


A Vision of the Interconnectedness of Housing to Community Viability

**Presented
By
Otis S. Johnson, Mayor
City of Savannah, GA
February 22, 2011**



What Is A Vision? “A Thought, Concept, Object Formed By The Imagination.” A Preferred State of Being.

A Vision For Savannah

Savannah is a safe, environmentally healthy, and economically thriving community for all of its citizens.

What is a community?

- **A social group with a common territorial base and a sense of shared interests and “belonging.”**

SOURCE: Ian Robertson. *Sociology*, Third Edition. New York: Worth Publishers, Inc., 581.

Hierarchy of Capital Assets: The Building Blocks of Community

- Human
- Social
- Political
- Economic
- Physical

Physical Capital

Access to descent, affordable housing, public transportation, recreation and open space.

New Urbanism

An urban design movement, which promotes walkable neighborhoods that contain a range of housing and job types. It arose in the United States in the early 1980's and continues to reform many aspects of real estate development and urban planning.

Charter of the New Urbanism

“We advocate the restructuring of public policy and development practices to support the following principles: neighborhoods should be diverse in use and population; communities should be designed for the pedestrian and transit as well as the car; cities and towns should be shaped by physically defined and universally accessible public spaces and community institutions; urban spaces should be framed by architecture and landscape design that celebrate local history, climate, ecology, and building practice.”

Twelve Elements of New Urbanism

1. The neighborhood has a discernible center. This can be a square or a green that is sometimes a busy or memorable street corner. A transit stop would be located at this corner.
2. Most of the dwellings are within a five-minute walk of the center, an average of roughly $\frac{1}{4}$ mile.
3. There are plenty of dwelling types – usually houses, rowhouses, and apartments – so that young and older people, singles and families, the poor and the wealthy may find places to live.

Elements, con't.

4. At the edge of the neighborhood, there are shops and offices of sufficiently varied types to support the weekly needs of a household.
5. A small ancillary building or garage apartment is permitted within the backyard of each house. It may be used as a rental unit or place of work.
6. An elementary school is close enough so most children can walk from their home.

Elements con't.

7. There are small playgrounds accessible to every dwelling – not more than a tenth of a mile away.
8. Streets within the neighborhood form a connected network, which disperses traffic providing a variety of pedestrian and vehicular routes to any destination.

Elements con't.

9. The streets are relatively narrow and shaded by rows of trees. This slows traffic, creating an environment suitable for pedestrians and bicycles..
10. Buildings in the neighborhood center are placed close to the street, creating a well-defined outdoor room.

Elements con't.

11. Parking lots and garage doors rarely front the street. Parking is relegated to the rear of buildings, usually accessed by alleys.
12. Certain prominent sites at the termination of street vistas or in the neighborhood center are reserved for civic buildings. These provide sites for community meetings, education, and religious or cultural activities

Source

New Urbanism

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Urbanism