

TODs (Transit Oriented Development): A *New Urban* (see above) style of development built around public transportation.

Zoning/regulations: Local laws governing land use and development. Many current zoning laws are incompatible with new ideas of urban design such as *mixed-use* (see above) areas.

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